

# First Impressions



## Baldwin City, Kansas

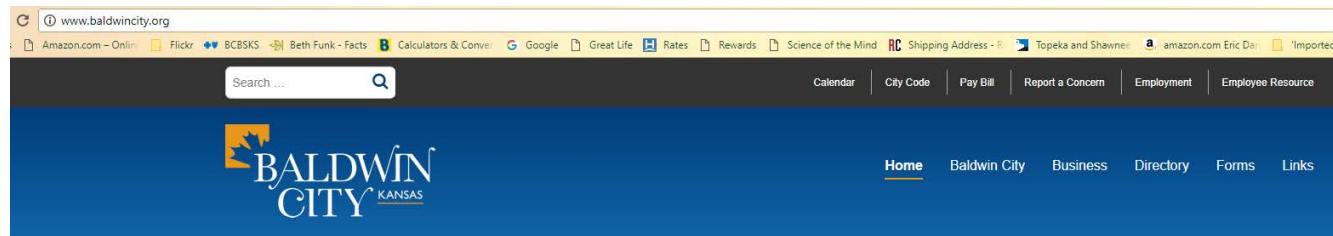
K-State Research and Extension in Partnership with  
The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



- 2010 Census Population **4,515**  
(+32.8% since 2000\*) **KS +6.1%**
- 2016 Estimate is **4,677**  
(+37.6% since 2000 **KS +8.1%**)
- 37.3% college educated, 96.1% high school or GED  
– **KS 31% college education, 90% HS or equivalency**
- 62.9% family households, 37.3% non-family
- Poverty rate is 10.4% **(KS=13.6%)**
- Median Age 34.9 years **(36)**
- Median household income is \$51,718 **(\$52,205)**

## Web Presence:

- The City and Chamber web sites are easy to find, navigate.
- Visitors focused on relocation information and had suggestions for webmasters to evaluate.



### Welcome!

Baldwin City is third largest among the communities in Douglas County and part of the Lawrence, Kansas Metropolitan Area with all of the cultural advantages of a major metropolitan area. Baldwin City offers a life style of exceptional quality. A drive through Baldwin City's attractive neighborhoods shows a historical, pleasing community.

Baldwin City's quality of life invites you to look at the community as a place to call home....

