

First Impressions

Yates Center, KS

K-State Research and Extension



- Yates Center asked for First Impressions, Carbondale agreed to be its partner; 1 hour, 9 min drive.
- I trained the volunteers about the visit and survey on September 25 and took photos.
- Carbondale visitors came in two cars in September and November.
- Results presented by video recording.
- Yates Center 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*, hold a newcomers meal periodically.
- If you bring 13 people to Yates Center 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.
- 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 1,309 2010 Census: 1,417
(down 7.6% since 2010 **KS= +2.1%**)
- Median household income is \$34,000 (**\$62,087**)
- 90.3% high school or GED, 11.9% college educated,
91.8% HS or equivalency, KS 34.0% college education,
- Median Age 45.3 years (**37.2**)
- Poverty rate 17.0% (**KS=11.4%**)

- **Website** <https://cityofyatescenter.com/>

Website was informative and up to date.

Visitors liked:

- History
- Request for maintenance
- Job Openings
- Website ideas

*More photos would add to public engagement.
Help us picture your city and the fun you have here.*



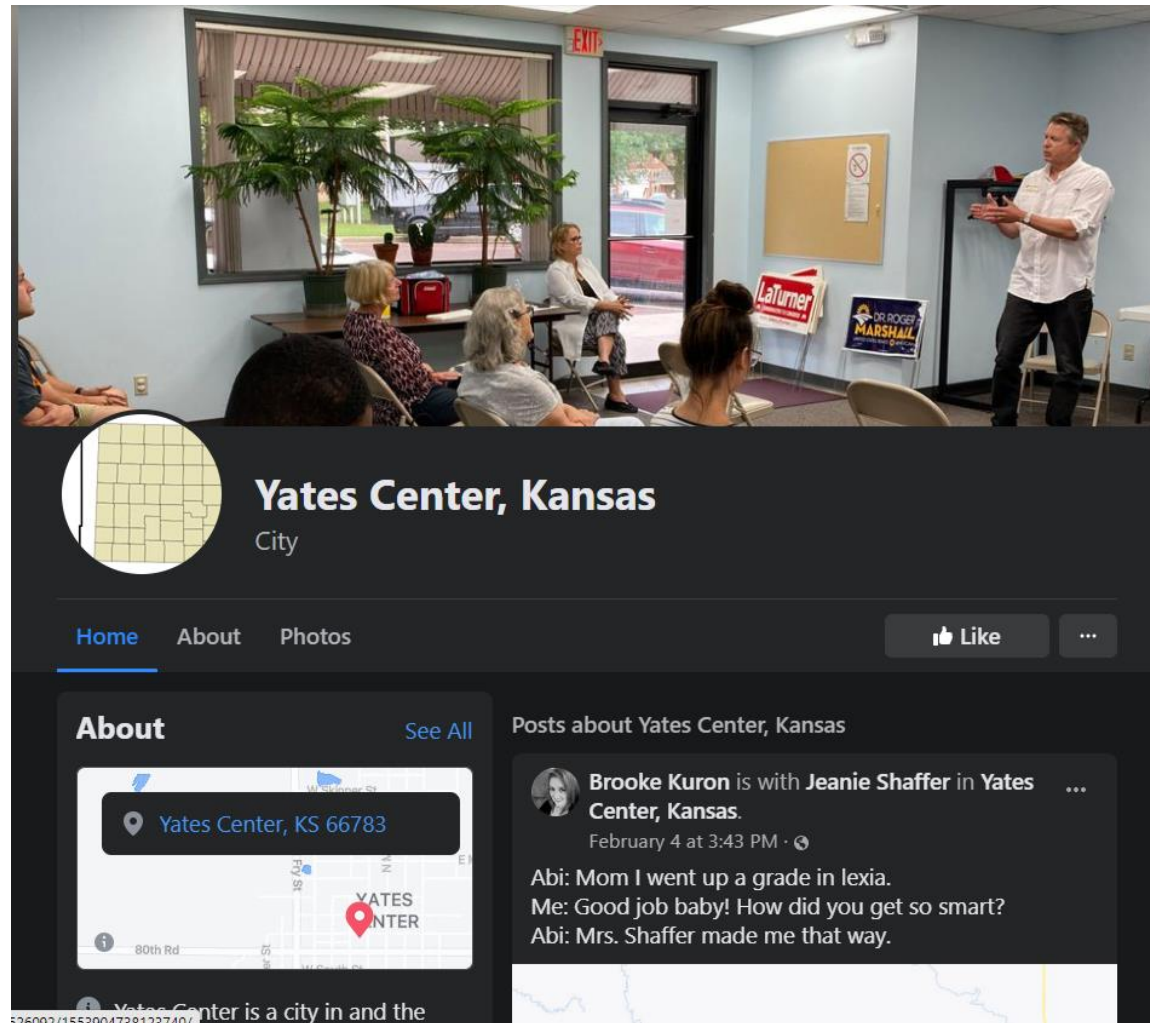
- **FaceBook**

Yates Center, Kansas

- Visitors didn't find FB pages to be informative.

