

First Impressions

Erie, KS

A program of
K-State Research and Extension



- Pleasanton asked for First Impressions, Erie consented to be its partner; 1.25-hour drive.
- I trained the volunteers about the visit by zoom call on July 22 and took photos of Erie on July 26.
- Pleasanton visitors came in one car on August 14.
- Results are presented tonight, September 30.
- Erie 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 and no one is noticing or talking about it.
- Only 36% lived there previously.
- 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 Kansans move every year.
- In a survey of newcomers to rural areas, the reasons they come are:
 - Simpler pace of life
 - Safety and Security
 - Low housing cost
 - ***“A job,” isn’t in the top 10 reasons.***
- “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/>

- 2010 Census Population 1,150
(down 5.0% since 2000*) **KS= +6.1%**
- 2017 **Estimate** is 1,089
(down 10.1% since 2000*) **KS= +8.0%**
- 93.8% high school or GED, 17.4% college educated,
90.5% HS or equivalency, KS 32.3% college education,
- Poverty rate 19.6% **(KS=12.8%)**
- Median Age 41.4 years **(36.3)**
- Median household income is \$43,929 **(\$55,477)**

* 2000 Census was 1,211

- **Website**
- We didn't find a website, there is a Facebook site that shows a few things.
- Citydata.com and Wikipedia gave most of the basic information
- Surprised I didn't find a city website.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "erie, ks". The search bar at the top contains "erie, ks" and the search button is a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar, there are tabs for "All", "Maps", "News", "Images", "Shopping", "More", "Settings", and "Tools". The "All" tab is selected. The search results show "About 15,100,000 results (0.70 seconds)". The first result is "Erie, Kansas - Wikipedia" with a link to "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erie,_Kansas". The snippet describes Erie as a city in and the county seat of Neosho County, Kansas, United States, situated in the valley of the Neosho River, about a mile Northeast of the river. It also lists the county as Neosho, state as Kansas, area code as 620, and ZIP code as 66733. The second result is "Erie, Kansas | Home - Love Small Town America" with a link to "www.lovesmalltownamerica.com/erieks". The snippet describes Erie as a city in the Neosho River Valley, surrounded by the beautiful Osage Cuesta Hills, and mentions that Erie's sense of connection to the past is strong. The third result is "Erie, KS - Erie, Kansas Map & Directions - MapQuest" with a link to "https://www.mapquest.com/kansas/erie-ks-282021924". The snippet says "Get directions, maps, and traffic for Erie, KS. Check flight prices and hotel availability for your visit." The fourth result is "Erie, Kansas (KS 66733) profile: population, maps, real estate ..." with a link to "www.city-data.com/city/Erie-Kansas". The snippet mentions a son who was trapped in a blaze in the lakeside city of Erie while he was responding to a call for what turned out to be a malfunctioning alarm. The fifth result is "Erie, Kansas | Livability" with a link to "https://livability.com/ks/erie". The snippet says "Learn what makes Erie, Kansas a best place to live, including information about real estate, schools, employers, things to do and more." Below the search results, there is a sidebar on the right with a map of Erie, Kansas, and a summary of information about the city. The summary includes the city name "Erie", the state "City in Kansas", a description of the city's location and population, the weather "72°F (22°C), Wind S at 13 mph (21 km/h), 95% Humidity", the zip code "66733", and the population "1,087 (2017)". Below the summary, there is a section titled "Events" with a table of upcoming events.