**Discover Baldwin City**

#### NEXT COUNCIL MEETING:



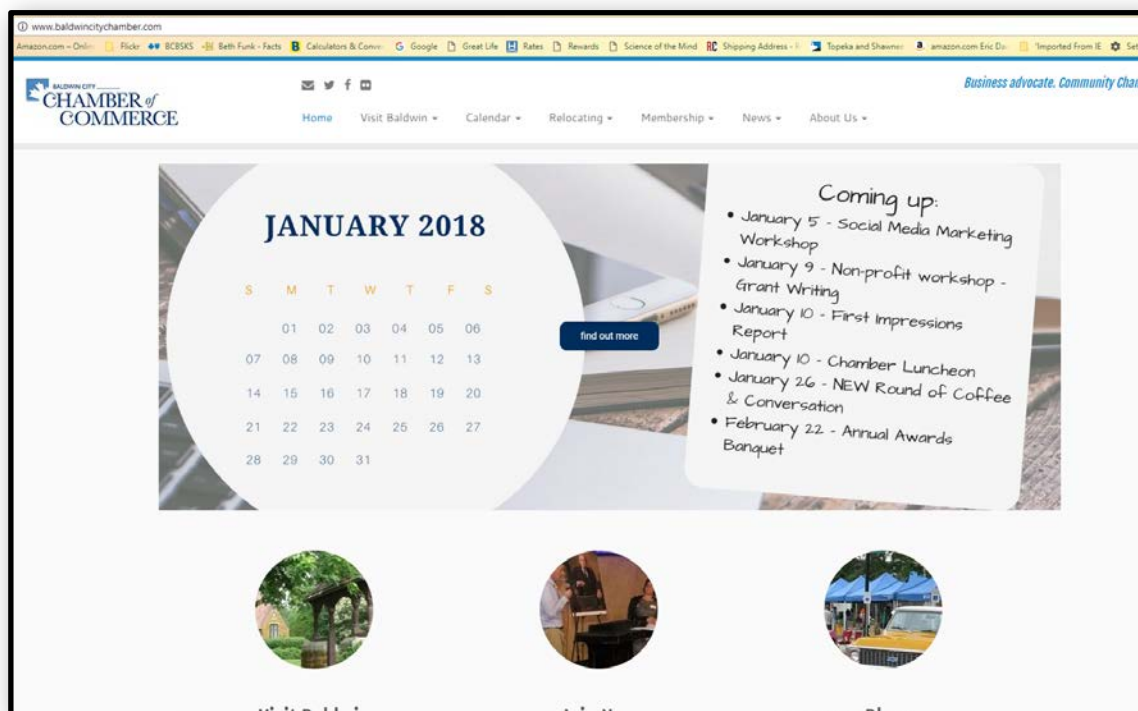
12/19/2017 7:00pm

[View Council Packet](#)



## Web Presence:

- Chamber website is linked to the city website.
- Visitors wanted more information about Medical Services, Parks and Recreation, Housing and Schools—much of which is on the Chamber website.



## The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Very nice community, clean, homes looked nice overall. Well-kept, nicer older homes.
- Baker University and downtown added positive first impression.



Photos taken afternoon of  
Sept 15, 2017



# The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Finding signs was a challenge for the first-time visitor.
- We entered from the southeast; not as welcoming as other entrances.



# First Impressions

- Saw an initial sign on the I-35 exit, but we did not see any other signage once we were off the highway.



# The “Five-Minute” Impression- North







## Downtown Business Area

- Older, well-kept buildings, nice sidewalks and landscaping in places.





## Downtown Business Area

- Businesses were well-marked. Two restaurants/ coffee shops.
- Customer service was friendly and warm.



## Downtown Business Area

- Buildings were very clean and had lots of character inside and out.
- The downtown offers the relaxed atmosphere that I love in small towns.





## Downtown Business Area

- Brick streets and well-kept downtown buildings added to the character.
- Loved that Baker Campus was part of downtown.
- Baldwin does a good job of utilizing their spaces.



## Downtown Business Area

- Saw benches, trash receptacles and there was some Wi-Fi available.





## Downtown Business Area

- Plenty of parking within walking distance of multiple businesses.



## Downtown Business Area

- Several buildings had recently been remodeled or repainted.
- I appreciated the diversity of the businesses and merchandise. The owner of a new retail gift shop explained her business and classes available.







## Other Retail Shopping Areas

- 56 Highway had a grocery store, Taco Bell, Sonic, Pizza Hut, Medical Buildings, hardware store.





## Other Retail Shopping Areas

- The strip mall areas are easy to find and easy to access, but are not very attractive.



## Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Visitors were not clear if there was an industrial area.
- Thought there was one on north side.





## Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

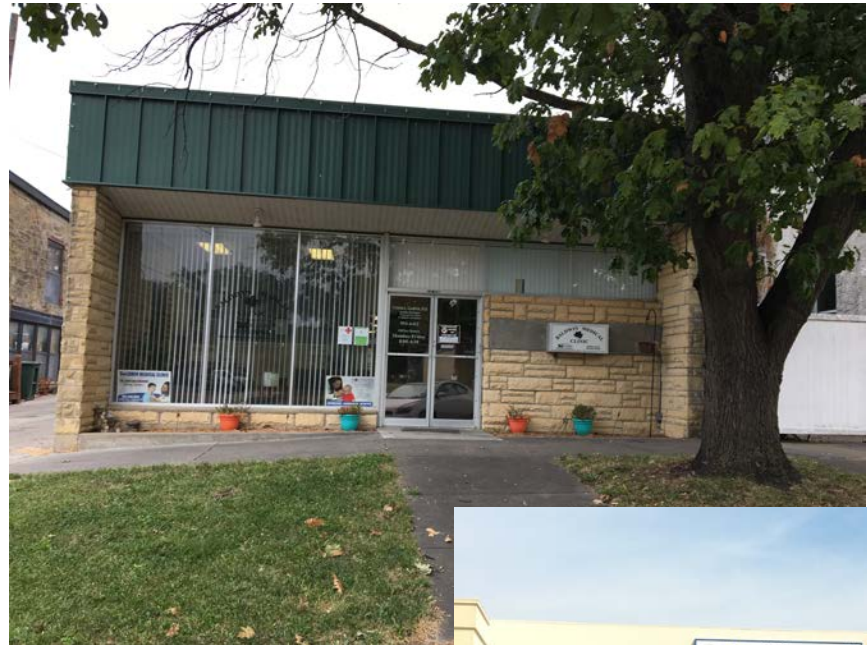
- Searching for “Industrial” areas on the City and Chamber website yielded little information.

### ***Observation:***

- “Entrepreneurs who choose to start their small businesses are responsible for 63 percent of net new jobs created in the United States every year.”
- *The same UPS truck who competed with your downtown can help your entrepreneur serve the world.*

# Health Care Services

- Dental, mental health, chiropractic and the Baldwin Medical Clinic are available.



## Health Care Services

- No local hospital, but accessible 20 miles away.
- Visitors did not see “access to health care” addressed on City or Chamber websites.





## Long-Term Care

- Saw Vintage Park and an Alzheimer's/Dementia Care facility.







- **Senior Housing**





# Housing

- New housing developments, probably for those who live in Baldwin City but commute to Lawrence or KC.





# Housing

- Did not appear to be a lot of housing available for rent or sale, especially for rental homes or move-in ready homes for sale under \$150,000.
- Housing overall was well kept.



# Housing

- Majority of homes were located on Zillow.
- Visitors wondered whether there is a central home locator service.





# Housing





# Housing



## Housing data

**KANSAS**

- Total Housing Units 1,687
- Total Occupied Houses 1,549 (91.8%) (89.5%)
- Vacant Houses 138 ( 8.2%) (10.5%)
- Owner Occupied 1,125 (73%) (66.7%)
- Renter Occupied 424 (27%) (33.3%)

# Need for clean-up of older properties





# Schools

- Primary, Intermediate schools appear newer and well-kept.



# Schools

- Junior High and High School is older, but appears safe and well-kept.





# Schools

- Love that their website explains academic awards received which would give me confidence in putting my children in this school system.
- Liked the sidewalks to the school properties; the walking trail should be publicized.





## Childcare

- Plenty of childcare providers can be found easily online “Childcare providers Baldwin City, KS”
- Rainbow Experience Preschool and Baldwin City Rec Summer Discovery Days.
- Baldwin City USD 348 has three early childhood programs available.



## Faith/Religion

- Several churches, primarily protestant and Catholic.
- All the buildings appeared in good condition.



# Faith/Religion

- Saw one church that offered free meals once a week.





## Civic

- A sign for the Rotary Club and a building for the Palmyra Masonic Lodge #23.
- Master Gardeners area downtown.
- Kiwanis.
- Business professional women's organization sponsored one of the City entrance signs.



# Public Infrastructure

- Old brick streets have character and charm.





## Public Infrastructure

- Highway 56 locations do not have the same continuity of streets, lighting and landscape as downtown.
- Appreciated that the trees are not pruned so that they cover sidewalks and streets.





## Public Infrastructure

- To walk from downtown to Baker there is only one sidewalk on one side of the street.
- If there are trails, they are not well-signed.



## City Hall

- Saw the building, but did not visit.
- Loved the Chamber office and several reiterated compliments for the hospitality and pride Jeannette showed them.





