

First Impressions

Burlington, KS

K-State Research and Extension



- Girard asked for First Impressions, Burlington agreed to be its partner; 1 hour, 36 min drive.
- I trained the volunteers about the visit and survey on October 21 and took photos on Oct 21 and Nov 5.
- Extension Agent Jill Barnhardt submitted additional photos in late October.
- Three Burlington visitors came in one car on Thursday, November 19.
- Results presented April 15.
- Burlington uses the results for further discussion and action plans.

Why: First Impressions?

- **Feedback:**

How does a first-time visitor view my town?

- Evaluate successes,
- Set goals and priorities for next steps.

- **If you don't agree with the observation:**

- ***Be curious,*** Why does the visitor see it this way?
- Is the observation worth considering?
- What can we do to change it– or the perception?

Curiosity: A strong desire to know or learn something.

-Oxford Living Dictionary

Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN

We need to change the narrative about rural.

- Rural is *changing*, not dying.
- Brain Gain (30-49 year olds moving to rural) is a “new trend” that has been happening since the 70’s.
- People research a number of places before they move to a rural town.
- 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.

Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN

- 46% of Kansas households moved between 1995-1999
- In a survey of newcomers to rural areas, the reasons they come are:
 - Simpler pace of life,
 - Safety and security,
 - Affordable housing,
 - Outdoor recreation,
 - Quality schools
 - ***“A job” isn’t in the top 10 reasons.***
- Communities can work together to attract newcomers and create quality of life for everyone.

- “In small towns everyone knows each other.” *false*
- *Get to know each other*, invite them to a newcomers meal.
- 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 and what we say. It matters.
- Don’t say, “You have to live here twenty years to be an insider.” And don’t act like it either.

- 75% of rural homeowners are Baby Boomers and older. 30% are over 75.
- 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.- *Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, University of Minnesota*



*Ben Winchester was our guest on the
March 1, 2019 First Friday Call.*

See the recording at:

<https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>

- 2020 Estimate 2,587 2010 Census: 2,674
(down 3.3% since 2010 **KS= +2.1%**)
- Median household income is \$48,235 (**\$62,087**)
- 92.1% high school or GED, 17.7% college educated,
91.8% HS or equivalency, KS 34.0% college education,
- Median Age 39.5 years (**37.2**)
- Poverty rate 16.1% (**KS=11.4%**)

- **Website** <https://burlingtonkansas.gov/>

On Google Chrome and Firefox this was the second entry; Wikipedia was first.

- City page contains lots of helpful information which added to our visit.
- Lots of information on tabs and pull-downs.



- **Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/burlington.kansas.7>

In dark mode for better contrast.

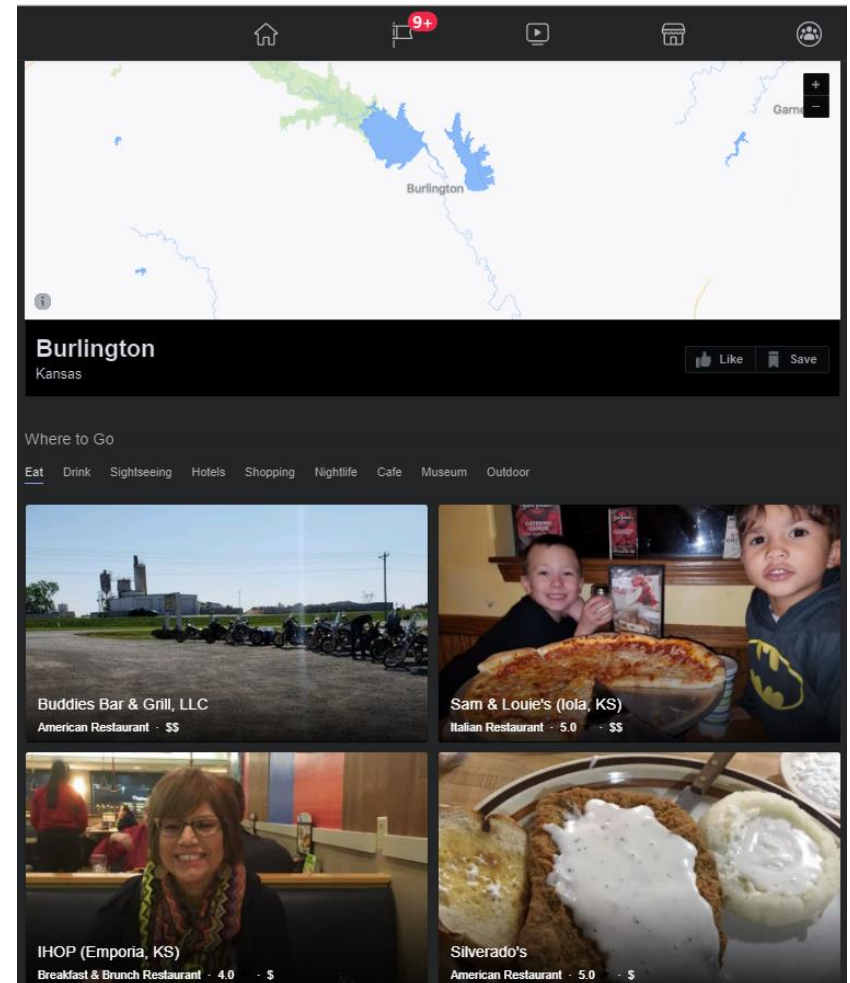
- Facebook search revealed good information which seemed up to date.