Events	
Sat, Sep 28 9:00 AM	2019 Chanute Artists Alley Festival Chanute, ... Main Street Chanute
Fri, Sep 27 4:00 PM	Chanute Bit & Spur Saddle Club Rodeo Chanute Bit & Spur Saddle Club Arena
Fri, Sep 20 7:00 PM	West Elk Varsity Football @ St. Paul St. Paul Elementary School

View 5+ more

- **Website**

<http://www.lovesmalltownamerica.com/erieks.php>



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Erie KANSAS

COMMUNITY | BUSINESSES | SCHOOLS | REAL ESTATE | NEWS/EVENTS | GALLERY | JOB LISTINGS

Erie, KS

Nestled in the Neosho River Valley, surrounded by the beautiful Osage Cuesta Hills is **Erie, Kansas**. Erie's sense of connection to the past is strong: the city was incorporated in 1869 and has been the county seat of Neosho County since 1872. The quiet, peaceful lifestyle is reminiscent of days gone by, but the conveniences and comforts of technology make it possible to stay connected. Residents enjoy the best of both worlds: Erie's tranquil, rural setting is an easy two-hour drive from getaways like Kansas City, Tulsa, Joplin, Springfield, and the Ozarks via U.S. Highway 59. Residents have access to a wide range of amenities in Erie – the regionally-known Prairie Ridge Golf Course, disc golf, bowling, swimming, restaurants, and shopping, in addition to thriving community organizations, churches, and businesses. Erie's business-friendly atmosphere is a great place for entrepreneurs to thrive in city that celebrates being rural by choice. Come experience the rich history and independent lifestyle that makes **Erie, Kansas** special.

SMALL TOWN DIRECTORY
VIEW HERE

COUNTY DIRECTORY
VIEW HERE

STARTING AT \$225 PER YEAR

Incorporated: Dec 25, 1869

Population: 1,121

County: Neosho

Zip Code: 66733

Elevation: 896 ft

Average Temperature
Summer: 77°
Fall: 61°
Winter: 43°
Spring: 54°

Average Annual Rainfall: 45"

Location: On US HWY 59. 15 miles North of Parsons and 15 miles Southeast of Chanute

Recycling Available:
800-870-5393

History:

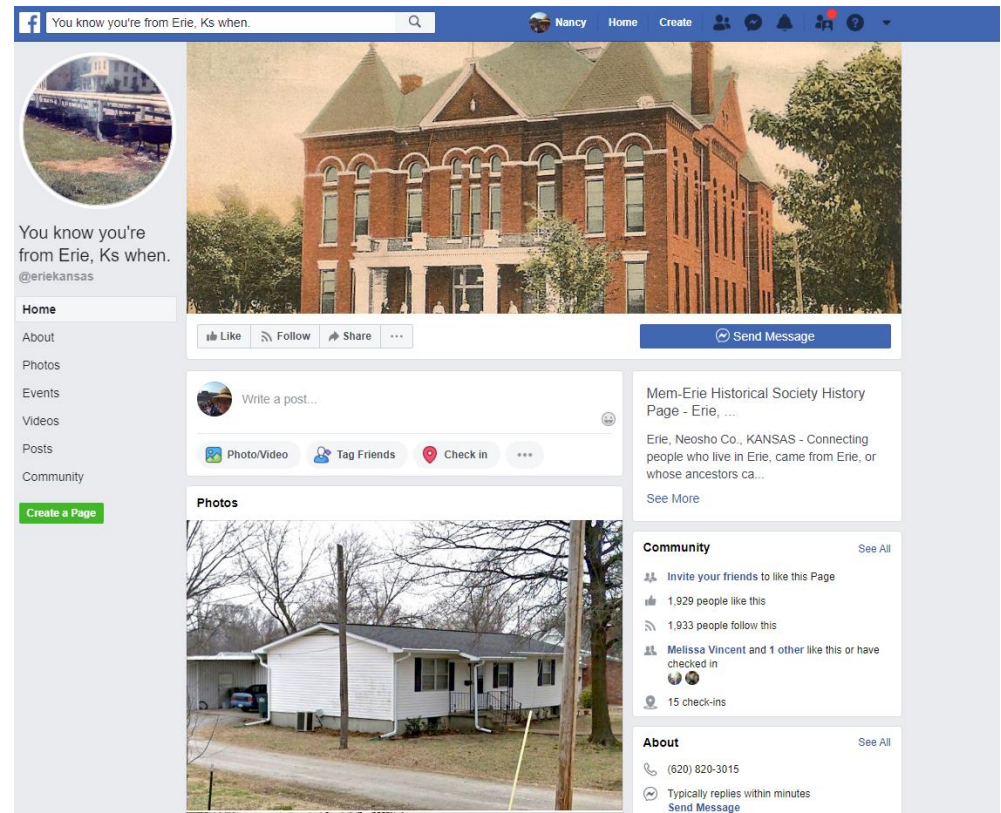
The community of Erie was formed when two neighboring towns ("Old Erie" and "Crawfordsville") merged, both groups donating land and combining to establish present-day Erie in 1866 near a lake for which the town is named. Cooperation is in Erie's roots!

