

First Impressions

Girard, KS

K-State Research and Extension



- Girard asked for First Impressions, Burlington agreed to be its partner; 1 hour, 36 min drive.
- A pandemic happened....
- I trained the volunteers about the visit and survey on October 21 and took photos.
- Four visitors came in 3 cars in October & November.
- Results presented by video recording.
- Girard 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/>

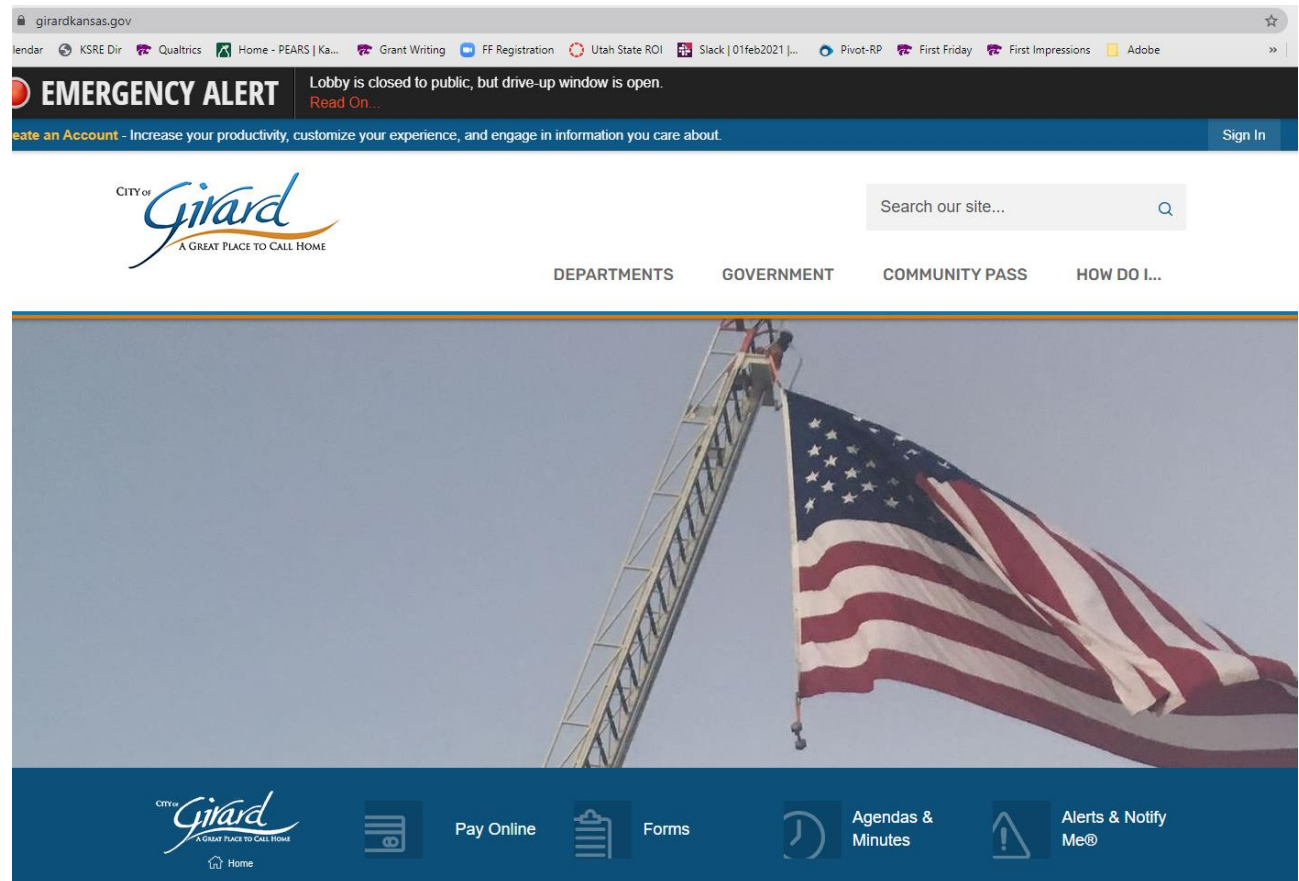
- 2018 Estimate 2,721 2010 Census: 2,789
(down 2.4% since 2010 **KS= +2.1%**)
- Median household income is \$39,063 (**\$62,087**)
- 90.5% high school or GED, 22.1% college educated,
91.8% HS or equivalency, KS 34.0% college education,
- Median Age 34.4 years (**37.2**)
- Poverty rate 17.9% (**KS=11.4%**)

Website <https://www.girardkansas.gov/>

- Girard's website had good information: emergency services, schools, community organizations and city offices.
- There is a link to the Chamber of Commerce. The information on the Chamber page was last updated in 2018. Girard has really cool businesses in their town, and the Chamber page is a good place to let outsiders know about them.
- Very accessible information.
- Liked the link to the school and hospital, however the style of the site could be more polished: font and size changed several times on the same page.
- Amazed at the beauty of the court house and would like more emphasis on its history.