- **Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/places/Things-to-do-in-Burlington-Kansas/106071889423976>

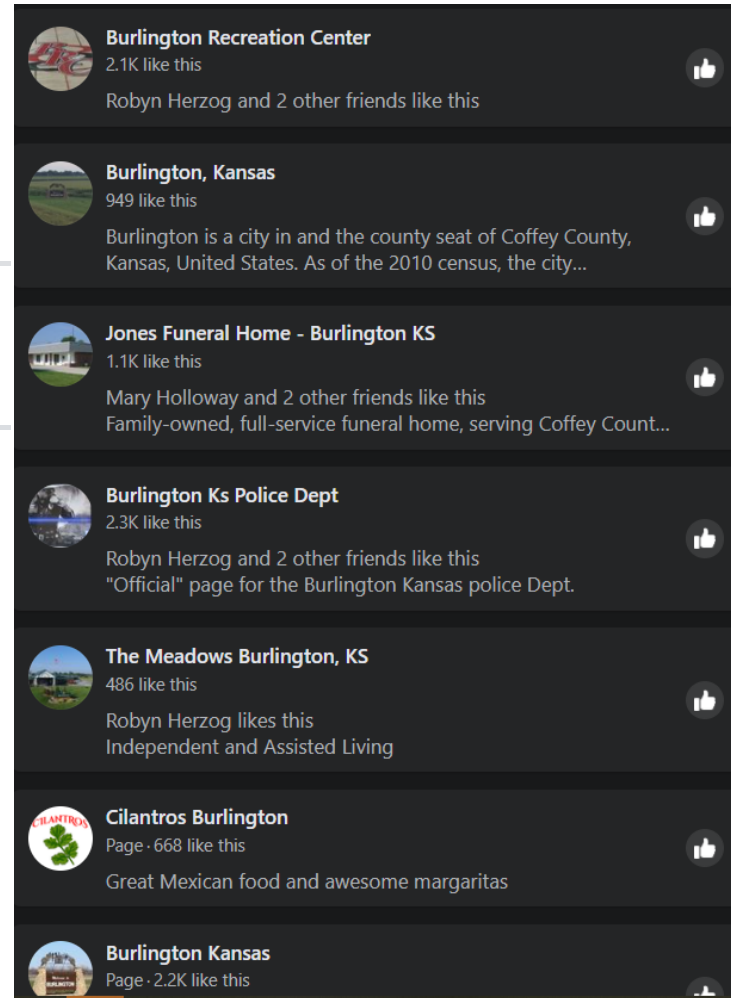
This is a Facebook-generated page which can be personalized, if you choose.

In dark mode for better contrast.



- **Facebook**

- Almost 30 FB pages located in Burlington, Kansas
- *An opportunity for co-marketing.*



“Five-Minute” Impression

- Very clean with metal welcome signs as we entered on two highways.
- Main street is in decent shape with lights, sidewalks.
- Eye-catching veteran’s signs on the light poles.



“Five-Minute” Impression

- A few buildings could use some cosmetic repairs.
- Lots of murals.
- A lot of empty shops downtown.



“Five-Minute” Impression

- Sign on the east showed school’s winning sports teams.
- There are many types of businesses for this size town.



“Five-Minute” Impression

- My first impression was very positive.
- Not many sidewalks in residential areas, especially missed them in elementary school area.



Downtown Business Area

- Business signage could be improved by helping strangers know the products/business is inside.
- Loved the Vintage Sisters. Very busy at noon.
- Not sure we would have gone inside if it hadn't been recommended by 3 different people.



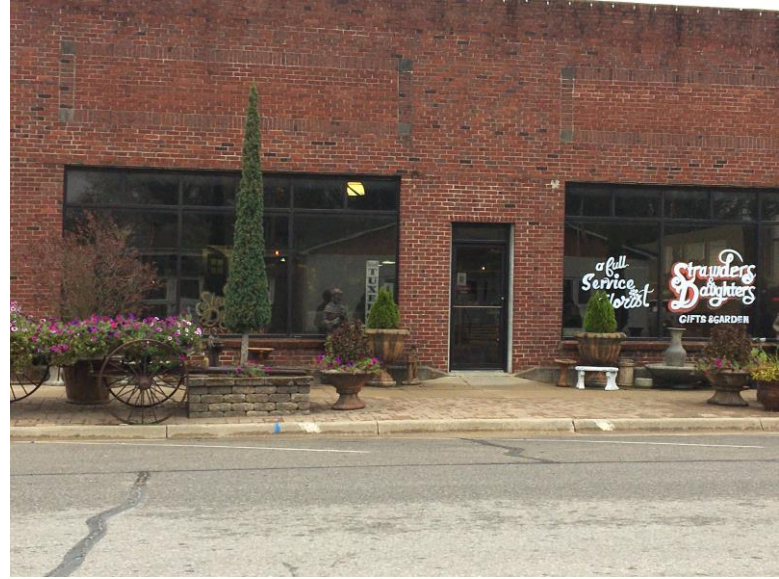
Downtown Business Area

- Walked around downtown, most buildings occupied.
- Many buildings are empty; it isn't clear which businesses are occupied.
- All essential businesses are covered.
- Lots of vehicles downtown.













Public Amenities

- Pandemic implications for these public spaces.
- We observed drinking fountains and public restrooms by train, but closed at the time.



Other Retail Shopping Areas

- Outlying retail shopping was attractive with plenty of parking, new buildings and businesses.
- Only two empty buildings available for expansion; grocery and restaurant.



Industrial Parks/Commercial

- There are two industrial park areas with plenty of space for growth.
- Signage on the businesses may not be correct for what was manufactured there.
- Bowling alley wasn't a bowling alley.



- *A drive-by is not how industry will find you, check with your local Eco Devo director to make sure your site is listed on LocationOne @ Kansas Department of Commerce.*

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.”
- *Global marketing makes your town accessible to purchases all over the world.*

Health Care Services

- A small, but nice town hospital. Easy to find, looked clean and accessible, except for parking.
- Did not find clinics or physician facilities until we asked.
- Dentists and optometrists were readily seen.