Fun Facts:

Beantown, USA
Erie is host to the oldest consecutively running Old Soldiers and Sailors Reunion in America. Held annually during the third week of July since 1873, the reunion features a "Free Bean Feed." The beans are prepared using a historic recipe, simmering all day in cast-iron kettles over wood fires like soldiers used in the Civil War. The beans may be an old tradition, but guest country and western musicians from Nashville add a touch of modern spice to the Friday night celebration.

Landmarks:

- **Facebook**
 - Top Search on FB
 - **You know you're from Erie, Ks when.**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/eriekansas/>
- 1.9k followers*

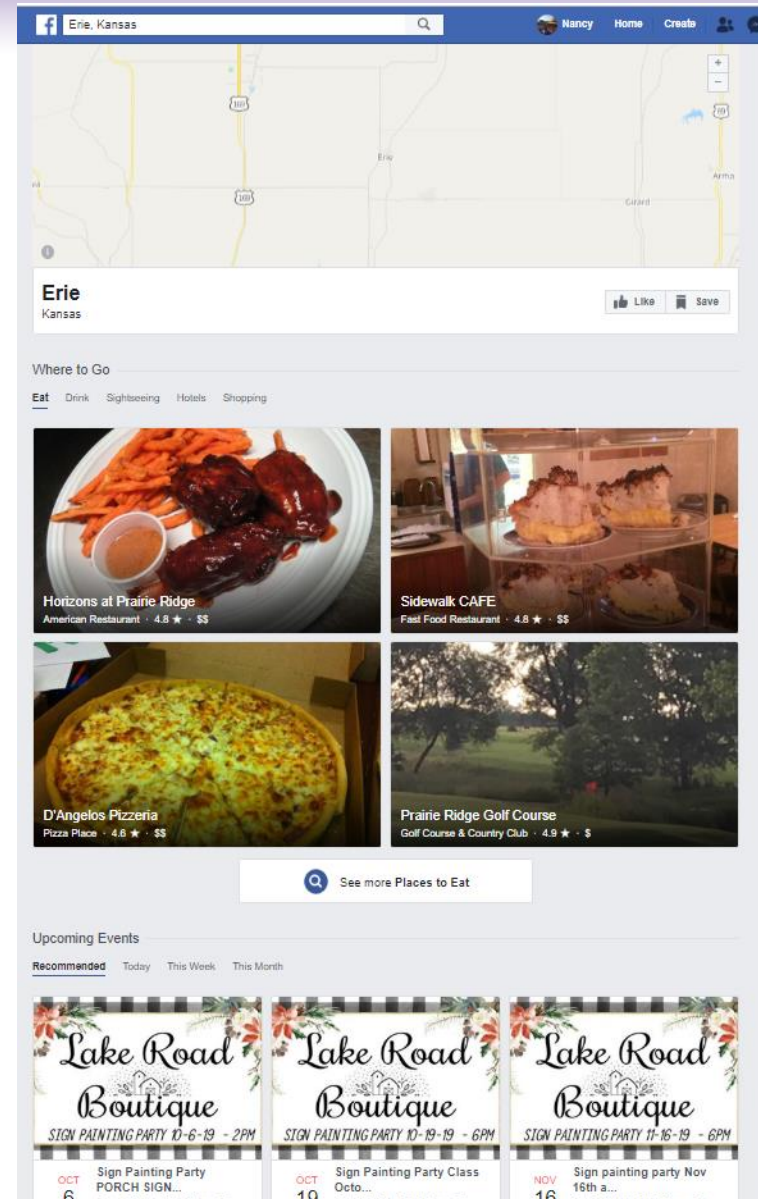


- **Facebook**
 - #2 on search:

Erie, Kansas

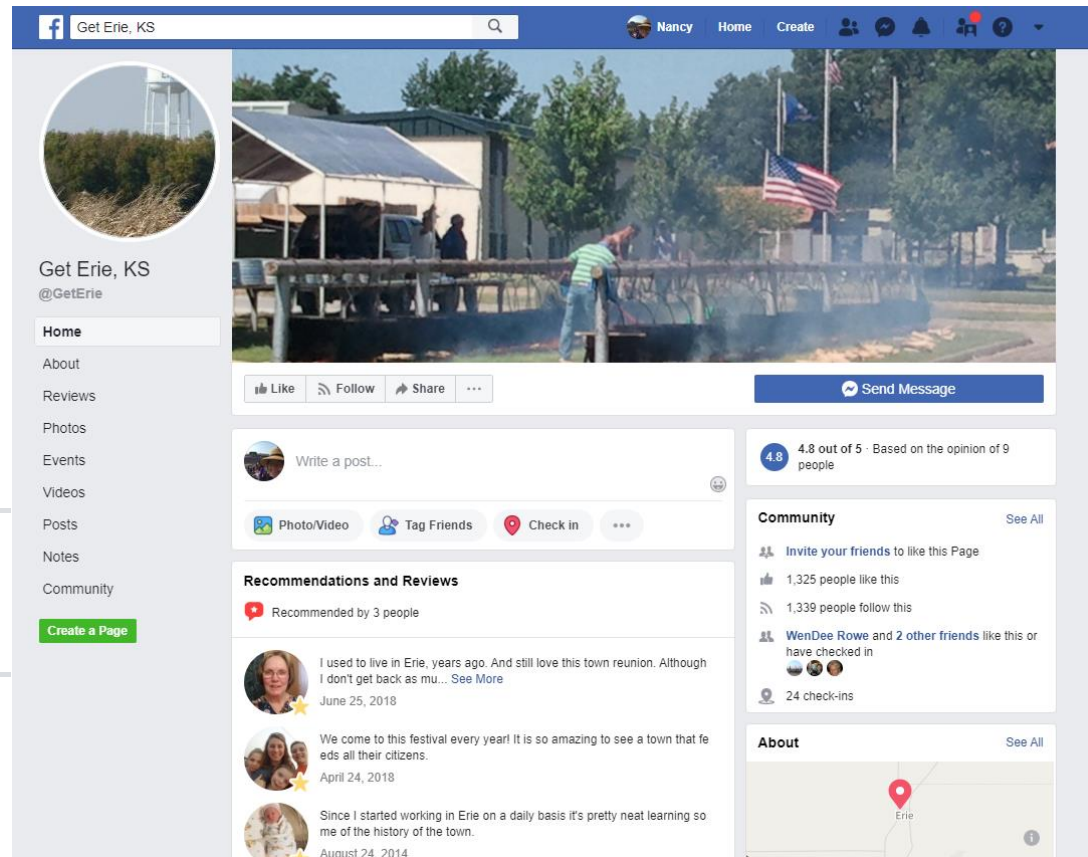
<https://www.facebook.com/places/Things-to-do-in-Erie-Kansas/109847669034217/>

-A Facebook generated page.



- **Facebook**
 - #3 on search:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/GetErie/>
- 1.3k followers*

Are there co-marketing opportunities with other Erie, KS Pages?



“Five-Minute” Impression

- Town is a clean nice town. Businesses are spread between Main Street, the highway and others in an industrial type area near the high school.
- If you don't know the town, there was no way to take a five-minute look around, it would take longer.



“Five-Minute” Impression

- The one highway sign showing downtown coming from the north was small and easy to miss. I noticed the Erie rock sign, but it is after the entry to the city.
- There are no way-finding signs to city hall, police, schools, parks, etc.