Website <https://www.girardkansas.gov/>

- *On Google Chrome, their official website was the first on the page. The photo takes longer than 30 seconds to load.*

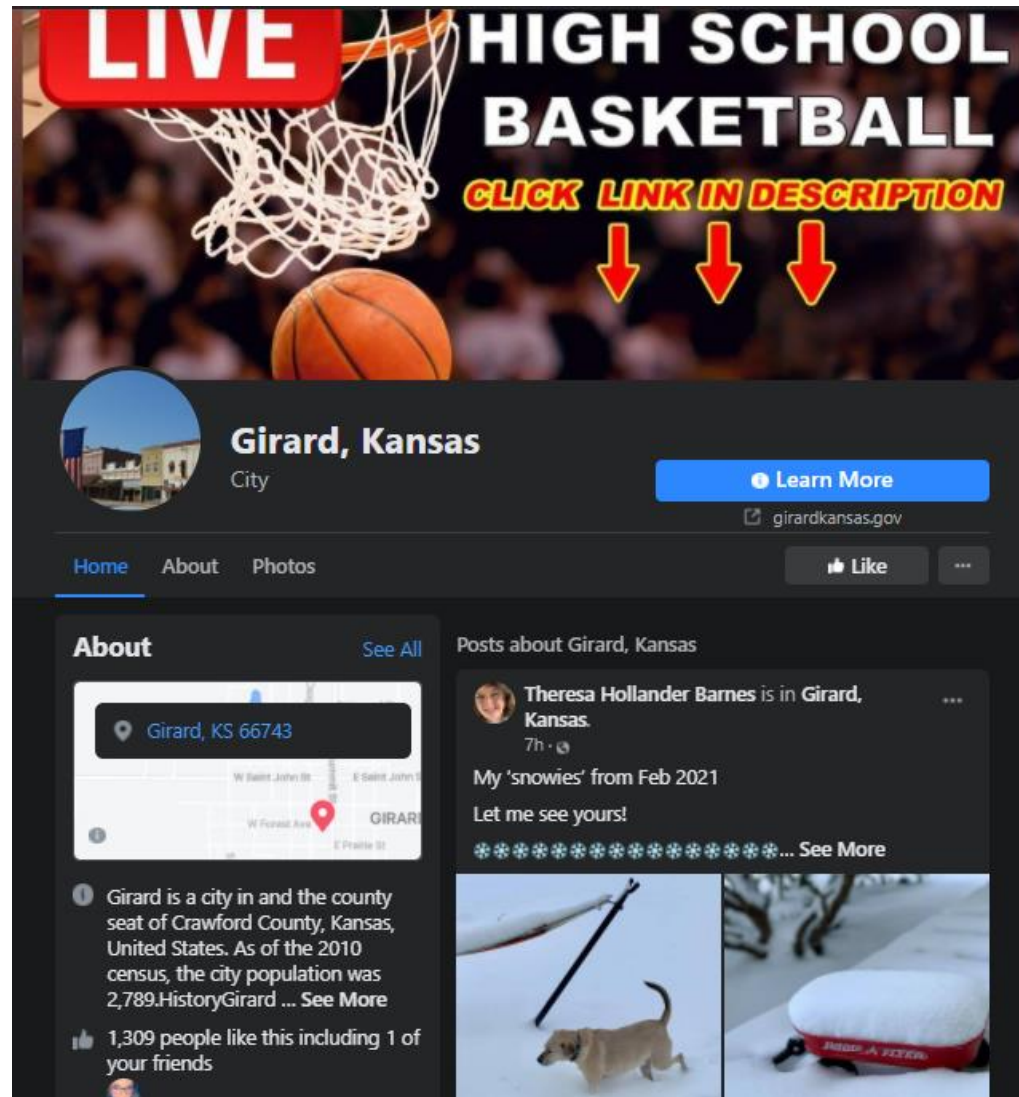


Facebook Girard, Kansas

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Girard-Kansas/104005272970706>

The Facebook page and Crawford County Events page does a good job of informing about community events.

Shown in dark mode for greater contrast.

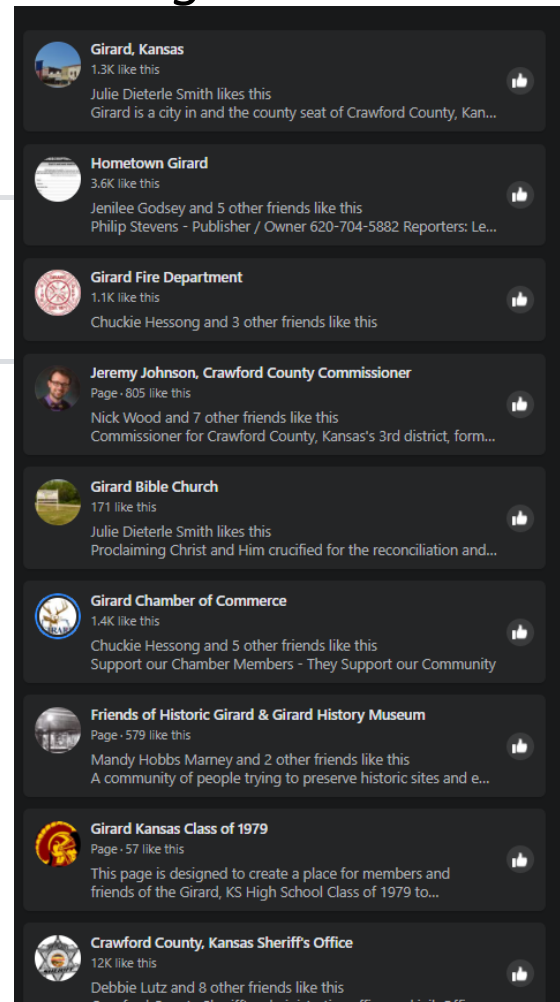


- **FaceBook**

- *More than 40 pages related to Girard, KS.*
- *An opportunity for co-marketing.*