They didn't tell us which FB site they looked at.

Shown in dark mode for contrast.



- **FaceBook**

City of Yates Center

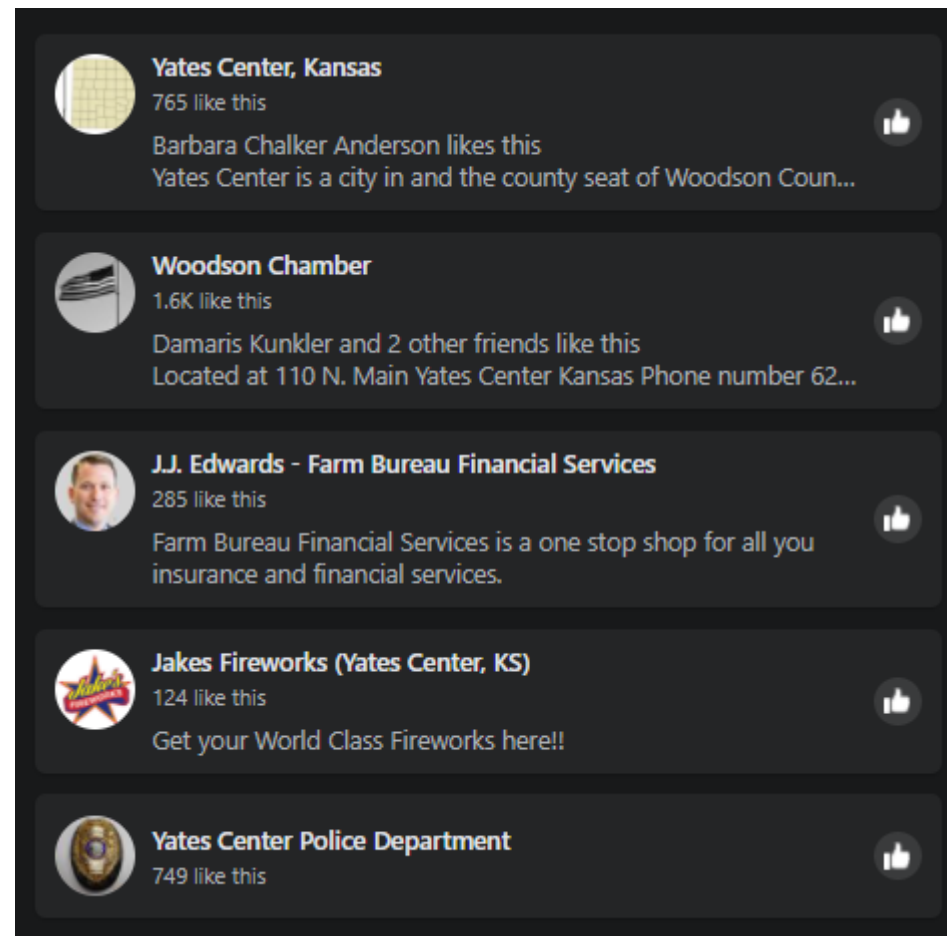
Shown in dark mode for contrast.



- **Facebook**
 - I counted more than 50 Facebook pages.
 - *An opportunity for co-marketing.*



Shown in dark mode for contrast.



- Nice entrance signage from each direction, with school awards posted.
- Lots of gas stations; at intersection of two highways.
- Interesting older community with many beautiful older homes. A lot to offer.
- There are obvious signs of income inequality and community pride.
- Hard to find downtown, major highways by-passed the historic downtown featured on website.

“Five-Minute” Impression



“Five-Minute” Impression



- Most buildings around town square were nicely painted and decorated for fall; many were empty.
- Visit during pandemic didn't help.
- Friendly people everywhere they visited.
- Proud of their city.
- Insurance agencies, bank, car dealership, hair salons, gym, hardware store, grocery store, motels, Subway, Pizza Hut.
- Loved the brick streets and the Court House Square.