“Five-Minute” Impression

- Things seemed a little spread out. There were several entrances into town from the highway, but we weren't sure which entrance was designated as the main entrance.





You have a right to demand children play safely, but I love seeing “free-range” children, whose parents can feel safe letting them roam.

Downtown Business Area

- Downtown is nice, they've done a good job freshening up old buildings and melding new ones in.



Downtown Business Area

- The streets were nice as well as the curbs and gutters.
- We saw quite a variety of businesses and the pharmacy was nice.



Downtown Business Area





Downtown Business Area



Customer Service

- Ladies in the pharmacy were very friendly and helpful and told us lots about the annual celebration.

Amenities

- Plenty of trash receptacles downtown, city hall had an accessible bathroom and fountain. Not sure of wi-fi. Parking was fine with many businesses accessible from one spot.

Other Retail Shopping Areas

- As you came into town, you could easily access Pete's, Dollar General and the grocery store.



Industrial Parks/Commercial

- This wasn't easy to find.
- I think this area would be over by Beachner Grain or by the electric generating station.



Industrial Parks/Commercial



- *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

- Lots of nice clinics and a pharmacy. We were told of a dermatologist that also comes to the community. Healthcare was obviously not a problem in Erie.



Health Care Services

- There are two different clinics and an urgent care.
- The facilities looked nice.



Tip from other small communities:

- *Name the health care assets you do have on your website.*
- *Tell how many minutes it is to the hospitals, etc. you don't have.*



Health Care Services

- There is a nursing home or long-term care place; it seemed nice, older, but still in business for the community.
- There was an assisted living facility by the high school.



- Homes had plenty of grass between them giving an open concept.



- There were many block homes mixed with nice manufactured homes.



- City Hall provided their “building incentive program” and available lots in their development.



- A lot of nice houses for different income ranges. It appeared that most homes were older, but very well maintained.



- The blighted homes spread their blight to neighbors, but it appeared the town is on top of the problem.



Rental Properties

- We picked up a large list of landlords from City Hall. Rent is between \$350 and \$500. The turnover in homes is low.



Rental Properties



Rental Properties



KANSAS

- Total Housing Units 500
- Total Occupied Houses 424 (84.8%) (89.1%)
- Vacant Houses 76 (15.2%) (10.7%)

**In 2010, there were 540 occupied housing units*

- Owner Occupied 270 (63.7%) (66.4%)
- Renter Occupied 154 (36.3%) (33.6%)
- Family Households 75.9% (65.4%)
- Non-family Household 24.1% (34.6%)

- There is a nice grade school that used to be the high school.
- Middle school is in another town, so kids are bused.



- The high school is a nearly brand-new facility.
- The high school is a great facility with ballfields, etc.





- Most of the information is on the school page.
- *Tell us **why** you love your schools.*
- *Your website reaches potential students as well as those already enrolled.*

The screenshot shows the USD 101 website. The header features a large banner with the text "USD 101 ERIE" in red, flanked by two grey wolf head silhouettes. Below the banner is a navigation bar with links: "DISTRICT USD 101", "ERIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (PREK-5)", "GALESBURG MIDDLE SCHOOL (6-8)", "ERIE HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)", "PARENT/STUDENT QUICK LINKS", and "SITEMAP".

On the left side, there is a "DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION" section with the following details:
101 Erie-Galesburg
3 Main St
Kansas 66733
Phone: 620-244-3264
Fax: 620-244-3664

Below this is a "LIKE USD 101 ON FACEBOOK" section with a Facebook "Like" button and a photo of a group of people.

On the right side, there is a section titled "USD 101... where KIDS come first!" with a sub-header "USD 101 is a rural school district in Southeast Kansas made up of the Erie, Stark and Galesburg communities READ MORE...".

At the bottom right, there is a large photo of a group of students and staff posing in front of a stone wall. The photo is dated "10.22.2010".

The footer includes the "PowerSchool" logo and the "eTrak" logo.