Shown in dark mode for greater contrast.



“Five-Minute” Impression

- Clean and well organized and we could identify businesses that would be helpful if we moved here:
 - Activity center, gas stations, hospital and school.
- Entrances on all 4 highway entrances were clean and inviting. A few eyesores, but overall a positive impression.
- Like the signs pointing out parks, sports complex and public library.
- Welcome signs are nicely designed, but a little small.
- Street signs were easy to read.

“Five-Minute” Impression





Downtown Business Area

- Downtown was very appealing. Loved the square and courthouse. Beautiful labeled trees on grounds.
- Most buildings have active businesses and good curb appeal. A few on the west could use some dressing up.



Downtown Business Area

- We observed a couple of parts stores, The Painted Barrels, Pearls & Curls Boutique, the C4 Coffeehouse & Country Store.
- There was a good variety of gift items and clothing offered by these stores. The customer service at the places we visited were excellent.



Downtown Business Area

- The wide variety of businesses in this area would make it easier for a new person to town to find all of the good/services they needed in one place.



Downtown Business Area

- Each place had friendly staff who were proud to show us what they had. Products appear to be of high quality. They also recommended other shops, which really impressed me.





Downtown Business Area

- Vacant building sites would benefit from an ad hoc group to take them on for a creative solution.



Downtown Business Area

- We spent the majority of the time in your downtown business area. I thoroughly enjoyed the little jewelry store/clock repair store, Flea Market and Gifts, Outta Line Designs, Eastside Café, C/4 Coffee, insurance company and the boutiques.
- They all were very friendly and eager to talk about their community.



Downtown Business Area

- The hometown pride was evident, with the amount of school spirit clothing that was offered. We received exceptional service and greetings in all the locations we visited. The businesses were busy, and the clerks still acknowledged our presence.
- Hometown pride was displayed and apparent to visitors.





Downtown Business Area



Downtown Business Area



Downtown Amenities

- I loved the corner landscape, very tasteful and the Girard benches were a very nice touch. We did not see any restrooms just for the public.
- We were told Wi-Fi was available throughout the community but did not verify it.
- The landscaping and streetscaping in the town square were top notch.
- This community should be proud to have such a unique area for a town of their size.





Other Retail Shopping Areas

- The other retail areas included the Dollar General, G&W and ACE. These areas were right on the main road so they were easy to find and access. These stores didn't have the trendy updated outsides like some of the downtown stores, but they appeared well kept.
- A lot of other retail shopping was available on the main road coming into Girard and was easy to access.
- We were able to find stores for almost any need we would have, and would be easy to find for anyone visiting or new to the community.
- The gas stations were accessible and we received good service.

Other Retail Shopping Areas



Industrial Parks/Commercial

- There is definitely room to expand Commercial area on the west side of town and the south side of town.
- The industrial park looked like it was full. There are numerous manufacturing and printing facilities scattered around downtown.
- I struggled to find an industrial area. Some of the buildings on the south side appeared to have at one point been involved in some type of manufacturing, but most looked like they had been repurposed to something else or abandoned.
- We looked around where the industrial park should be, but it didn't appear that the property was being utilized much for industry.



- *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.*

- Hospital, clinic, and emergency services were present, and active. Looked to be recently updated and growing with the community. Pharmacy located on 47 with drive-up and plenty of parking.
- I reviewed the hospital's website and it appears they offer a wide range of services, which surprised me for a small town hospital.



Physicians, dentists, optometrists, public health, other:

- Girard offers all of these services in their community. Residents have all the health services they need without leaving the community. They seem to also have a lot of specialty physicians that also come to the community.
- Hospital, medical clinic, eye doctor, dentists all in great facilities and easily accessed. Pharmacy located on Highway 47 looked new and provided drive up.



Long Term Care Services

- The West Ridge Assisted living facility looked very nice and up to date. The other nursing home also appeared in good shape, just not as new. The assisted living's proximity to the hospital was also a bonus.
- Girard had Medicalodges Girard for long-term health services and also have home health service, which is important in all communities.



- It did not appear that there was an overabundance of housing on the market. On Zillow there are not a lot of listings and it looks like they are lacking housing in the mid-price range.
- We noticed a new housing development on the east side of town. This housing appears to provide mid-price housing options. Good for Girard for recognizing the need for affordable housing and developing this area.
- The market looks slim especially since real estate mortgages are so reasonable and it is a buyer's market. I like the 10-year tax abatement of all taxing entities if you buy and remodel an existing property. Probably the most aggressive program I've seen to persuade the owners to invest and improve.









