

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND APPLIED SCIENCE
MANHATTAN, KANSAS

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

POSTWAR PLANNING AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL¹

W. E. GRIMES²

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page		Page
The Community's Goal	1	Homemaking	6
The Existing Community	2	Factors to Consider in Estab-	
Survey of Existing Conditions	2	lishing New Industries	7
Services for Farmers	5	Relation of Agriculture to the	
Strengthening Established In-		Community	9
dustries	5	Attaining Community Well-being	10

THE COMMUNITY'S GOAL

A desirable goal in planning for the postwar economy of a community is the maximum of well-being for all the people who make up the community. This is true whether the community has a few or many persons. A community of relatively few persons, every one of whom enjoys a high standard of living, is a better place in which to live than a community in which a portion of the people are poverty stricken. There is no community in a more desperate situation than one where industry has declined and where many people have been stranded without a satisfactory way of earning a livelihood.

When postwar planning is mentioned, many people think only of new and big industries. This may be the way out for some communities. For most Kansas communities, however, the postwar picture probably will not be materially different, quantitatively, than it is at present.

Much can be done, though, to attain the goal of maximum well-being for the people of the community by improving the quality of the services rendered and increasing the earning power of those who make up the community. It is not the number of persons that counts most but how prosperous those are who make up the community. An increase in population often will increase the prosperity of the community. But it should not be forgotten that an influx of people who are im-

1. Contribution No. 124 from the Department of Agricultural Economics.
 2. The author is indebted to Mrs. Ruth Botz Jones and Professor Norris J. Anderson, who cooperated in the conduct of the study on which this publication is based and who made many helpful suggestions in the preparation of the manuscript. This study was begun in cooperation with the Kansas Industrial Development Commission.

poverished, or who may become paupers, is a drag rather than a help.

THE EXISTING COMMUNITY

So, in making postwar plans for the usual Kansas community, emphasis should rightly be placed on quality rather than quantity. In other words, the local community should be in position to do its job well and then do it. This view of postwar planning for the community leads us to look within the community and to analyze its existing problems. What is the job of the community at present and how well is the job being done? What can be done to improve the community with its existing people and industries?

Those who view the community from this angle will find need for dependable and accurate information concerning the community. Who are the people who make up this community? What do they do? What is their level of living? What is their relation to each other? Do they patronize each other's businesses or do they go elsewhere to trade? How many people who normally belong in the community are temporarily away in the armed services or in other war work? How many of these will return to the community and what will there be for them to do when they return? These are a few of the questions for which the community will need to find answers. And finding the answers, what does the community propose to do about them?

SURVEY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The first step in constructive community planning should be the survey or study of existing conditions. How many people are there in the community and what do they do? What services do they need and where do they obtain them? What businesses does the community have and are there too many of some and too few of others? Do local people patronize local business concerns? If they go elsewhere with their trade, why do they do so? What services are needed but not provided in the community and how can these be provided? Suggested forms that will be helpful in making such surveys may be obtained from the Kansas Industrial Development Commission, Topeka, Kansas. The most important factor, however, is a keen and critical eye and an alert attitude.

RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS

One may begin consideration of the problems of the community by taking stock of the retail establishments and the services they render or might render. As one goes down the street, does the outward appearance of the stores repel or attract? Attractive store fronts, artistic surroundings, and cleanliness are appreciated by all people. They have their dollars and cents value. They make people want to come in

and trade. Flowers and green grass in summer and evergreens in winter add to the outward attractiveness of the place where such things are possible. Attractive store fronts and show windows are an asset. Does Main Street need to have its face lifted?

Within the stores, how attractive is the display of goods?? Can the merchandise be seen, readily and at its best? Or does one fall over bags and barrels and boxes in getting at the thing that is desired? Are the clerks efficient and pleasing? Do they make the customer want to buy? These are things that will help the retail portion of the community to do its job. It may require classes in salesmanship for the clerks and store operators. Bu if this will help the local store obtain and retain the trade of the community, it is worth while.

When people come to a town to trade they need services that sometimes are forgotten. It should be remembered that women do more than 75 percent of the buying at retail. What provision does the town make for their comfort and convenience when they come to trade? Many of the women have children with them when they come to trade. Are there attractive and clean rest rooms readily accessible for their use? Is there a place where the children can be left safely while their parents do the shopping? It may not always be possible to furnish such facilities, but where they can be provided they should add to the attractiveness of trading in a town.

OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES

In a similar way there is need for consideration of other services rendered by the local community to its citizens. The services of filling stations, machine shops, repair establishments, newspapers, and other service industries will be needed. These services must be adequate, but for the good of the community they should not be overdone. For example, three filling station operators who are busy and prosperous add more to the economic well-being of the community than if the same business were divided among six filling station operators and no one of them prosperous. The families of operators of service industries and of other industries must have sufficient income to permit a high standard of living if they are to contribute to the economic well-being of the community.

THE PROFESSIONS

The application of this principle extends further and takes in the service enterprises such as the professions. Service enterprises include the professions such as medicine, dentistry, law, banking, abstracting, and accounting, and also needed services such as schools, churches, and recreational and entertainment facilities. These services are needed in all communities. They add to the well-rounded prosperity of the

community. The services which are rendered by those engaged in these types of productive employment are essential to a high standard of living and a high level of well-being for those who make up the community.

The people of a community which has adequate medical and dental services will enjoy better health than the people of a community where these safeguards to health are lacking. A healthy people is more productive than one that is not. Also, the active doctor needs the services of nurses, of janitors, of garage and filling station operators, and many others. The income received by the doctor goes out again as he and his family spend it for goods and services needed in their living and in the maintenance of his practice.

HOSPITALS AND HEALTH

Good hospitals require people to run them. They employ nurses, technicians, and others, all of whom are spenders in the markets of the community.

Many Kansans now have contracts for hospital service if and when needed. This is being obtained at a cost of 66 cents a month for single persons and \$1.30 a month for families. It is probable that in the postwar period more hospital facilities will be needed in Kansas to take care of those who need hospitalization.

Hospitalization when needed shortens the period of incapacitation and increases the ability of the person involved to add to the production of the community. Hospitals add to the prosperity of a community in two ways. First, the people employed in them should be and usually are prosperous members of the community, adding to the trade of the community. In the second place, the hospitals aid in keeping the people of the community in good health and thus able to produce more abundantly than would be the case if their ailments were uncared for.

EDUCATION

Educational facilities usually are looked upon as a financial burden to a community. At first thought they might be considered such a burden. But in the long run it should be remembered that the high degree of prosperity in America in contrast to other countries is due in large measure to the ability of the individual Americans, and this ability traces directly to our extensive system of public education. It can well be said that the educational facilities of a community are a good investment. In addition, those employed by the schools should be and usually are good customers of other industries of the community. In considering schools, the chief concern should be the education of the children. Those provisions should be made which will give the children of our communities the best possible education. This should be the viewpoint rather than maintenance of schools at particular

places just to have the school teachers as customers of local stores.

CHURCHES AND OTHER FACILITIES

Similar attention needs to be given to other service enterprises of the community. Churches, recreational facilities, and other similar activities help to round out the life of the community. Each adds to the sum total of human well-being possible for those who make up the community. The barber shop, the beauty parlor, the shoe shine, and all others rendering needed and desired services add to the sum total of enjoyments available in the community and the over-all prosperity of its people.

SERVICES FOR FARMERS

Most Kansas communities include farms and farm people. These people will be in need of great quantities of goods and services in the postwar period. It is estimated that in the postwar years the farmers of Kansas will be in the market for more than 40 million dollars worth of new machinery, more than 25 million dollars in new buildings, and perhaps 100 million dollars in electrical lines and plants and equipment.

These are markets that are on the doorsteps of every Kansas community. Who will supply these goods and service them after they are supplied? There will be opportunities for lumber yards, hardware stores, machinery dealers, electric supply shops, and so on. In addition, there is the probability that many of our returning boys will have skills which will fit into these needs in exceptionally fine ways.

STRENGTHENING ESTABLISHED INDUSTRIES

The most important postwar job of the usual Kansas community is to get to work on its present job and do it better than ever before. The present job includes those businesses and services now established in the communities. They are certain. That is, they are certain if forward-looking citizens get busy and keep them and do not let them slip away. The industry that is established and going in the community has demonstrated its ability to survive there. The first interest of the community is to see that it continues to thrive and, if possible, to thrive even better than ever before.