- Several eye doctors, pharmacies, chiropractors.
- Nice nursing homes and an assisted living are. Good quality for the seniors.



- A mix of single-wide homes, brand new homes and well-kept older homes.
- Didn't see many for sale.
- Saw a number of "For Sale" signs so there appears to be turnover and opportunity.







- Didn't think to ask at City Hall for a list of landlords.
- An older hotel advertises by the week.
- Saw an apartment complex.



KANSAS

- Total Housing Units 1,286
- Total Occupied Houses 1,076, (83.7%) **(88.8%)**
- Vacant Houses 210 (16.3%) **(11.2%)**
- Owner Occupied 679 (63.1%) **(66.3%)**
- Renter Occupied 397 (36.9%) **(33.7%)**
- Family Households 724 (67.3%) **(65.1%)**
- Non-family Households 352 (32.7%) **(34.9%)**

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/> Family data at DP04

- Burlington has excellent schools; I'm told that power plant funding makes it possible.
- High/Middle school are fairly new and in good condition.



- Grade School is older, but well-maintained.



- I was surprised by the physical size of the elementary school.



- I found school information online.
- School quality looked sufficient from online views.
- *Nice photos of children having fun together and achieving.*

The screenshot displays the Burlington Public Schools website. At the top, a red navigation bar contains links: Home, Schools, Departments, Administration, School Board, Community, and Resources. Below this is a black bar with 'DISTRICT' and 'CAMPUS' icons. The main header features the 'B BURLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS' logo. A secondary red navigation bar includes icons and labels for BES, BMS, BHS, Menus, Jobs, and Calendar. The central banner image shows a group of diverse children running happily on a paved path outdoors. Below the banner, the 'Quick Links' section lists various resources like Accountability Reports, Staff Email, and Family Web Access. To the right, the 'Quick Link Documents' section lists items such as the 20-21 Calendar, Remote Learning Assurance Form, and Health Guidelines. A small photo of school staff is also visible between the two lists.

Home Schools Departments Administration School Board Community Resources

DISTRICT CAMPUS

B BURLINGTON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BES BMS BHS Menus Jobs Calendar

Quick Links

- Accountability Reports
- Staff Email
- Family Web Access
- Student Email
- 244Alert System
- Employment
- Cafeteria Menus
- USD 244 Youtube
- BHS Photo Gallery

Quick Link Documents

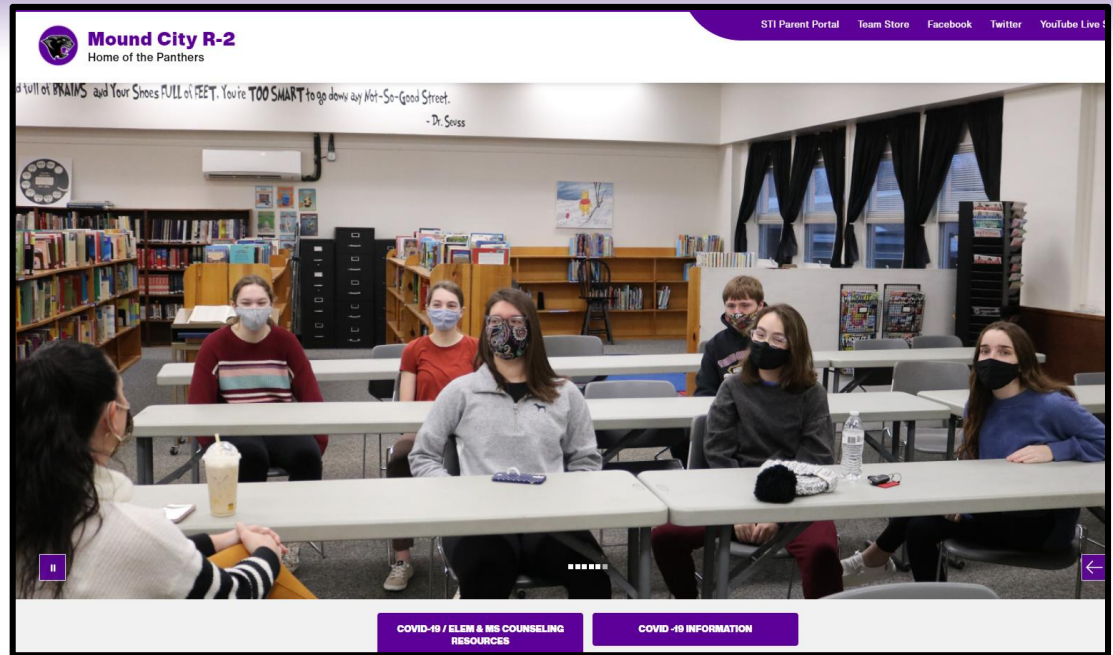
- 20-21 Calendar
- Remote Learning Assurance Form
- Return to School Flow Chart
- Health Guidelines
- 20-21 Learning Options
- Proposed Hybrid Model
- FAQ's for Reopening Advisory Committee
- 20-21 Physical & Consent

- Rec Center is outstanding and stands by the high school providing many opportunities for the school and community. Not sure of the relationship with the school.



Be mindful that “Potential Students” are an audience for your website.

- This is Mound City, **MO**:
- Current photos show emphasis on science-based. (masks & COVID info)
- “Why choose us” info on home page.



ABOUT US

Why Us

Graduation Rate

100%

Technology Ratio

Computer to Student Ratio: 1:1

Teacher Ratio

1:9 Teacher to Student Ratio

Career Ed. Programs

Agriculture Education, Business Education, Family Consumer Sciences and Human Services



- City Hall said there are several in-home child cares and a church with child care.
- One in-home care provider was evident but wasn't visually appealing.