- Rental properties in the area were difficult to find. In an internet search, I could only find one apartment building and no single family homes listed. While I am sure there are more rentals than this, I think it would be useful to have some kind of rental directory online or if more places used listing sites such as Zillow.
- The only rental property I found was an apartment house that was in an older residential area.





KANSAS

- Total Housing Units 1,244
- Total Occupied Houses 1,010 (81.2%) (88.8%)
- Vacant Houses 234 (18.8%) (11.2%)
- Owner Occupied 623 (61.7%) (66.3%)
- Renter Occupied 387(38.3%) (33.7%)
- Family Households 694 (68.7%) (65.1%)
- Non-family Households 316 (31.3%) (34.9%)

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

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

- Girard offers preschool, K-8 and High School. They are in close proximity to Pittsburgh State for Post-Secondary education.
- Income adjust Head Start and preschool, both private and public are available.
- School population is declining so current facilities more than fit attendance.
- High School testing results are declining, which is concerning.
- Parking at the gym appears to be a challenge because of parking lot proximity.
- The community pride really shined in the upkeep of the buildings and signs of support everywhere.



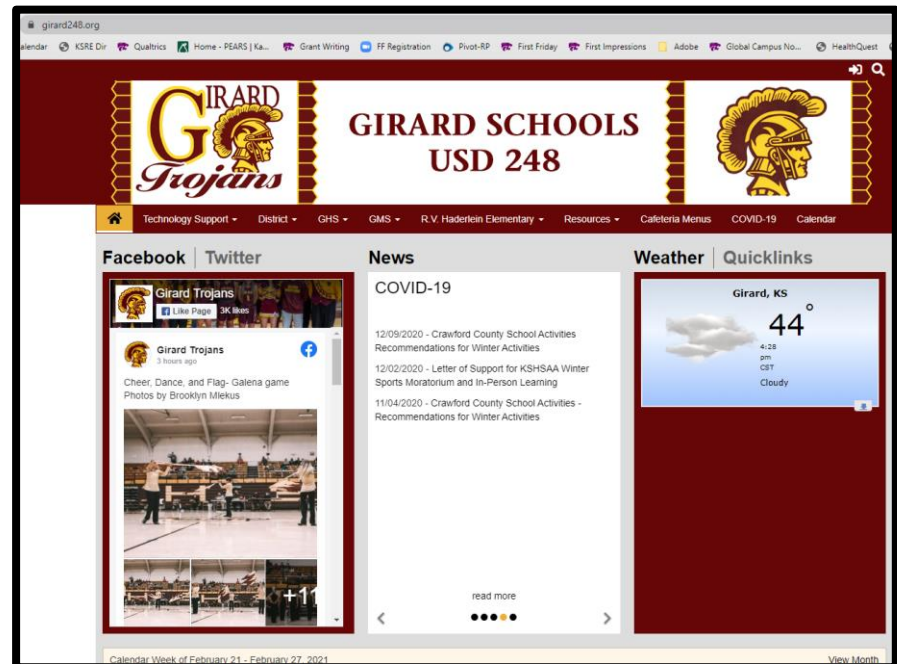






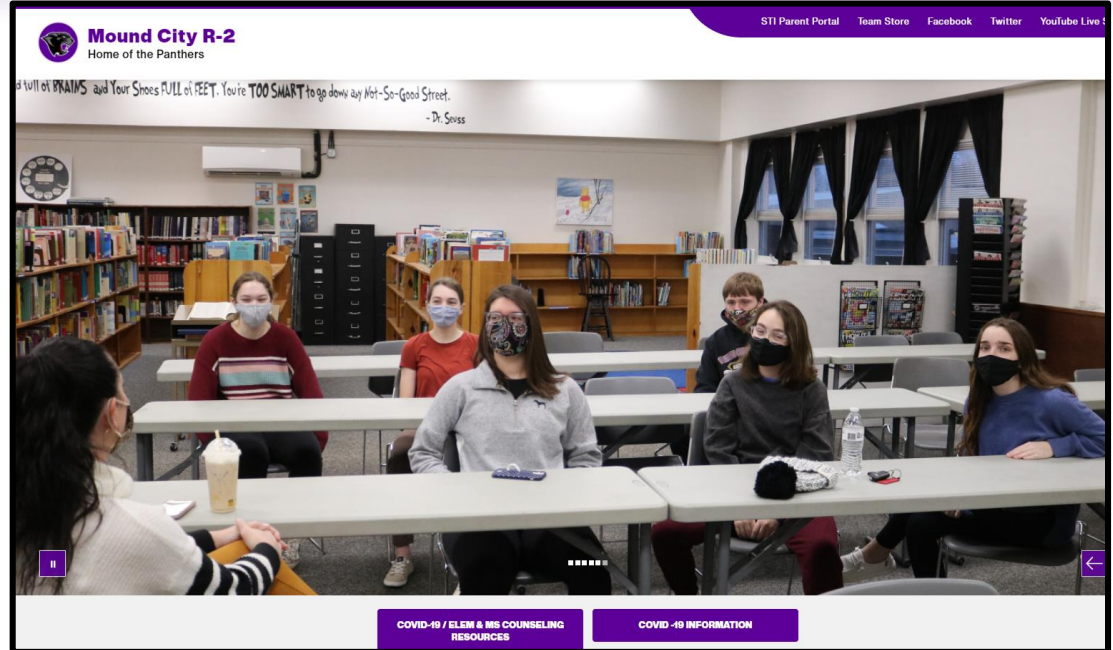
- The school's website does a good job of displaying the quality of their education. They have several resources on the site that shows their emphasis on education. The Girard site also has a link to the school's website.
- The school system testing shows a proficiency in math is 15-19% which is lower than state average of 33%. Reading/language arts is 20-24% lower than Kansas average of 37%. Girard High placed in the bottom 50% of all schools in Kansas for overall test scores. Teachers in class above state average.
- Numerous charts and graphs are available to the public showing the quality of the schools.

