Community Report for Crofton, NE

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**Community Profile**

Crofton is a small town located in northeast Nebraska near the South Dakota border. Highway 12 runs east and west through town and highway 121 meets highway 12 west of town. About 10 miles north of Crofton is the Lewis and Clark Lake, one of the main attractions of the area. Crofton’s quiet, yet convenient location makes it a summer hotspot, known as “the friendliest town by a dam site.”

Crofton was established in 1892 by mostly German settlers after the Fort Laramie Treaty in 1868. The purpose of the town was for the railroad; however, the railroad business went bankrupt and farming began in place (Arens, 2005). According to Arens (2005), Crofton got its name from being drawn out of a hat; Crofton Courts, England is where the Englishman who promoted the railroad was from. The first two establishments built in Crofton were saloons, followed by a bank, a lumberyard, and other businesses. In 1906, a railroad was built through Crofton and the population grew from there.

**Population/Demographics**

According to Data USA (2018), Crofton’s population, as of 2018, is 879; the population density is about 1,000 people per square mile. Over 92% of the total population is Caucasian, almost 4% is Hispanic, and another 4% are other ethnic groups. As stated by the U.S. Census Bureau (2019), 51% of the population are males.

**Income and Education**

The average household income in Crofton is $51,364 and an average per capita income of $29,100. About 6.8% of the population is below the poverty line. 91.6% of Crofton’s population has attained a high school or higher education and 20.9% have a bachelor’s degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019).

**Employment Opportunities**

According to Data USA (2018), employment in Crofton has declined at a rate of -0.211% from 2017 to 2018. The top five employment industries are manufacturing, health care and social assistance, retail trade, agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and educational services. The highest paying employment industry in Crofton is finance and insurance.

**Health Care Accessibility**

Crofton has one clinic, the Avera Medical Group. This clinic provides immunizations, physicals, wellness check-ups, and disease management. The nearest hospital, Avera Sacred Heart, would be about 15 miles away in Yankton, South Dakota. 96.6% of Crofton’s population, as stated by Data USA (2018), has health care coverage.

**Windshield/Walk Assessment**

Crofton is a small, community-centered town. After my walk through of town, I noticed how well-respected the town of Crofton is. Even though the population is gradually declining, Crofton is expanding, and businesses are growing. It is a great location to visit or live.

The town of Crofton is very historical. The Argo Hotel, built in 1912, is one of the main historical attractions. The Veteran’s Memorial, Arbor Walkway, and Memorial Rose Garden are located in the north and southside parks in honor of those who fought in battle. During the fourth of July, Crofton also displays an “Avenue of Flags”; more than 200 flags displayed in the northside park to honor the deceased Crofton Veterans. There are many other historical landmarks throughout Crofton, including some of the historical buildings in town.

There are many recreational activities to do in Crofton, especially during the summertime. Sports are a big one. There are four baseball fields in Crofton, two basketball courts, and a tennis court, plus three gymnasiums within the schools. Crofton does have a heavy fan-based baseball league as well as for high school sports. The southside park in town is right between the pool and the baseball fields with lots of open grass area; many children populate this area in the summertime. Lewis and Clark Lake and Recreation is less than 10 miles from Crofton and is utilized by a majority of the community.

As Crofton is mostly populated with families, you see a lot of children playing all around town. During my assessment, I noticed lots of miscellaneous items that seemed like garbage. Behind buildings there would be lot of broken glass, large pipes, woodblocks, and even tires just piled up. This seemed very hazardous and dangerous for children to get into. Also, a lot of sidewalks, including the one going to the pool, are very torn up and have grass growing in them. This particular sidewalk is also on a hill, near a busy road, and has a very narrow bridge. The park near the pool is also very old and rundown. The play sets are all rusted, squeaky, and seem like they’re about to fall apart. These aspects of the community worry me of the children’s safety. As Crofton is an older establishment, there is much room for improving the community.

**References**

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