Coffey County Data:

- **Desired Capacity of existing Child Care** **220**
- **Number of Children Under Age 6 potentially needing care:** **365**
- **Extent Desired Capacity meets Potential need** **60%**

Creating a Child Care Action Plan

<https://ks.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Draft-Child-Care-Supply-Demand-Action-Plan.pdf>

Contact ks.childcareaware.org to access local child care specialists.
785-823-3343

Source <https://ks.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/Supply-Demand-2019-FINAL.pdf>

- There are an abundance of Faith/Religion buildings, all seem very well kept.
- Some are very large, but even the smaller churches are well-kept.
- Community services were not evident.







- It was hard to find any Civic or non-profits.
- I saw a sign for Rotary, Holtz [Community] Foundation, Lions Club and Coffey County Support Group.



- City clerk told us Lions Club, Rotary and Floyd Lewis Foundation.
- The Cancer Support Center drew praise from several people we talked with because they are very active and the money they raise stays in the area.



- Surprised to find gravel streets inside the city limits.
- Saw signs for parks and street names.
- Loved the veterans flags on the light poles.





- City Clerk was nice and informative about the town.
- Nice building with County information.

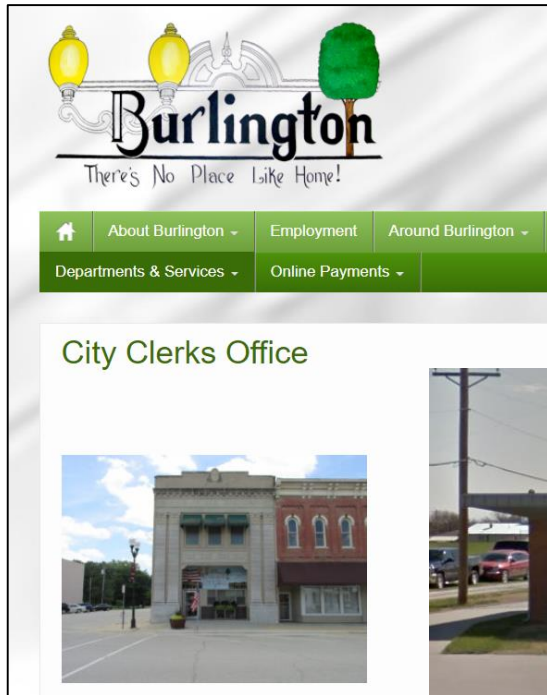


Image captured April 2018, with realtor's sign out front.
Retrieved from Google Earth 3-18-2021

- Water department building looked too elegant for its purpose.
- It doesn't have drive-up bill payment, but does have plenty of parking.
- I would like to see a map or city flyers to pick up.

Fire, EMS and Police Services

- City police station looks like a house.
- County fire department was a little hard to find, with signage obscured by vehicles in front.



- Fire department training and equipment determines ISO rating which has impact on fire insurance rates for homeowners and businesses.*

Welcome to Kansas Insurance Department

Home Contact Us

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt



Kansas Insurance Department
420 SW 9th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1678
Consumer Hotline: 800-432-2484 (KS only)
[Email Us](#) | Phone: 785-296-3071

- > The Department
- > Auto/Home
- > Health/Life
- > Insurance Fraud & Education
- > Producer/Agency Services
- > Company Services
- > Other Services



[HOME](#) : ISO

ISO Public Protection Classification

Most U.S. insurers of home and business properties use Insurance Services Office's (ISO) Property Protection Classification (PPC) in calculating premiums. In general, the price of insurance in a community with a good PPC is lower than in a community with a poor PPC, assuming all other factors are equal.

PPC Program: <https://www.isomitigation.com/program-works/how-the-ppc-program-works.html>

A community's PPC depends on:

1. Emergency communications systems, including facilities for the public to report fires, staffing, training, certification of telecommunicators, and facilities for dispatching fire departments
2. The fire department, including equipment, staffing, training, and geographic deployment of fire companies
3. The water supply system, including the inspection and flow testing of hydrants and a careful evaluation of

- Excellent library- has a useful patron library and a Carnegie library that is used as a museum/Arts building.



- Lots of parks and little nook areas in town to sit and observe.
- Excellent playgrounds/ballparks.



- Kelley and Katy Park were both nice.
- Aquatic Center was very nice.



- County fair and grandstand at Kelley park was excellent.
- Heard of a walking track, but didn't see it.
- Drove by the golf course, which seemed active with a number of golfers out (in November).