Comments:

- City hall informed us about childcare and showed a board with information.

Neosho County Data:

- **Number of Children Under Age 6:** **1,340**
- **Children with all parents in the workforce:** **65%**
- **Desired Capacity of Child Care Centers** **701**
- **Extent that desired capacity meets potential need** **80%**
- **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 get access to local child care specialists.
785-823-3343*

- There were several churches in town, most of which looked very nice.



- Signs for the churches were up on one of the main streets.



- I didn't see any evidence of faith-based activity.



- Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, American Legion have signs near the church sign.
- Lots of people told us about Sailors bean dinner.



- We saw the civic group signs. We saw the fair grounds and Saddle Club arena. We didn't see civic activity.



- Awesome parks, great fairgrounds and good streets. Several parks have bathrooms and picnic areas.





- No way-finding signs.
- *Consider putting “Public Restrooms” on your list of assets.*



- I didn't notice many sidewalks or much parking, landscaping was nice.



- The Senior Center wasn't mentioned. In many small towns it is either under-utilized or a hub of activity.*



- Nice city hall, new, very nice people who were helpful to strangers.
- City employees gave lots of information about tax levies, valuations and development programs.



Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Police were on duty in city hall when we were there.
- I saw the fire station.



Welcome to Kansas Insurance Department

Home Contact Us

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

- > 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

- We saw the exterior, they need bigger signs.
(*Lettering?*)



- Awesome! Great complexes, ball fields. A point of pride and a reason to go to Erie.
- If people are bored in that town, it's their own fault.
- *Didn't mention the walking trail. Could they find it?*



- City parks were great! So much green space! We were very impressed with the bridges at the park and the character of the space.



Well-Known for an attraction or event?

- Fishing or the fair
- Soldier and Sailors Reunion/Bean Feed



Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- The Dinosaur Park, Neosho River.
- Fairgrounds and park.



Visitor's Center

- City Hall fills this role. Chamber people are not in an office.



What would bring you back?

- I'd like to try the pizzeria. Sailors Bean Feed would be fun.
- I'd like to bring my kids to the Dinosaur Park



Most Positive Observations

- It was a nice, clean community that obviously cares about its image. Their new business facades and buildings are a great addition.
- The community is so clean, and you can tell that people take pride in the property. Main Street looked great. The schools looked great and the recreational space was excellent.



Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- The biggest obstacle is the same for any small city – location to bigger urban areas. If they can focus on their parks, the fairgrounds, their yearly event, that'll draw people.
- Erie has to set themselves apart from other communities near them of similar size. They are on their way to that. I would focus on marketing, signage, and economic/job development.

What will you remember?

- I loved their parks! I spoke of them to our chamber and they asked me what made them special. It was hard to put a finger on it – the curved bridges, big trees – so many of them. Very cool. Land of parks...and recreation!
- The friendly people and how clean and neat the community is.



- Get to know each other.
- Get a web presence, maintain it, constantly improve it. Tell your story.
- Signage to assets: parks, restrooms, library, city offices, schools, sports fields, walking trails.
- Tell us why you love your schools.
- Look around your town and don't take anything for granted: it's easier to save/improve an asset than to get it back. (grocery store, library, fire dept, etc.)

Thank our leadership team:

- ***Linda Weidert***
- ***Buddy Stark***
- ***Larry Weidert***

Set Next Steps:

- Which group will lead the discussion?

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.



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 to participate.
 - Previous calls are recorded at <http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>
 - Community Vitality Calendar of events: <http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/>

- <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:
Join me and 3546 rural friends.