Downtown Business Area



















Downtown Amenities:

- One visitor noticed “all listed amenities” (Benches, drinking fountains, public restrooms, trash receptacles and Wi-Fi)
- Others did not.



Downtown Amenities:

- Two pocket parks.
- Square was accessible, parking was available.
- Many are decorated for fall.



Other Retail Shopping Areas

- G&W Foods Grocery: Very nice displays in and out.
- Dollar General



Industrial Parks/Commercial

- No visitors saw evidence of an industrial park.



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.*

- I didn't see it, but there is a medical clinic and dentist office.
- Community has dental, pharmacy, medical clinic.
- No hospital.



- Ambulance Service
- *Optometrist*



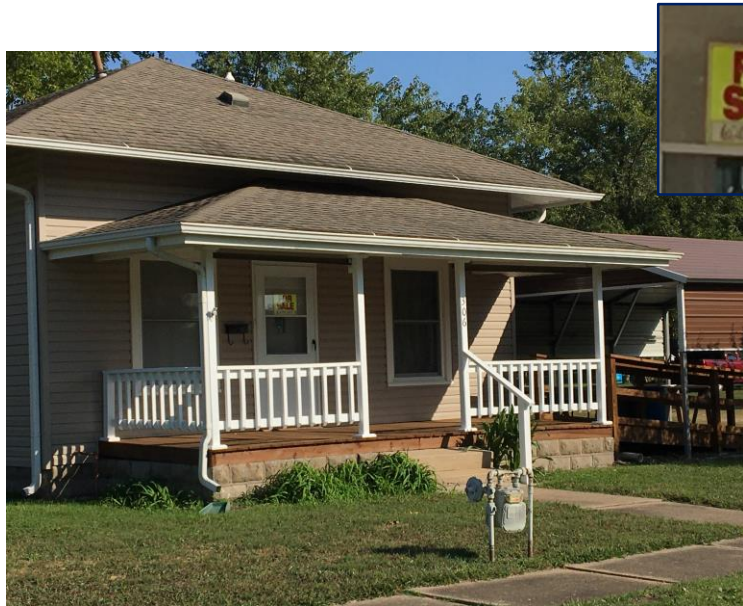
- Large facility for nursing care on south side.



- Zillow shows a number of homes, prices, conditions for sale.
- Areas have a mixture of neglected and nicely restored homes.
- All income ranges are present.
- Finding good quality lower income housing would be a challenge.



• This









Rental Housing

- Saw apartments in a former hotel. I would be drawn to that.
- Saw an apartment complex in another part of town.
- No apparent rental properties.
- *Best practice: city clerk has a list of landlords.*





KANSAS

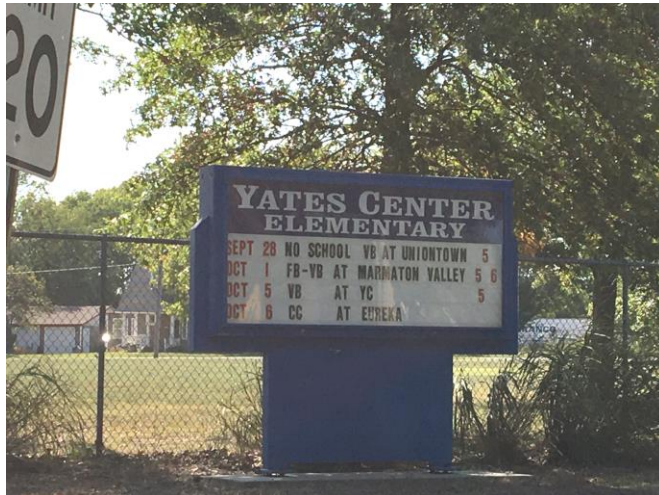
- Total Housing Units 830
- Total Occupied Houses 642 (77.3%) (88.8%)
- Vacant Houses 188 (22.7%) (11.2%)
- Owner Occupied 460 (71.7%) (66.3%)
- Renter Occupied 182 (28.3%) (33.7%)
- Family Households 48.0% (65.1%)
- Non-family Households 52.0% (34.9%)

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

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

- They have preschool, K-8, High School.
- Yates Center is the only School District in the county.
- The K-8 school seemed to need some updating.
- Both schools appeared to be maintained and in good repair.