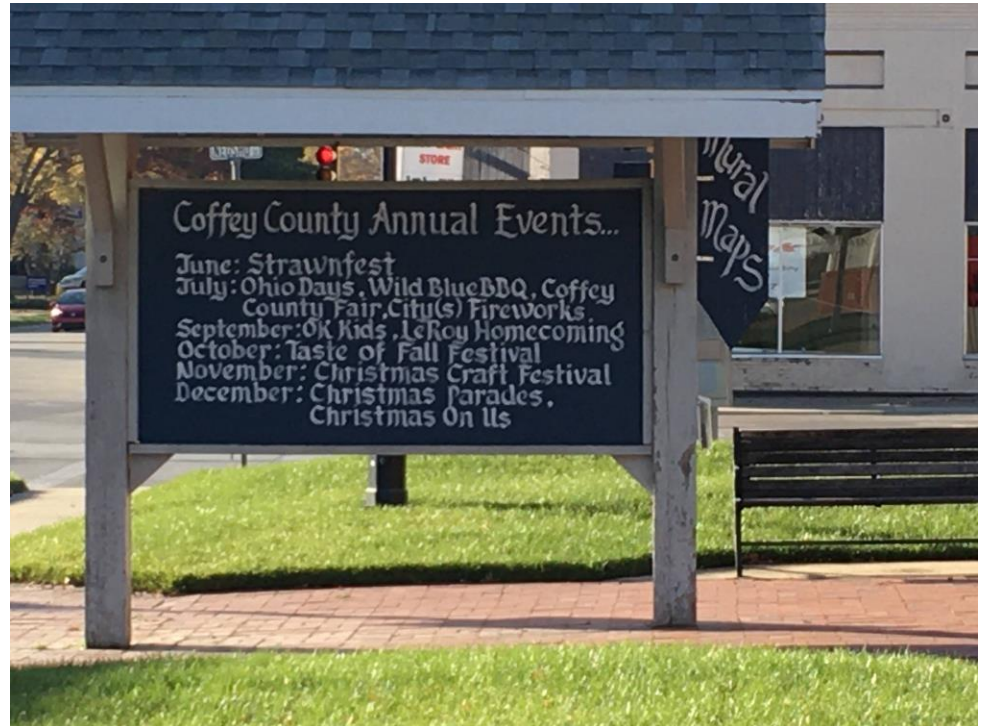
Well-Known for an attraction or event?

- Webpage says “No Place like Home” but did not see it throughout town.
- Sign says, “Catfish Capital of the World” with no other mention of it in town.



Well-Known for an attraction or event?

- I was told there is a huge crafts fair every year that brings thousands to town; canceled in 2020.
- Events are posted on signage at the caboose, but many canceled this year.



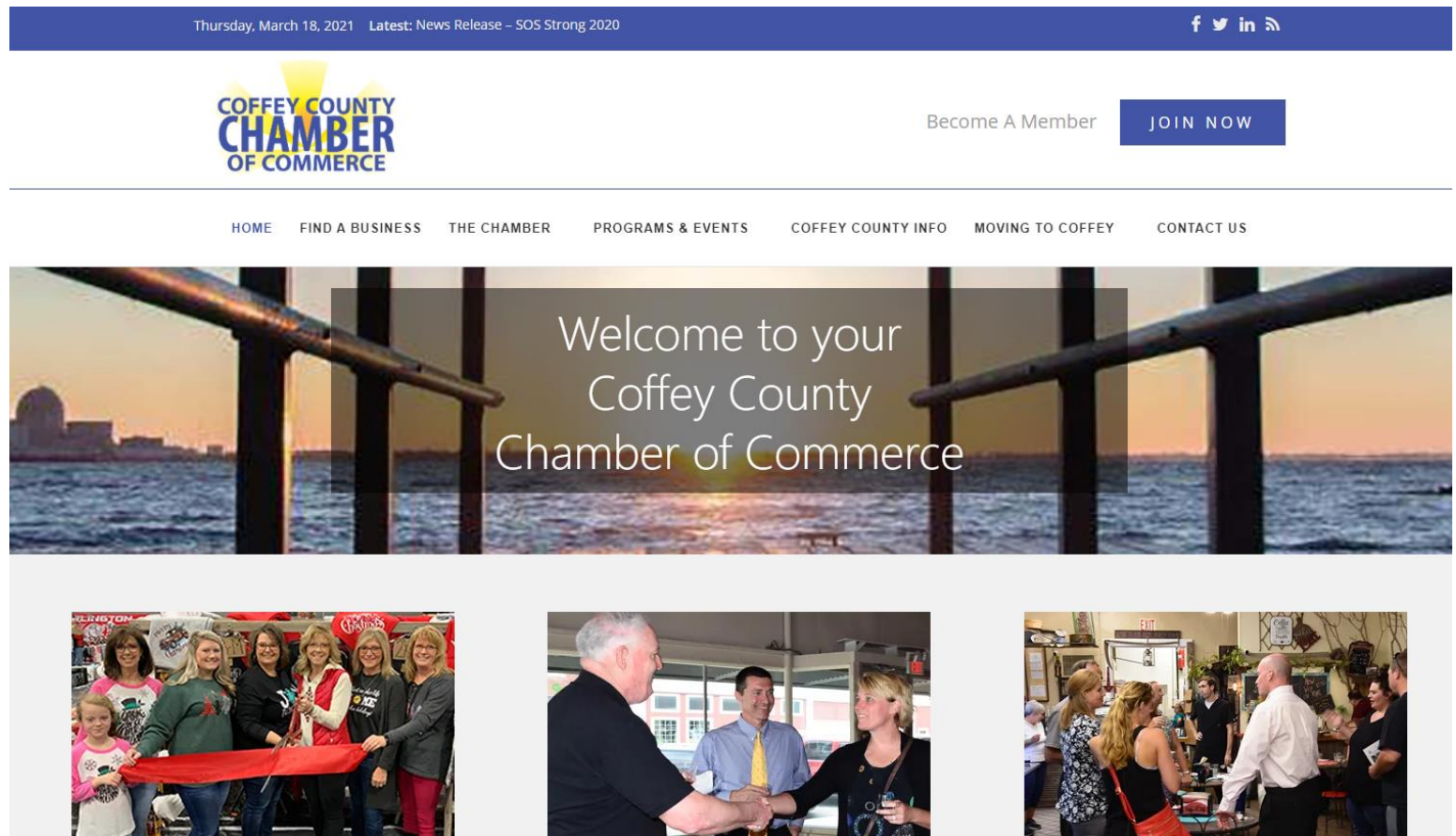
Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- Murals, caboose on the corner. A map of the 100+ murals by Burlington native artist.
- Didn't get to see John Redmond Reservoir or the lake on the east side of town, but I'm sure this draws many people.