## City Hall

- At the Chamber there were flyers and literature about events and information- particularly appreciate information about annual events.
- Appreciated the evidence of collaborative relationship between the City, Chamber and Economic Development.





## Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Baldwin has a Police Department and Volunteer Fire Department.



# Library

- Library is aesthetically pleasing from the outside.
- Visitors did not go inside.





## City Parks

- Visitors noticed city parks, a walking trail to schools, baseball fields and public golf course.
- Wondered whether there was a dedicated walking/biking trail.





# City Parks

- Needed better signage to the parks.
- Douglas Lake is close by.



# Recreation/Tourism

- Maple Leaf Festival the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of October.
- Kansas Belle Dinner Train/Midland Railway.





## Events of Interest to Visitors and Locals

- Festival of Lights is evident on webpages.
- How does one know about Baker's events?
- Saw the Rec commission, but is there a community gym or workout classes or other fitness initiatives?
- Historical Markers





## What would bring you back?

- Quaint coffee shops, Lumber Yard Art Center, the Old Depot.
- Would love to come back for a day trip or for the Maple Leaf Festival.
- Chamber map that outlines all the activities of the weekend make me confident I would enjoy the Maple Leaf festival.



## **Most Positive Observations**

- Overall well-kept and attractive appearance of downtown and most homes and yards.
- Friendliness of the people and their city pride.
- Collaborative atmosphere of downtown businesses who share space (Dance academy with coffee shop) and City, Chamber and Community Development.



## **Biggest Obstacles/Challenges**

- No local newspaper; how do you find out about local news?
- Supporting local businesses.
- Affordable housing.
- Small Business/Industry.

## **What will you remember the most in six months?**

- Attractiveness of the community.
- Feels like a charming bed/breakfast community that holds onto traditions and character.
- Seems like a good place to live.
- Friendly, down-to-earth people and community.
- Wonderful location in relationship to larger cities.

## Next Steps:

### *Thank our leadership team:*

- *Jeannette Blackmar*
- *Marlin Bates*
- *Marilyn Pearse*
- *Tammy Michael*
- *Dan Meehan*
- *Cheryl Sylvester*
- *Rob Culley*
- *Scott Schultz*

- **Set next steps!**

**Contact me if you need help:**

**Nancy Daniels**

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## Resources I like:

- <http://smallbizsurvival.com/>  
– THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE

NEW! SURVEY	BOOK BECKY TO SPEAK	THE BOOK: SMALL TOWN RULES	SHOP LOCAL EBOOK	SAVEYOUR.TOWN	
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# SMALL BIZ SURVIVAL

THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE




FRONT PAGE	LATEST STORIES	ABOUT	GUIDED TOUR	SUBSCRIBE	PODCAST	CONTACT	RSS	
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WHAT BUSINESS STAGE ARE YOU IN?



### Dreaming

For those who are dreaming or planning to start a business of their own. ... [Get started.](#)