- KSDE supplies information about schools.
- I was impressed they have APP, Preschool, elementary, High School all within the city.
- Current FB page has many positive comments and gives up-to-date information about pictures, sports events.
- Some online info was not favorable

<https://www.usd366.net/>

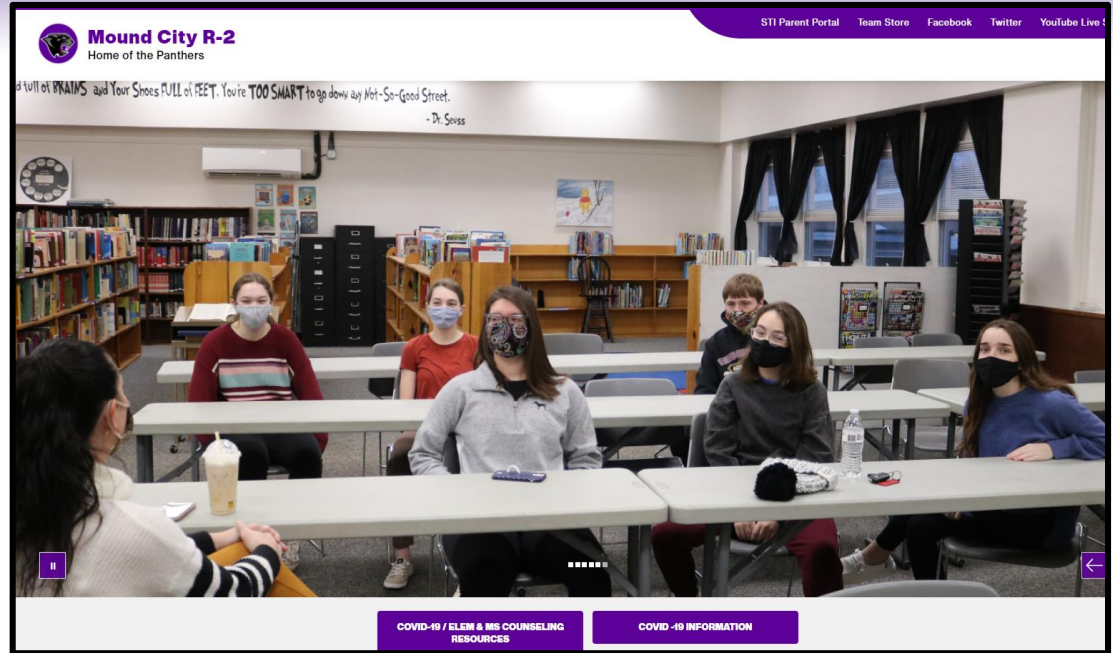
Retrieved from internet 2/08/2021



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

Example: 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

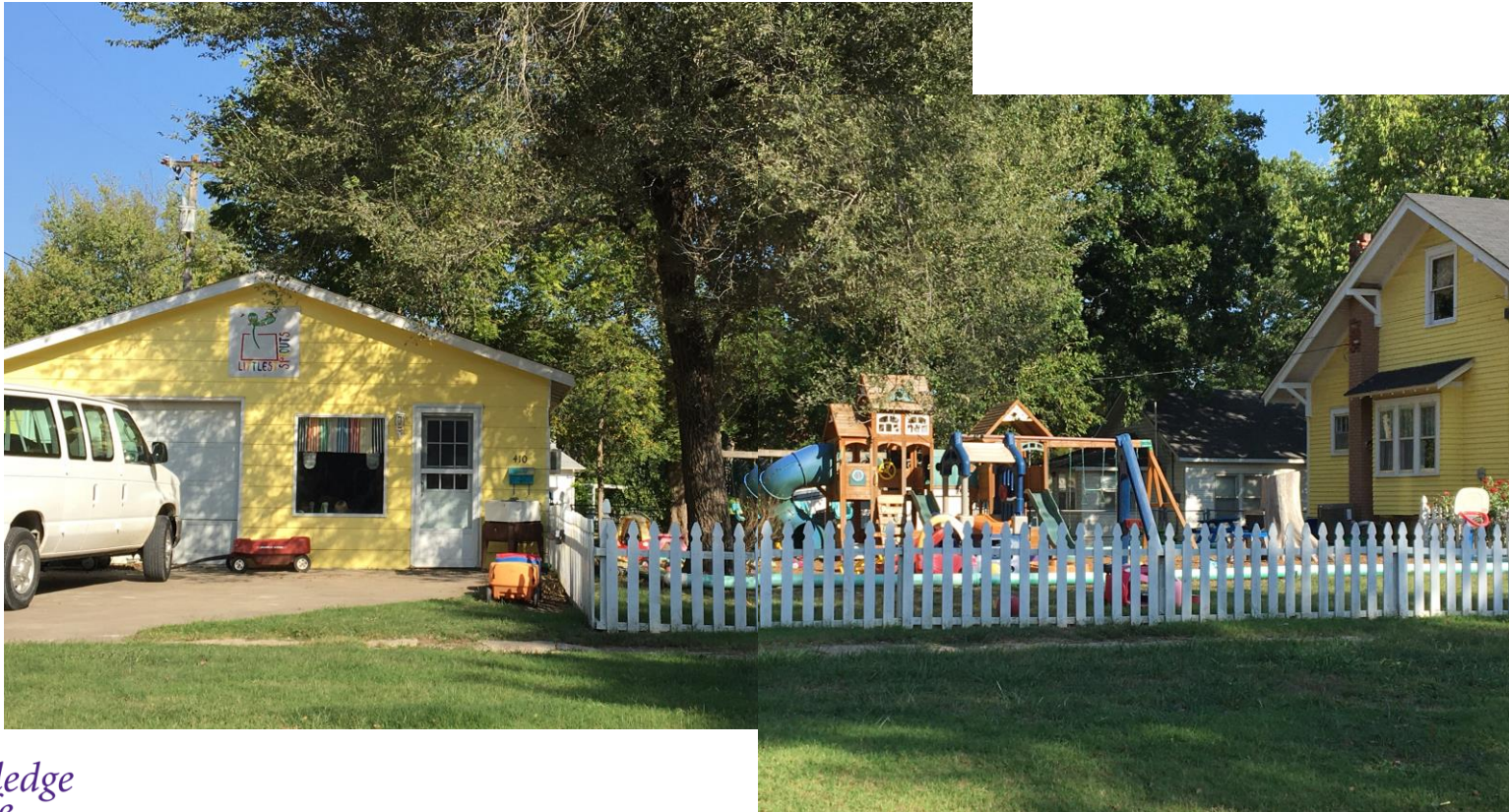
1:9 Teacher to Student Ratio

Career Ed. Programs

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

Comments:

- Inquired at City Hall, they referred to the Chamber of Commerce, which is not open.
- Two home child cares were observed.



Woodson County Data:

- Desired Capacity of existing Child Care **58**
- Number of Children Under Age 6 potentially needing care: **164**
- Extent Desired Capacity meets Potential need **35%**

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

- We saw quite a number of churches, you should be able to find one to suit your needs.
- Some very beautiful buildings.





Town Hall, former church.



Visitors:

- 4-H
- Masonic Lodge
- Senior Center



- Liked the brick streets around the town square.
- Didn't see many sidewalks in residential areas.
- Most streets were in good shape, street signage and sidewalks were apparent.
- No landscaping outside of city square was observed.
- Dangerous open ditch for water run-off





- Greeted by a friendly employee. Lots of printed materials, including maps.
- Brochures were also available at restaurant.
- City Hall closed on Friday of second visit.



Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Newer fire department located near town square.
- Police were evident.



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

- Wonderfully cozy old Carnegie Library!
- Full of county history.
- Friendly librarian who was full of county history.
- “I need to look up Kalida cave/castle in Woodson County.”



- Loved the gazebo at city park and the “exercise pad.”
- Play equipment for all ages.
- Horseshoe pit needed some work.
- Enjoyed the pocket parks downtown.
- Stadium in the pool/park vicinity which looks to still be in use, needs some repair.
- 3 baseball diamonds, small swimming pool and track.
- Pool under construction or reconstruction.





Well-Known for an attraction or event?

- Slogan: “Hay Capitol of the World.” Not sure why.
- The website showed events, but not apparent while we were there.
- *Show us some pictures of your town having fun at these events.*



Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- Two lakes, one with a campground.
- Well-kept RV park with clean bathrooms and play equipment at South Owl Lake. Even has Wi-Fi provided by the city.
- 4-H Fair



Visitor's Center

- Chamber of Commerce was closed the day of the visit.
- In most towns your size, we expect to get this info at City Hall.



What would bring you back?

- Vaquero's Mexican Restaurant.
- I would enjoy another day just walking around the town and taking it all in.