- *The website has lots of good information, evidence of transparency.*
- *Tell us why you love your schools.*
- *Photos help us picture our children being happy here.*



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



- The school and a few other businesses provided pre-school education, but it was difficult to find information online or from exploring the town regarding daycare.
- Could not validate information on childcare other than asking whether it's a problem, with the response being no. No daycare is provided by the school, other than for those children with special needs.

Crawford County Data:

- **Desired Capacity of existing Child Care** **1,229**
- **Number of Children Under Age 6 potentially needing care:** **1,879**
- **Extent Desired Capacity meets Potential need** **65%**
- **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 were many churches and many had great signs making it easy to find them. There was a food pantry on the corner of the square, which I thought showed the community cared for their less fortunate members.
- The majority of the churches appeared to be very becoming and welcoming. It was nice to hear of the ministerial alliance being organized and available for families in need.





- From the City's website, there appeared to be many clubs/organizations to promote the community including a Celebrate Girard Group and a Girard Area Community Foundation.
- Numerous signs were posted throughout the town indicating special events which were organized by the clubs. Lions Club and Masons had organized activities to be held in the near future. Individuals were being served free lunch on a first come first serve basis that was arranged by the city and volunteer groups.



- The streets and sidewalks were in good condition throughout the whole town. My favorite aspect of the infrastructure was the street signs.
- Overall sidewalks seem to be designed to connect schools on major streets, limited sidewalks in residential areas. Streets that I observed were above average. Did not see a public restroom.



- The city is not totally running LED lighting.
- The street signs were nice, but the street department might need to take a look at Magnolia and Summit as the gutter covering needs some attention.
- A few street signs in the residential section need some help.
- At the city electric department spools of wire were left in front of the build inviting crime and are unsightly. A better placement would be inside locked fencing.



- City Hall was closed due to Covid, but employee came to door, gave me cards of administrator and city clerk, referred me to Chamber of Commerce office. Jessica Ripper, Executive Director, took time out of her busy schedule, to provide dialogue on town, provide maps, information, and welcome packet to explore Girard.



- The Chamber of Commerce has an extremely nice and knowledgeable director that truly cares for the community. The Mayor also has the city of Girard in his best interest. The two offices appear to work together as a team for the betterment of the community. The brochures, literature and Welcome Guide were very useful and very professional. I hope these were printed at a local printing shop, but if so, it was not made known.

Fire, EMS and Police Services

- City provided Police and Fire Protection looked to be up to date equipment.
- The police department's buildings when you come into town from the west were impressive. They were new and well kept.



Welcome to Kansas Insurance Department

Home Contact Us Search GO

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

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

Navigation:

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



Fire, EMS and Police Services



- We were unable to visit the library even though it was the middle of the afternoon on a Friday. The doors were locked so we could only view the historic building and newer addition, which were complimentary to each other. We enjoyed the rock garden and cute sidewalk.



I was a little disappointed I could not view the “Little Blue Books” or the “Appeal to Reason” which is vital to the history of this community.



- The parks and playgrounds were not on the main streets, so signs pointing to where they are may be helpful.
- I was disappointed in parks available for children. Only viewed one small city park, a basketball/skateboard park, several memorial parks, and limited walking trails.
- The school has a magnificent indoor sports complex and work is in progress to put artificial turf on the baseball field. Young children are limited on what's available from my perspective.







KDHE Grants for playgrounds, tables:
[Kansas Tire Waste](#)

Well-Known for an attraction or event? Slogan?

- None that we were aware of at the time of the visit.
- The Chamber letterhead has a picture of a deer depicting how they were founded by Dr. Charles Strong. A Girard coffee table book proclaims Girard, A Great Place to Call Home.
- I didn't notice any slogan around town, but everyone was appeared to be very supportive of the sports teams.



Well-Known for an attraction or event? Slogan?

- The deer head represents the history of the town. I find it very unfortunate that the utility companies located their electrical transformer and gas valves in the same location as the deer statue.



Events that may draw visitors and residents?