Visitor's Center

- Chamber office fills this role. The Chamber Director is leaving the position.



What would bring you back?

- Didn't observe very many restaurants.
- The Rec Center would bring me to town.
- Vintage Sisters, a unique and delicious establishment.



Most Positive Observations

- #1 The Rec Center
#2 The school system.
#3 The arts- murals, parks, museum,
- People were congenial, but reserved. Didn't speak until spoken to.
- The Rec Center. The director seemed a key ingredient to its success. She mentioned several short day trips she conducts to area places of interest for seniors.

Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Perception of living next to a working power plant. Are there associated health issues?
- Empty buildings; keeping a vibrant downtown.
- Unpaved streets.



What will you remember?

- The Rec Center and all the Murals the town has to offer.
- I love the iron signs at the entrance of town. They are unique and will stand out in my mind. Also, the murals. They are a great touch.
- The one thing I'll probably remember about Burlington is the school facilities and the Rec Center.

- Tell “why you love your schools.”
- Gather informal groups to talk about what they saw in this presentation and what they’d like to do.
- Check out the [First Friday e-Call: Filling Empty Buildings](#).
- Existing businesses: Check out “[Marketing Your Small Town.](#)”
- Fellow Baby Boomers:
Wouldn’t you love to live in a loft downtown?

**NO ONE CAN DO EVERYTHING,
BUT EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING.**

Thank you to our volunteer visitors.

Set Next Steps:

- Start talking! Find ways to discuss what you heard in small groups of every kind.

Contact me if you need resources or have questions:

Nancy Daniels

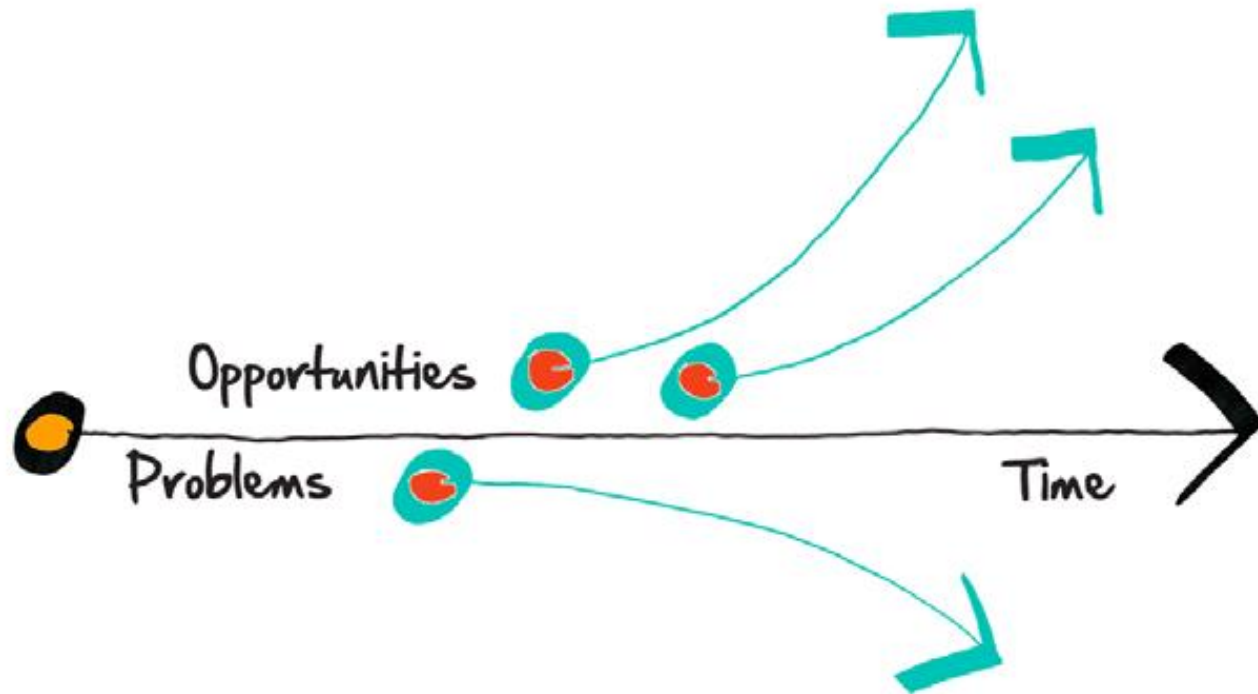
Community Vitality Specialist, K-State Research and Extension

785.410.6352

nkdaniels@ksu.edu

Asset Based Community Development

People move in the direction of their conversations



Climate Change Refugees



There isn't a community in America, particularly in coastal America, where we are not seeing a transition from the coast to higher ground.

- Jesse Keenan, PhD, Tulane University

CBS Sunday Morning, January 24, 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SByFy9R6320>

Retrieved from the Internet, 2-8-2021



K-State Research and Extension

PRIDE: <http://kansasprideprogram.k-state.edu/>

- Local communities identify what they would like to preserve, create, or improve for their future and volunteers pull together to create their ideal community future.



Youth Community Perceptions

- Youth-Based Community Assessment.
- Gives communities insights on how youth see their community.
- Creates opportunities for youth voices in the community.
- Allows youth to become involved in local government and community process



K-STATE
Research and Extension

Community
Vitality

K-STATE
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Contact

Nancy Daniels

nkdaniels@ksu.edu

to participate.

Grant Writing Workshops

Grants are a vital piece in your community's funding puzzle...and *you* can do it.

K-State Research and Extension's Community Vitality Team offers grant writing workshops for local communities.

Objectives

- Conquer your grant writing fears and start writing.
- Learn new sources of data to document community needs.
- Learn new sources of grant funding.
- Practice developing the Grant Elements: Problem, Outcomes, Activities, Evaluation, and Budget.

