

1. **The Felt Block Building, 4th & Main** - The Pony Express Museum collections are housed in this elegant Italianate iron-front building, even a bed the riders slept on at the historic Smith Hotel.
2. **The Seneca Theater, 3rd & Main** - At one time Seneca had two Opera houses, one was at this site. Today you will find first run movies and fresh popcorn for “date night”!
3. **The Gilford Hotel, South Side of 3rd & Main** - A landmark railroad hotel from the 1890’s, unable to survive in the automobile age but still fondly remembered.
4. **The Smith Hotel, South Side of 4rd & Main** - The first “Home Station” headed west on the famous Pony Express trail.
5. **The Railroads, South Corner of 5th & Main** - The first railroad built west of the Missouri River with dreams of becoming Transcontinental.
6. **The Seneca Telephone Co., 506 Main** - Once operated by friendly operator Nellie Mae, from the upstairs window she kept track of where everyone was and who needed to be home for supper!
7. **The Courier-Tribune, 512 Main** - The bustling newsroom of the county’s historic newspaper.

8. **The Seneca Library, 606 Main** - A prize winning renovation of an old stone church built in 1869 and now one of the finest small town libraries in the United States.
9. **The Seneca Post Office, 607 Main** - Housing an impressive Joe Jones “Men and Wheat” mural from the post-Depression era.
10. **Sheriff’s Residence and Jail, 113 N. 6th** - A law abiding town rebuilds its jail after many escapes, now houses the Nemaha Co. Historical Society exhibitions. Open Wednesdays and by appointment.
11. **City Hall, 6th & Main** - The City Administration welcomes you and houses an antique 1922 Stutz fire truck in the Fire Dept. Museum.
12. **Buggy Days, 509 Main** - Original store fittings and an old rope elevator give you a shopping experience from the 1880’s.
13. **The First National Bank, North corner of 5th & Main** - Seneca’s architectural gem undergoes a renewal worth noting. Today you can meet your friends at Cornerstone Coffee Haus!

Thank you for visiting Seneca and we hope to see you again!

This brochure funded in part by Seneca Travel and Tourism,
a Seneca Downtown Impact Project.

Seneca was established in 1858 by immigrant farmers and merchants coming off the Oregon Trail. It became a stop for freighting wagons servicing Army forts in western Kansas and Nebraska. The first cluster of buildings near the Nemaha River was known as “Castle Rock” but when the town was finally plotted it became Seneca, after the eastern Indian tribe. A crude log cabin on what was to become Main Street was followed by small wooden houses, a blacksmith shop and a two-story hotel. The hotel owner, John Smith, built a wooden bridge over the river and soon his hotel was filled every night.

In early 1860, the Leavenworth freighting firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell selected Seneca and the Smith Hotel as a home station for the Pony Express. On April 3 of that year the first exhausted Pony rider galloped into Seneca from St. Joseph. In less than two minutes a fresh rider threw the mail pouch onto his horse and bounded off to the west as Senecans cheered

him on. Ten days later an eastbound rider with California mail stopped in Seneca and his pouch was quickly sent on to St. Joseph where there was a railroad and telegraph line. The telegraph finally linked the two coasts completely in 1861, ending the Pony Express.

After the Civil War, German and Swiss immigrants began to establish prosperous homesteads in the county, raising corn, wheat, cattle and hogs. By 1870, the railroads arrived in Seneca turning it into a railroad town with repair facilities and a round house. Soon new hotels, shops, churches and schools were built. Seneca grew to 2,500 people, and became the Nemaha County seat. Main Street was paved with local brick; beginning in 1919, an array of proud buildings across the city reflected the latest Victorian styles.

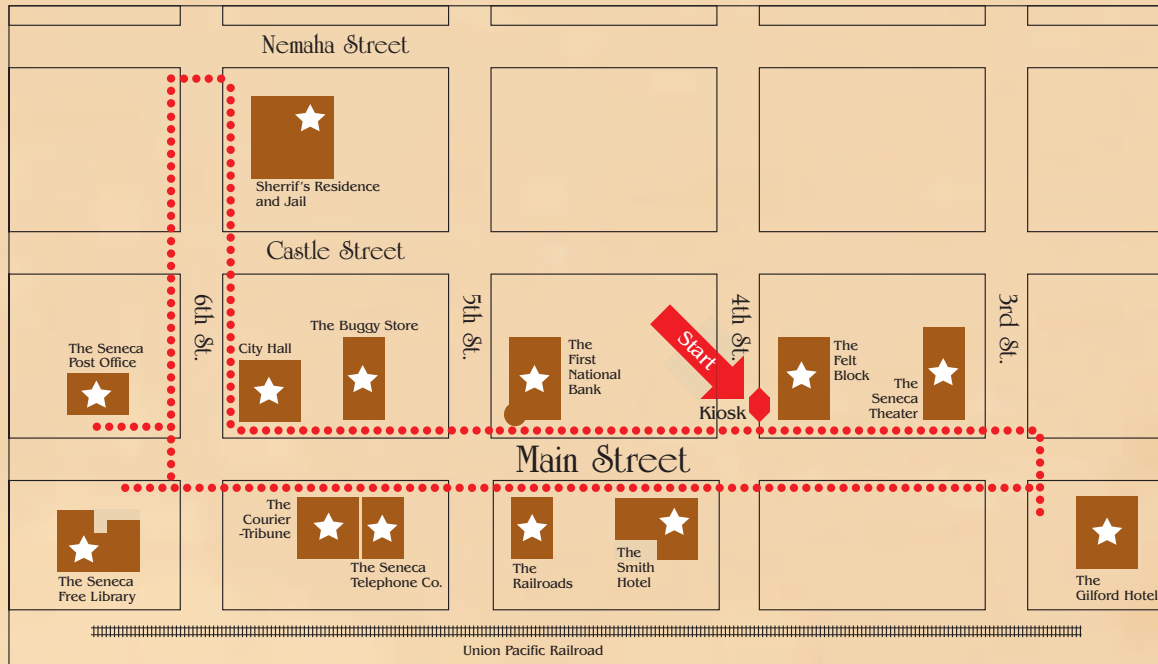
Today Seneca is restoring and renewing itself with new businesses, homes, and schools. Seneca remains a prosperous business and agricultural center - a successful town on the former American Frontier.