What would bring you back?



Most Positive Observations

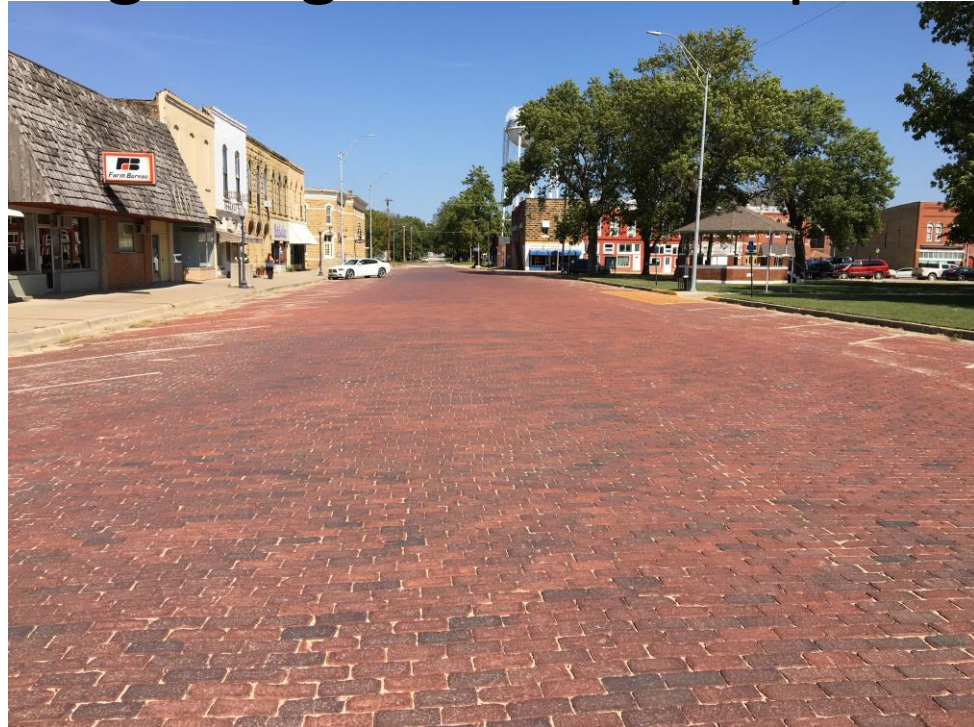
- The general atmosphere, friendliness of citizens and all the old buildings. I hope the city finds a way to actively use the buildings.
- The citizens are very friendly and proud of their town. Most anything you might need, whether you are 9 or 90, can be found in the area.
- Obvious potential. Quilt squares on building, houses and fences were throughout the city and were fun to look for and see the different patterns and colors.

Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- All the empty buildings. The elementary school needs work and they don't have many students in the district.
- Same as faced in all small communities, older structures, struggle to maintain, dwindling population.
- Lack of commercial, industrial or businesses that could provide good employment was evident. Significant distance to larger city that could offer employment.

What will you remember?

- All the old buildings in the city square-positive. The barber who talked to us and the “coffee cup cabinet.” The hotel turned into apartments. The giant gazebo at the park and the stadium.