The established industries of the community may be improved in many ways. The services they render may be more adequate and more attractive to the customers. Markets may be improved. New production methods may be used which will lower costs and improve the competitive position of these industries. Markets may be found that will make possible the production of a greater volume of products or services.

During the war some business establishments of Kansas communities have been forced to close because of the shortage of materials or of manpower. Reopening these business places may be one of the first steps in postwar adjustment. If the business was thriving in the prewar period, there is good reason to believe that it can thrive in the postwar period. Also, such business establishments should present opportunities for the returning men and women from the armed services and the war industries. These young persons will have skills, energies, and enthusiasm. Full advantage should be taken of them and full opportunity given these young persons to find productive and satisfying employment.

In prewar times most Kansas communities served the traveling public in many ways. The tourist trade was important. It is to be expected that the tourist trade again will be important in the postwar period. Tourist cabins and camps and filling stations catered to such trade. It is one of the types of business that has a reasonable prospect of satisfactory reestablishment after the war. Travel by airplane may be more important in the postwar period and services centering around the airport will be needed.

HOMEMAKING

Many Kansas women have been employed in various and highly desirable ways in local business, in war industries, and in the armed services during the war period. It is expected that many of these women will return to the more important peace-time occupation of homemaking. This occupation is the most productive of all in every community. More persons are engaged in homemaking than in any other occupation. More is dependent upon the satisfactory accomplishment of this function than upon any other. The woman who leaves the store, the profession, the war industry or the armed services in the postwar period to go into the work of homemaking has no apologies to offer to anyone. She is seeking a higher calling.

So, in the postwar period it is expected that many women now otherwise employed or partially employed, will give more attention to homemaking. No community is worth while unless it has a high proportion of real homes. The importance of the service of rearing children and of making real homes is too often forgotten. It should not be forgotten by Kansas communities in the postwar period. Every effort should be made to strengthen the homes of Kansas communities. Every homemaker of Kansas should be given every encouragement to do her job well and should have the full cooperation of other members of the family and of the entire community in doing this most important job. The ultimate goal of the adjustments suggested in this publication is to

make possible better homes in Kansas communities.

Suggestions for improving Kansas homes may be obtained from the Extension Service, the School of Home Economics, and other departments of Kansas State College, and from many other agencies. No attempt is made in this connection to enumerate in detail the many things that will be needed in the postwar period to improve the homes of Kansas. However, the initiative in doing this is with the homemaker.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN ESTABLISHING NEW INDUSTRIES

Undoubtedly new industries will be established in Kansas communities in the postwar period. But in obtaining these new industries community leaders must be alert to the hazards involved. There are certain fundamental principles to be observed in establishing industry.

RAW MATERIALS

A new industry usually needs raw materials. The supply of these raw materials must be ample and dependable. They must be of a quality that will permit the industry to meet its competition. For example, a citizen of Wamego has gained well-deserved credit for the establishment of a factory making snow plows that are sold and used all over this continent. It should be noted that he obtains his raw materials from a source that is dependable and that furnishes a high quality of product.

Starch factories using cull potatoes have been suggested for the potato-producing sections of the Kansas River Valley. Studies that have been made reveal that the supply of raw materials is insufficient and available over too short a period to permit profitable operation of a starch factory. The same thing may not be true of an alfalfa dehydration plant. The important thing is to get the facts and to face them in a realistic way.

MARKETS

A new industry need markets. It does not just spring up. Goods must be sold, and selling is expensive. Again the snow plow factory at Wamego may be cited. The snow plows are sold by the established sales force of a large tractor company. This company's interests are furthered by being able to sell a more complete outfit since its tractors are used to operate the snow plows manufactured at Wamego. This sales force existed before any snow plows were made at Wamego. Many a good product has failed to find its place in our markets because of the lack of an adequate and well-developed sales force.

FINANCING

A new industry must be financed. It may be financed by funds of people from outside the community. This relieves

the community of that problem but it also may relieve the community of any chance to direct the policies of the new concern. Funds brought in from the outside may be taken away from the outside.

Every new industry does not succeed, so those individuals investing their funds should be financially able to lose them without being impoverished thereby. And even if the industry succeeds, it may be years before it is in position to pay the investors much return on their investment. The investors in a new concern should not expect dividends the next week; or the next month, or even the next year after it is started. A new industry is handicapped if those putting their funds into it are too impatient for returns.