Seneca Mainstreet Walking Tour



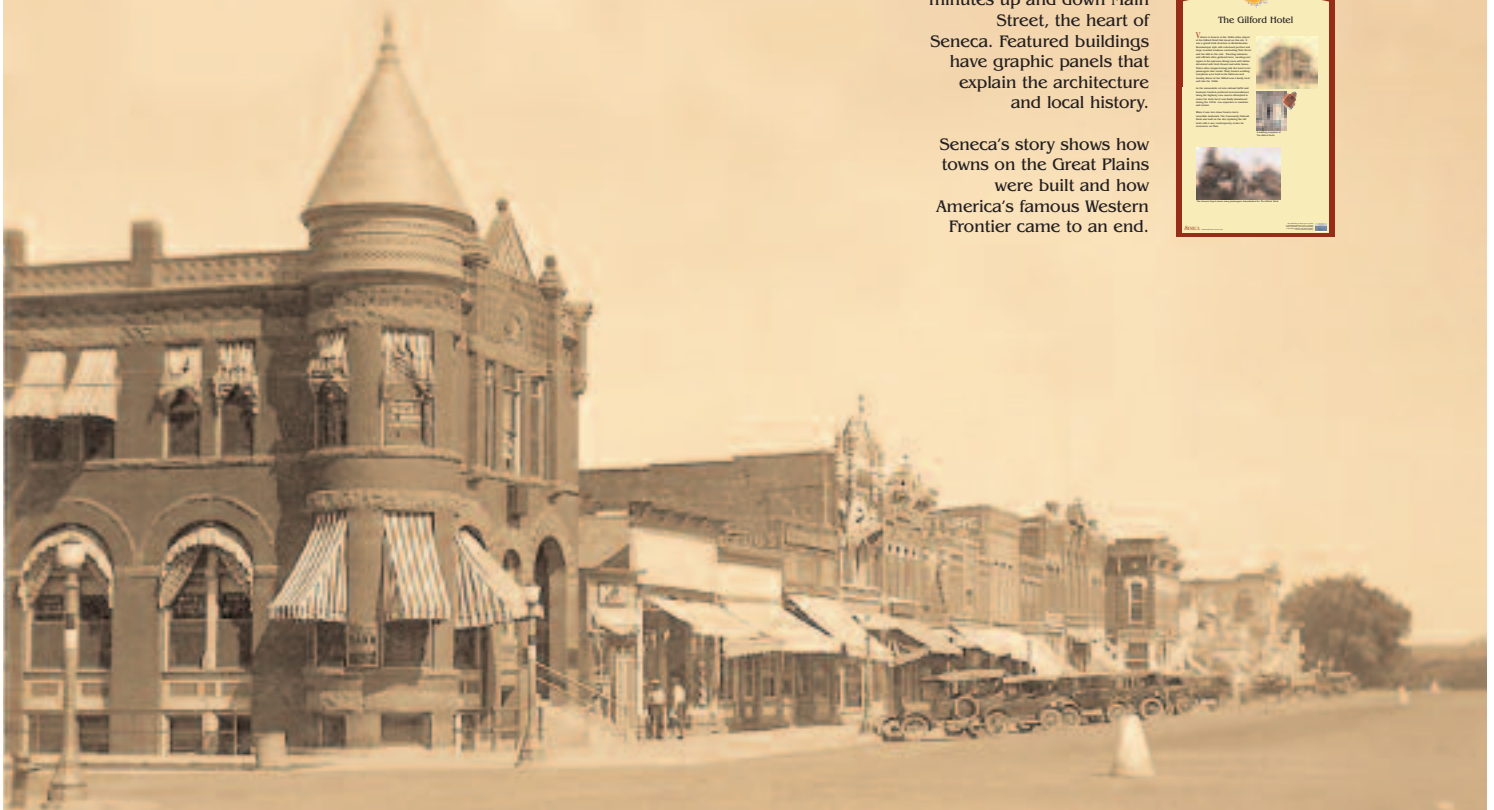
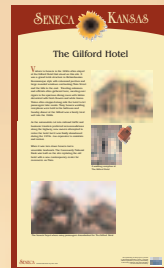
Seneca

Main Street Walking Tour



This walking tour takes 30 minutes up and down Main Street, the heart of Seneca. Featured buildings have graphic panels that explain the architecture and local history.

Seneca's story shows how towns on the Great Plains were built and how America's famous Western Frontier came to an end.



Seneca is a "MAIN STREET CITY" working with the Kansas Dept. of Commerce and the Kansas Humanities Council on this Project. This Project is funded by the Ks. Humanities Council.