### Doing & Growing

For those who have a business and have grown to the point that it's

**Get our articles plus special bonus emails, a positive view of rural once a week:**  
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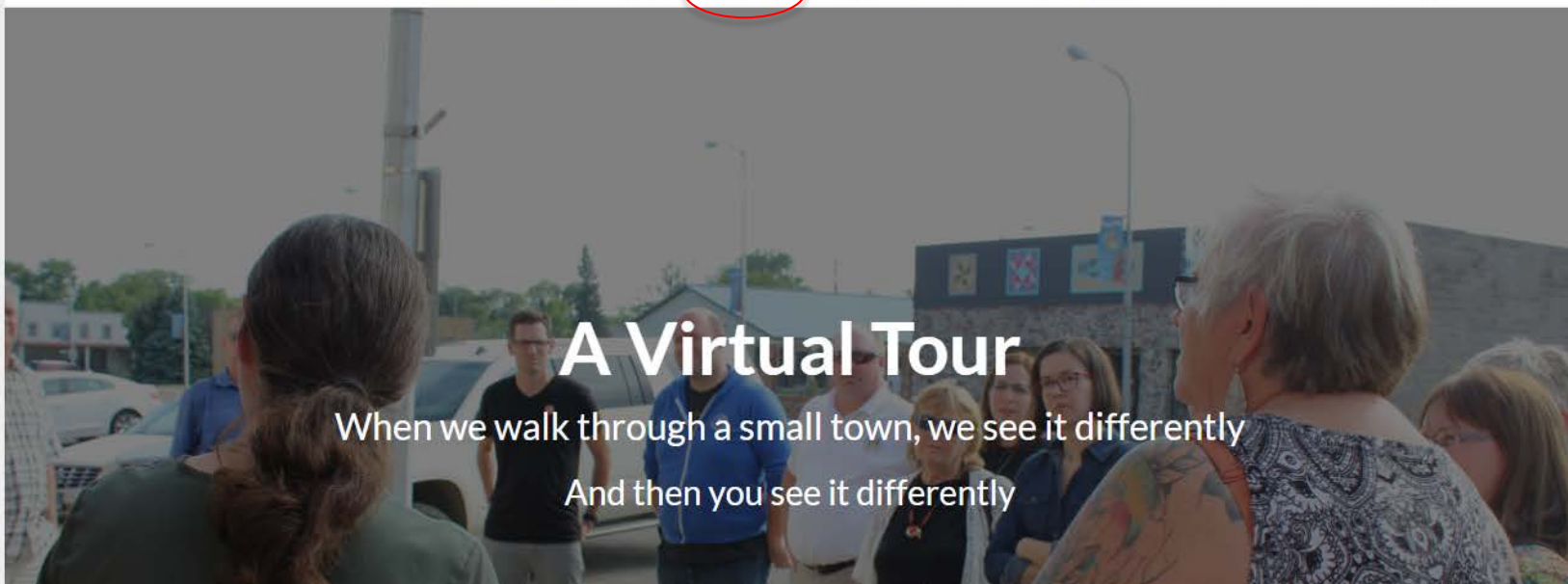
I will never sell or rent your email.

## Resources I like:

- <http://saveyour.town/>
  - Monthly live webinars; available on recording.
  - Pay once and show as many times as you want.
  - Watch parties encouraged.

**SAVEYOUR**.town

[HOME](#) [ABOUT DEB & BECKY](#) [WEBINARS](#) [TOOLKITS](#) [WORK WITH US](#) [I DON'T HAVE TIME!](#) [CONTACT](#) [MEMBERS LOGIN](#)



## Resources I like:

- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/brownbagmx/>  
Brown Bag Marketing Exchange  
(Atchison, KS Co-Marketing group)





**Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOIMRJ-jc14>

- Brain Gain (30-49 year olds moving to rural) is a “new trend” that has been happening since the 70’s and no one is noticing or talking about it.
- Rural is in the middle of everywhere. You live one place, work another and play another. With transportation and internet, it’s all accessible to you.
- People research a number of places before they move to a rural town.
- Only 1/3 of the people who move rural have a previous connection with that area.

- If you bring 7 people to a 700 citizen town every year in 10 years you'll have a 10% increase. It matters! It is a challenge with housing, but it is achievable.
- We are our own worst enemies. We have to monitor our customer service! It matters!
- The number of people who live in rural areas is increasing—from 54M to 60M from 1970-2010. The relative % of people who live rural is smaller (19% instead of 26%) but the real number has increased.
- Don't buy in to someone else's narrative.
- We lose our hardware store, our school, consolidate our churches, etc... but we are still here! In MN, they have only lost 3 towns in 50 years.

- Housing will be freed up as the baby boomers retire and move closer to medical services.
- Rural communities need retirement housing (not nursing facilities, but maintenance free) to retain seniors.
- 1/5 of dollars come from transfer payments—not employers.

*- Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow,  
University of Minnesota*