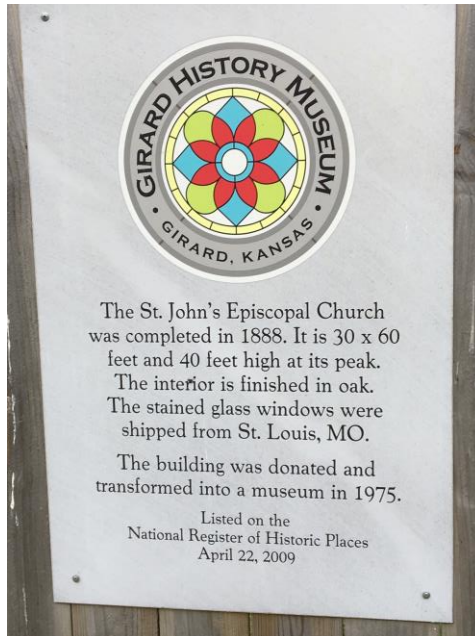
- They had a Trunk or Treat in October and will be having a Christmas festival in December.
- Ladies night out – 300 last year
- Golf tournament – fundraiser for Chamber
- Fall Festival – Homecoming – BBQ Cook-off, beer garden, and parade
- Easter celebration activities
- First Friday Events
- 4th of July celebration
- Christmas Festival of Trees, 5th of December with pancake feed and Santa bingo

Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- The public has a couple downtown murals, the Girard Museum in the old stone church is a simple but very informative center for Girard history. Greenbush west of town should be a draw for Girard. The Madison House seems to be only overnight stay, but inviting. Only camping areas observed were at fairgrounds.

Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- Some of the top things to do on Trip Advisor is to visit St. Aloysius Church Historic Site, The Vietnam War Memorial and the Girard History Museum. One place I would like to go back and visit is the Courthouse. It had unique character.



Visitor's Center

- The Girard Chamber of Commerce is located near the square and has a great Executive Director in Jessica Ripper, young and excited to promote Girard. Great handouts and web information, lots of activities and promotion here.



What would bring you back?

- There was some variety to choose from, but we chose to eat at Eastside Diner. The food and service were excellent. People in the restaurant were friendly, even though they didn't know who we were. Definitely would do it again.
- The two shops that would definitely bring me back to the community were the Painted Barrels and the Pearls and Boutique. They were very fun and the ladies at each store were very welcoming and excited to share about their community. They also did a great job of promoting other businesses.

What would bring you back?

- I didn't get to experience Chicken Annie's, but would come back to eat there. The Painted Barrel is definitely a come-back retail spot. I would come back to see the Carnegie so glad they saved it and added on.
- I loved the Painted Barrel and Pearls and Curls store. If I was in the area, I would definitely stop in. They carried a wide variety of merchandise and prices were reasonable.
- Your community has a certain charm that would make an enjoyable day trip. The unique jewelry store that works on grandfather clocks is what I will be coming back to. I feel the jeweler's talent of working on these clocks could be publicized to bring others to your area for this lost service.

Most Positive Observations

- This town was a very nice clean town. Businesses and services were all very easily accessible. I also like how the town has kept businesses in the downtown area. It was very enjoyable to visit. The people were super friendly and helpful. I would be very proud to be a part of this community and a community I would consider living in.
- Great community support for schools from business community. (Turf paid for by businesses in school facilities.) The Courthouse Square landscaping and streetscape around is an inviting area. Small shops springing up on square are an asset to draw to downtown. The community is clean, friendly, and with good leadership from city, businesses, and residents will be successful into the future.

Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- I really liked the trendy shops located in the downtown area. Having all these businesses compacted in the town square made everything easy to find and get to. I thought it was very neat how everyone appeared to have pride in the high school. The hospital appeared to be top notch.
- The town square is such a pleasant place and should be appreciated. The shopping available is very unique to a town of this size. The Courthouse is such an asset that I don't feel the community appreciates for its true beauty and its history. We truly enjoyed the time we spent getting to know Girard.

What will you remember?

- I will remember how welcoming people were to us and how much we enjoyed the downtown. They had a fun variety of little shops and some good eating options. Our visit gave us a wonderful impression of Girard, and we will look forward to visiting again someday!!
- I want to return in six months to see improvement on the building south of Painted Barrels. It's amazing all taxing units went along with a 10-year tax abatement to remodel or build new structures, great program bound to improve the quality of housing inventory. You have some great retailers just have to support locals first to survive. Thanks for the opportunity to visit and observe.

What will you remember?

- I will remember how well kept and friendly the storekeepers were in the businesses we visited. Everyone was so excited to talk about their products and help us find what we needed. They were also so supportive of one another with each recommending we visited the others.
- The community pride that was presented to us. The historical courthouse that was worth the trip on its own. The biggest disappointment was the utilities at the corner of the square that showcased the deer monument. I still can't believe the city allowed this location to be used for utilities.