Newsletters
☒ Small Biz Survival
☒ Positive View of Rural
☒ Building Possibility

JOIN

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!](#)

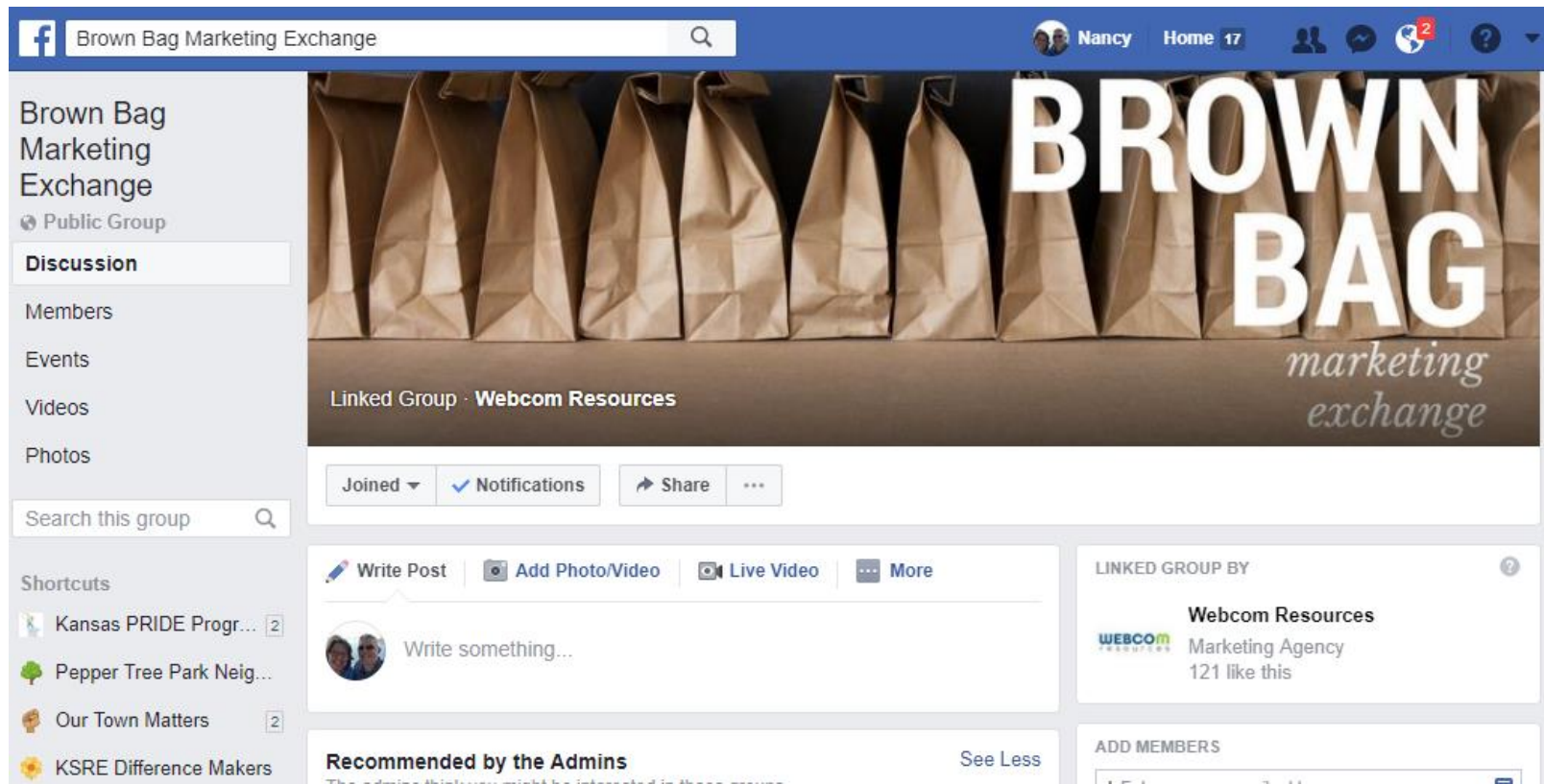
[CONTACT](#)

[MEMBERS LOGIN](#)

A Virtual Tour

When we walk through a small town, we see it differently
And then you see it differently

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



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 sheep, wheat, a cow, a pig, chickens, 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 affordable fresh 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/>

Isabelle Busenitz, ibusenitz@ksu.edu,

KHFI Technical Assistance Coordinator, 785-532-6868





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