OTHER FACTORS

Other factors of importance to new industries include sources of power, the cost of power, transportation costs on raw materials and on finished products and the relation between them, the position of probable competitors, the availability of skilled labor as required, efficient management, and other important factors. Of these, efficient management is of outstanding importance. The local elevators of Kansas learned through bitter experience that the farm boy at \$76 a month was a poor investment when hired as a manager of the elevator but that an experienced and able man at \$250 a month was a profitable investment.

LOSS OF INDUSTRY

It is easy to plan for a big, new industry that will come into the community and bring employment and prosperity all at once. But things do not always work out that way. Big, new industries are not numerous, so many Kansas communities probably will be unable to obtain them. And of those who do obtain them, some may not retain them. If a big industry moves into a town, operates for a time, and then leaves the town, the results are disastrous. For example, one Kansas town rode into prosperity during the middle twenties with the establishment of a big refinery at the edge of the town. The refinery was operated a few years and then was moved away. It is more than fifteen years since the refinery closed, but the town still is trying to overcome the effects. A small dwelling built in that town in the middle twenties at a cost of \$3,500 went begging on the market when priced at \$1,500, and finally, under the stimulus of war conditions, it sold for \$2,000. Banks suffered, building and loan associations failed, trade suffered, and in many other ways the introduction of this new industry that did not last resulted in hardship and privation for the community that obtained it.

Such experiences should not discourage Kansans in at-

tempting to obtain new and big industries, but they illustrate that the community has a big job even though it gets such an industry. This job may become immeasurably bigger if the new industry fails to survive.

New industries offer possibilities for Kansas communities but the problem of obtaining them must be approached intelligently and open-mindedly. New industries can be either salvation or curse to the community, depending upon their outcome.

Information concerning possible new industries may be obtained by writing Kansas State College, the Kansas Industrial Development Commission, Topeka, Kansas, or other state agencies. However, the most important source of information concerning new industries for Kansas communities is within the community itself. New industries frequently are the product of the local citizen with ideas. Many of the successful, established industries in Kansas communities are the product of local ability. This is the best and most dependable source of ideas for new industries for the community and one which must not be overlooked. If such ability is not found, the local community may be forced to forego the opportunity for new industries.

RELATION OF AGRICULTURE TO THE COMMUNITY

In planning for Kansas communities, agriculture must not be forgotten. Agriculture has been and probably will continue to be of great importance in all communities of the state. The postwar period should bring improvements in agriculture. In fact, Kansas farmers probably have gone further with effective postwar planning than most of the towns. The farmers have been working at it for nearly ten years and their plans are better considered and more fully developed than many of the plans of towns. Some of the farm plans are now going into effect as opportunity offers. There still will be much to do in the postwar period, however, in improving the agriculture of the state.

When agricultural industries or industries whose raw products come from farms are being considered, much can be learned from the experience of the past. In some communities, creameries have been established where there was an insufficient number of cows to provide the needed milk or cream. It was thought that farmers would increase the number of their cows if a market were available. It has not worked out that way. Usually the cows must be there before the creamery is established. If they are not, they will not be brought in quickly enough to rescue the creamery from the financial troubles resulting from a lack of sufficient raw materials. Agricultural production involves many skills, and a particular group of farmers, or of other people for that

matter, do not add to their skills quickly. Dairymen grow up and are not converted grain farmers. The same thing holds true of other farm enterprises.

Improvements are due in other parts of the farming industry. They are coming but they must not come too slowly and farm people must not be handicapped in obtaining them. Better farm homes are needed; the house on the farm is more than just a home. It is an important part of the farm business. There are many other things pertaining to agricultural adjustments in the post war period that should be considered, but they cannot be discussed fully in this publication. Rather, attention is called to them to indicate that they must be an important part of the planning for any community in Kansas.

ATTAINING COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

The first and most important job of the community as it plans for postwar adjustments is to safeguard and improve what it already has. The business establishments and professions which the community has are tried and tested and certain. Every effort should be made to retain and to improve them. New industries may come. If they do the community should welcome them. It should strive to obtain them, but in doing so it should be open-minded and alert to the hazards involved.

After all, the goal of the community is a high level of well-being for each and every one who is a part of that community. This is attained when each one is fully and productively employed at useful and needed tasks. When this is accomplished and the economy of the community is well-balanced, prosperity will come for all.