- Look around your community, what are you inspired to take on?
- Update Chamber Webpages
- School websites are strong on information, but **tell your story** in words and photos.
- “Coffee and Calendars” gatherings to cross-promote businesses and events.
- Idea-friendly gatherings to utilize empty lots.
- Baby Boomer lofts in 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

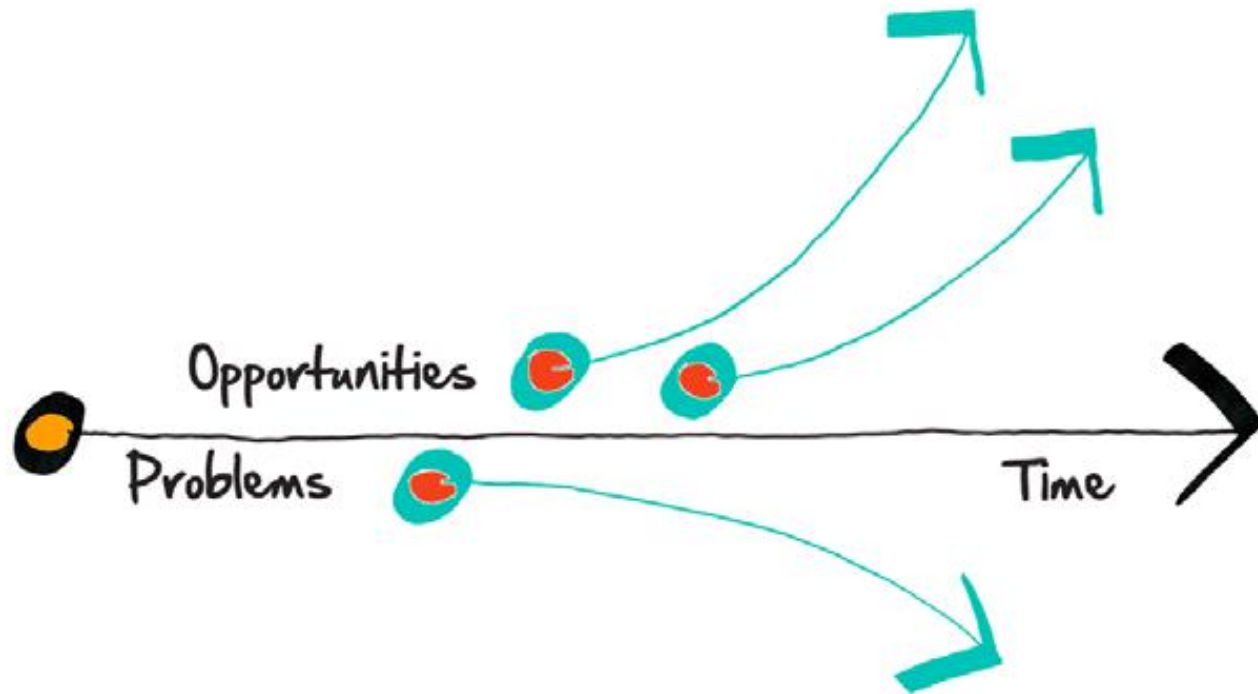
Community Vitality Specialist, K-State Research and Extension

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.



K-State Research and Extension

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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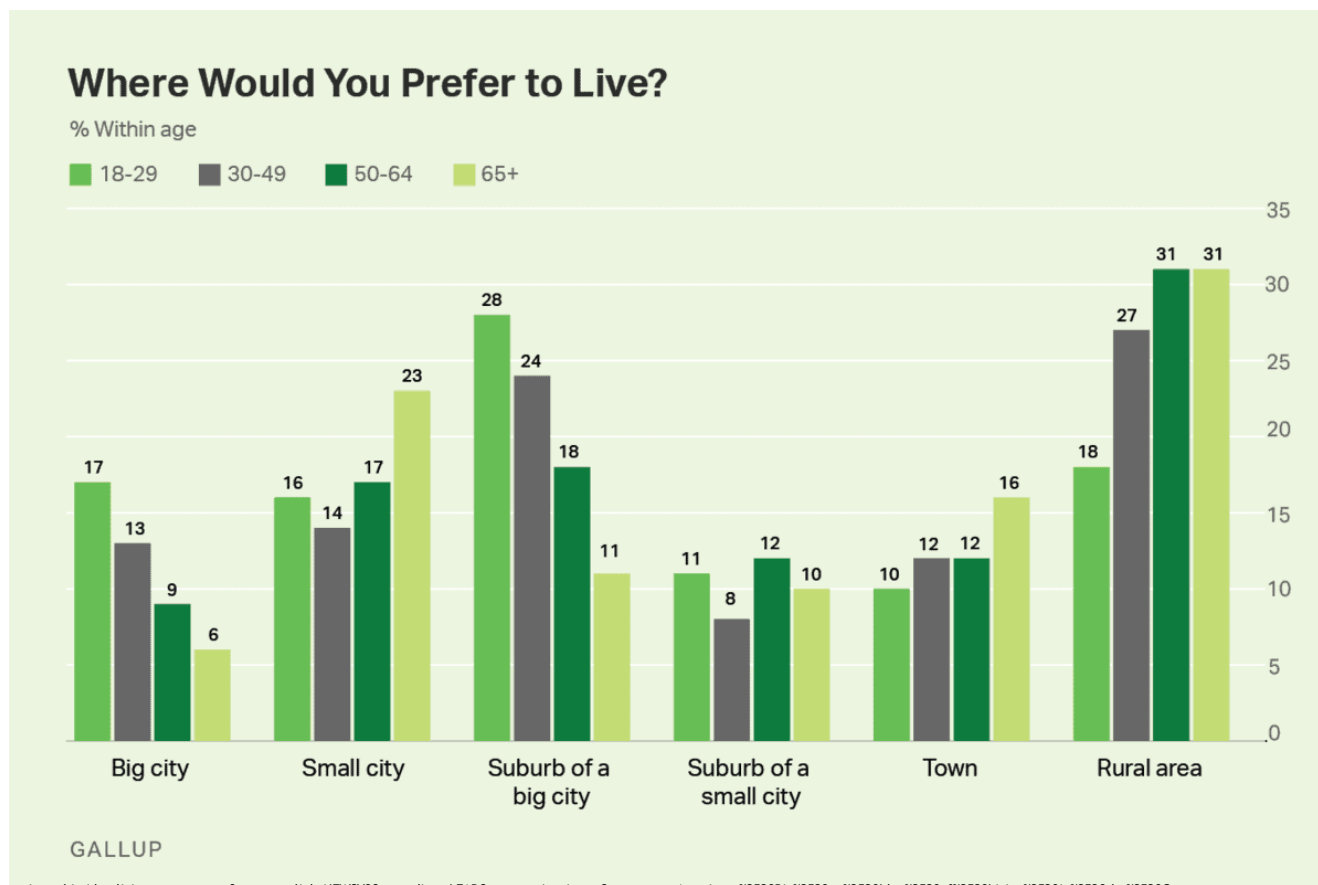
RSS