Short Term Outcomes

- 93% have increased confidence to write a successful grant.
- 94% learned new sources of data to document community needs.
- 80% learned new sources for finding grants.
- 91% have increased confidence to develop the elements of a successful grant.



K-State Research and Extension


- **First Friday e-Calls 9:30-10:30 am (CT)**
 - Connecting small businesses and communities with the resources to make them successful.
 - Contact Nancy Daniels nkdaniels@ksu.edu or [Register here](#)
 - Community Vitality Calendar of events:
<http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/>
 - Previous calls are recorded at
<http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>

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

SURVEY	BOOK BECKY TO SPEAK	THE BOOK: SMALL TOWN RULES	SHOP LOCAL VIDEO	SAVEYOUR.TOWN
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SMALL BIZ SURVIVAL

THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE



FRONT PAGE	LATEST STORIES	ABOUT	GUIDED TOUR	SUBSCRIBE	PRIVACY POLICY	CONTACT
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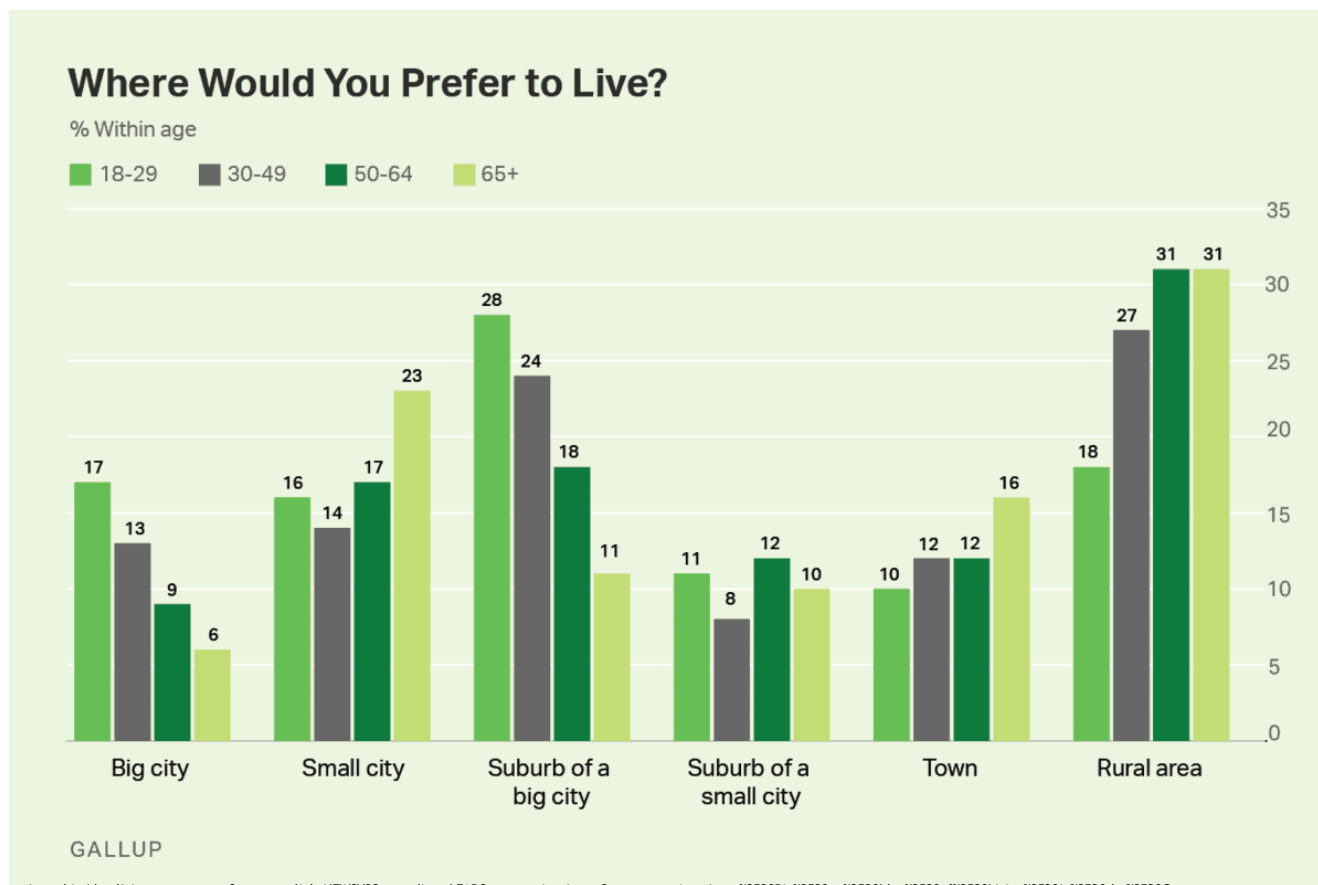
RSS

Zoom Towns: attracting and supporting remote workers in rural small towns

BY BECKY MCCRAY — 1 COMMENT

People have been saying for years that they would prefer to live in rural areas.

- Americans under age 30 are the only group whose top desired place to live is *not* rural; rural was #2, even for them.



- Now people have a choice, and millions of them are planning to move.
- **“The pivot to remote work is the biggest, fastest transformation of the labor market since the World War II mobilization.”**
- **Major cities will see the biggest out-migration:** 20.6% of those planning to move are currently based in a major city.
- **People are seeking less expensive housing:** Altogether, **more than half** (52.5%) are planning to move to a house that is significantly more affordable than their current home.
- **People are moving beyond regular commute distances:** 54.7% of people are moving over two hours away or more from their current location, which is beyond daily or even weekly commuting distances for most.