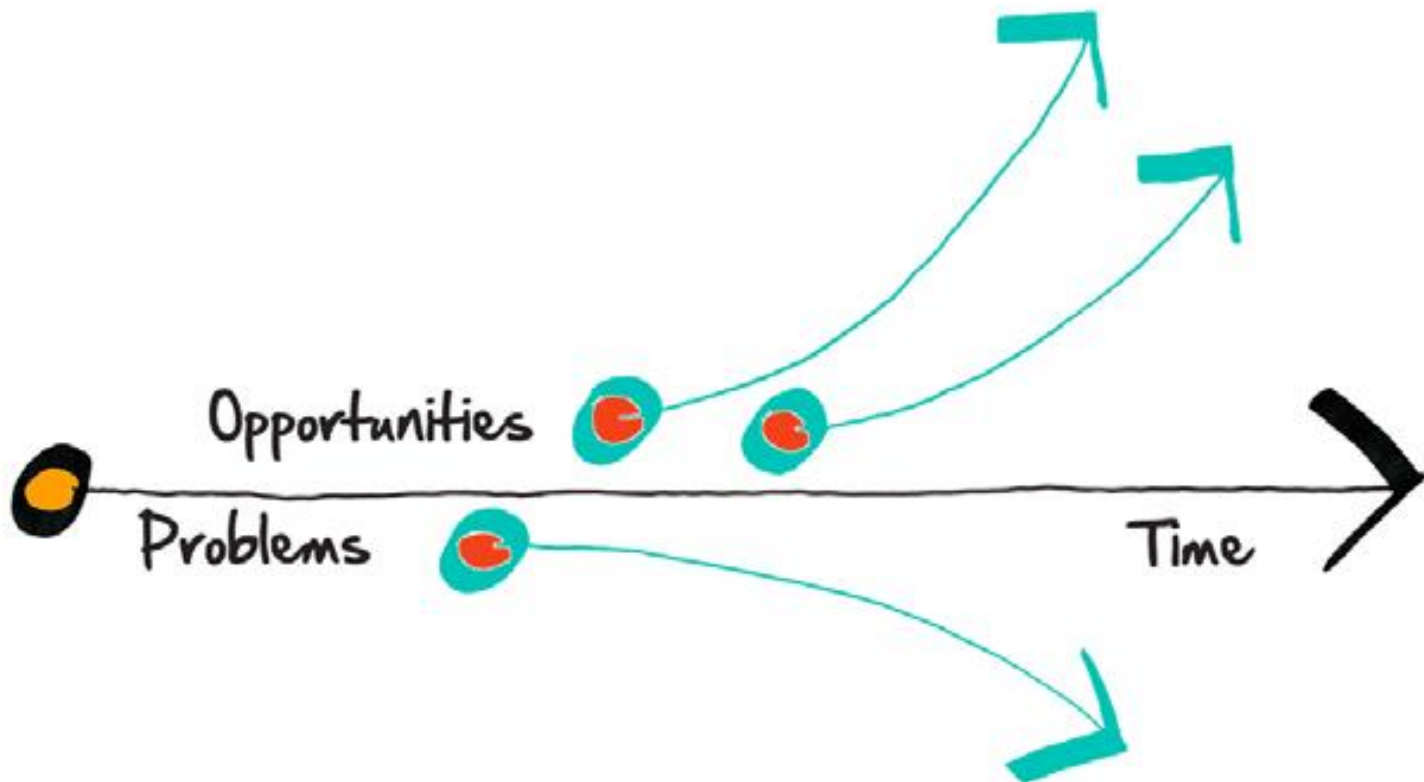


What will you remember?

- Bill the barber telling stories about the town and townsfolk. I will definitely return to have another look, maybe bring my husband to eat at Vaquero's
- We would like to re-visit after the pandemic. We were not able to observe normal activity of the community. Yates Center may have significantly more to offer under less stressful times.

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, Tulane University

CBS Sunday Morning, January 24, 2021

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

Retrieved from the Internet, 2-8-2021



According to **5-year old** KDOT Traffic Data, the Average Annual Daily Traffic going past Yates Center is:

- 150 vehicles on Hwy 54
- 725 vehicles on Hwy 75

The traffic counts shown on this map represent estimates of the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) and Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic (AADTT) for **2016**, published October 2017. These estimates are developed mainly from 24-hour volumes recorded by portable traffic counters.

Source: <https://www.ksdot.org/burtransplan/maps/mapstrafficdist.asp>
Retrieved from the internet 2-8-2021

1. Tell your City story:

Add photos to city pages showing

- 4-H Fair in action.
- Yates Center Days (move this to EVENTS tab)
- Lend a Truck – Cool! Photos with people, staged if necessary.
- Lakes! Photos with people.
- Businesses: who is doing business here?
 - Include services like plumbers, electricians, carpenters, etc.
- Add a tab for health care. You have lots of access.

How many minutes to a hospital?

Tell your school story. Why we love our schools.

2. Child care and landlord information at City Hall.
3. Get involved! Revitalize YC, Idea-Friendly towns: pick something you can do and do it.
4. Watch “[Filling Empty Buildings](#)” with Deb Brown and see the slides.