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.

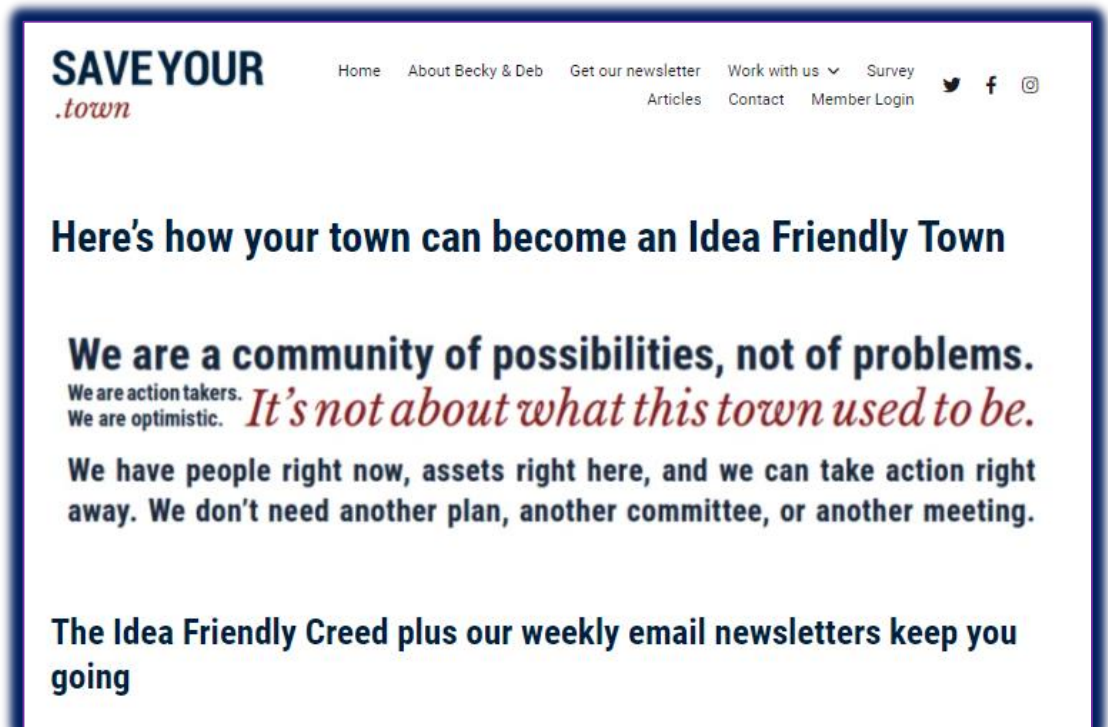
UpWork October, 2020 <https://www.upwork.com/press/releases/economist-report-remote-workers-on-the-move>, retrieved from Internet 12-12-20, UpWork October, 2020

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 includes the logo 'SAVE YOUR .town' and a navigation menu with 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 features a headline 'Here's how your town can become an Idea Friendly Town' followed by a bold statement: 'We are a community of possibilities, not of problems.' Below this, smaller text reads 'We are action takers. We are optimistic.' followed by the italicized phrase 'It's not about what this town used to be.' Another paragraph states: '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.' At the bottom, a final line says: '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.

The collage features various agricultural and technological elements: a white sheep, wheat stalks, a black cow, a pig, a chicken, a drone flying over a field, a green tractor, a circuit board, a horse, a person in a lab coat, and various fruits and vegetables.

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

Kansas Healthy Food 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/>

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