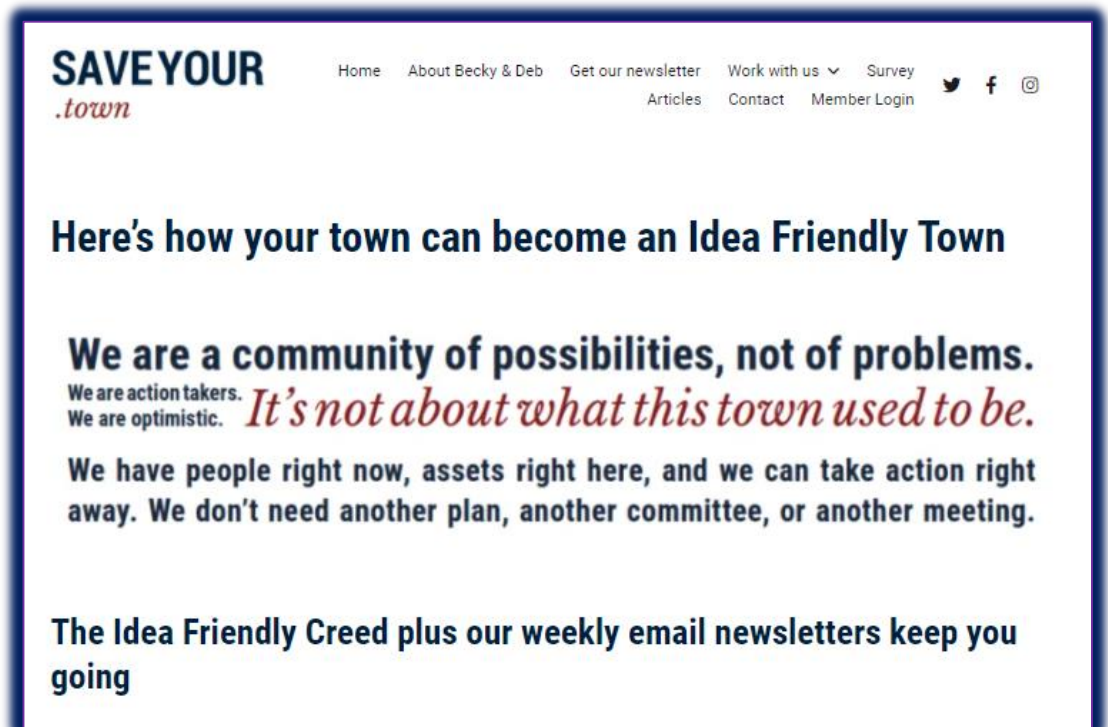
UpWork October, 2020 <https://www.upwork.com/press/releases/economist-report-remote-workers-on-the-move>, retrieved from Internet 12-12-20, UpWork October, 2020

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.

10 Tools:

<https://saveyour.town/workwithus/>



The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'Save Your Town' website. The header features the logo 'SAVE YOUR .town' in blue and red, followed by navigation links: 'Home', 'About Becky & Deb', 'Get our newsletter', 'Work with us' (with a dropdown arrow), 'Survey', 'Articles', 'Contact', and 'Member Login'. Social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are also present. The main content area has a heading 'Here's how your town can become an Idea Friendly Town'. Below this, it states 'We are a community of possibilities, not of problems.' and lists attributes: 'We are action takers.', 'We are optimistic.', and 'It's not about what this town used to be.' (in red italics). Further down, it says 'We have people right now, assets right here, and we can take action right away. We don't need another plan, another committee, or another meeting.' The footer of the page mentions 'The Idea Friendly Creed plus our weekly email newsletters keep you going'.

SAVE YOUR
.town

Home About Becky & Deb Get our newsletter Work with us Survey
Articles Contact Member Login

Here's how your town can become an Idea Friendly Town

We are a community of possibilities, not of problems.
We are action takers.
We are optimistic. *It's not about what this town used to be.*

We have people right now, assets right here, and we can take action right away. We don't need another plan, another committee, or another meeting.

The Idea Friendly Creed plus our weekly email newsletters keep you going

Collaboration between Businesses:



On Wednesday morning, Sam Capoun, owner of Mesa Collection, 216 Main St. in Maple Hill, shows off one of her bags she sells. Capoun has coordinated with other local businesses to adjust hours to align and help drive more customers into the small Kansas town. *Evert Nelson/The Capital-Journal*



Mike Babb clears the final bits of snow in front of his restaurant, Flint Hills Smokehouse, on Wednesday morning. coordinated his hours to align with those of Mesa Collection's so that visitors to Maple Hill can eat at the restaurant go shop, or vice versa. *Evert Nelson/The Capital-Journal*

Maple Hill, population 600. Two businesses struggling during the pandemic coordinated their social media and their hours for the benefit of both.

“It’s so much better to love thy neighbor, this is a unique and limited market.”

Kansas Department of Agriculture in partnership with other state organizations, will work with your community to find the best opportunities for growth using the assets of your region.

GROW IN KANSAS



STRATEGIC GROWTH INITIATIVE
A pilot program for the proactive recruitment of food, agriculture and UAS/small aircraft business to Kansas.

For more information on the Strategic Growth Initiative, please contact
Russell Plaschka, Ag Business Development Program Manager
785-564-7466 • Russell.Plaschka@ks.gov
agriculture.ks.gov/GrowAg

Rural Grocery Initiative

- **Goal:** Increase access to healthy food and to improve the health and economic development of Kansans and their communities.
- Technical assistance and financing to develop new or renovate fresh food retail in underserved communities throughout Kansas.

<http://kansashealthyfood.org/>

khfi@ksu.edu

Keeping Groceries Alive: [Webinar series for Grocery Transition](#)





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