A second version by Becky McCray at the bottom of the same page)

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

Thank our volunteer visitors

Set Next Steps:

- Start talking!
- Find ways to discuss what you heard in small groups of every kind.
- Aspire to be an Idea-Friendly town. (see SaveYour.Town)

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

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



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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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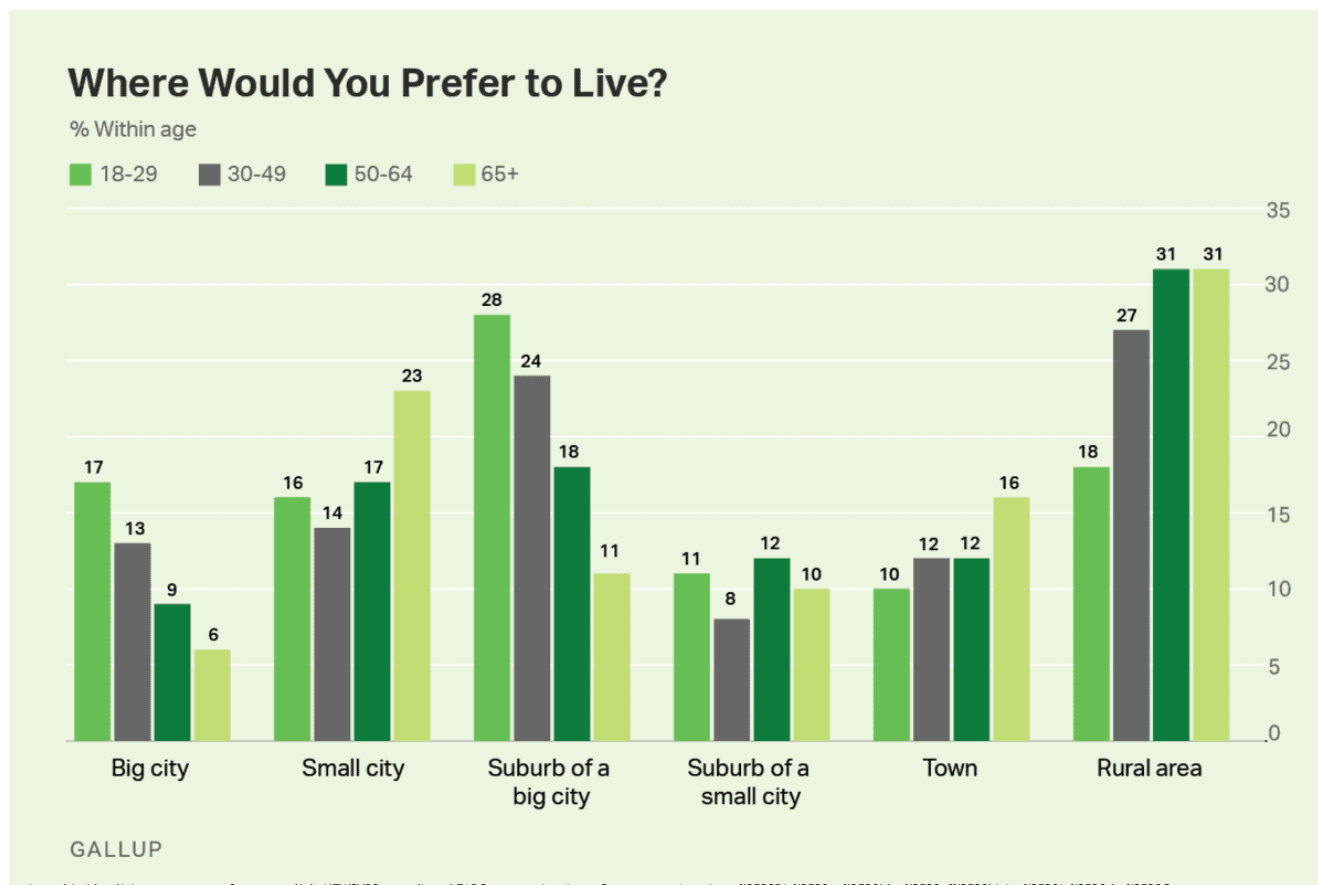
RSS

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' and a large quote: '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.' At the bottom, it states '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.*
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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.

A graphic for the "GROW IN KANSAS" Strategic Growth Initiative. It features a collage of various agricultural and technological images, including a white sheep, wheat stalks, a black cow, a pig, a chicken, a drone, a green tractor, a circuit board, a horse, a person in a lab coat, and various fruits and vegetables. The text "GROW IN KANSAS" is prominently displayed at the top in white on a blue background. Below the collage, the text "STRATEGIC GROWTH INITIATIVE" is written in bold, followed by a smaller line of text: "A pilot program for the proactive recruitment of food, agriculture and UAS/small aircraft business to Kansas."

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

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/>

khfi@ksu.edu

KHFI Technical Assistance Coordinator





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