First Impressions

Compiled Report Form

**Community Visited: Macksville Date(s) Visited :**A- 8/31/16 (Wed)

 B- 9/20/16 (Tues)

 C- 8/31/16 (Wed)

 D- 9/20/16 (Tues)

**Pre-visit web search: How easy was it to get information on the community you were visiting? Did it accurately reflect what you saw? Did you have difficulties obtaining information on the community through a web search?**

1. I mainly used Facebook and couldn’t find anything recent. After we learned the names of the eating establishments, I was able to find them on Facebook. Personally, I don’t feel they utilize social media very well.
2. Not easy…Finally found a link that took me to their Facebook page. They have very nice pictures on the FB page, but more information about the community would be nice.
3. Found the school district easily, not much else however. Hard to find what businesses are there. Cannot find websites.
4. Not a lot of info found. USD 351 on web site. Macksville on FaceBook, Stafford County on web. Edna’s Bar & Grill, County Store.
5. **The “Five-Minute” Impression: After taking a five-minute drive through the community without stopping, the following reactions were noted. The following observations were noted when entering the community from major entrances (signs, streetscapes, buildings, etc.)**
6. After a quick drive through, I just felt like I wouldn’t want to move here. Lots of unkempt yards, houses, couldn’t tell if buildings on main were open for business or vacant. As a lover of small towns, it made me sad. LOVED the park though. Signs looked nice, well-kept and welcoming.
7. Clean community. Didn’t see any trash lying around. There don’t seem to be animals running at large either. A couple of things that need some work would be that people need to weed eat their yards. Most of them were mowed just not trimmed. Many of the homes could use some paint. I feel like that would make a huge difference. The park was very nice…loved the bridge ways. The bathrooms in the park were nice as well. Signage to the town was good. Didn’t have any problems finding our way there.
8. Downtown and most houses were a little worn. Coat of paint would definitely help appearance. They have welcome to town on both sides. East end of highway 50 seemed cleaner and better kept up. Some buildings are in rough shape. Country store is nice looking and charming/welcoming.
9. Fairly clean and quiet rural community. Nice welcome signs at the edge of town. No street scape. Main Street looks pretty bare.

**2. Downtown Business Area**

**Describe the buildings, signs, infrastructure, etc. Explain what type of businesses you observed and give a description of the variety and quality of merchandise displayed. Describe the customer service received when you entered those retail businesses. (Were you greeted? Did you have to ask for assistance?)**

1. Mostly run down. It was easy to identify the city, library, bank and post office but the rest gave a “ghost town” vibe. On the highway we went into the Country Store. I thought they had a great variety of merchandise. Only the necessary questions were asked. (What would you like to eat, is everything okay, etc.) Not overly friendly or welcoming of new faces. The Country Store man was a little friendlier.
2. The Main Street area was not very busy. There didn’t seem to be many open if any open businesses downtown. I understand why they are on the highway as they get more traffic there. Just need to find some way to get people to still come into your town. We stopped in the tire shop. He had a wide variety of snacks and drinks. (my mother graduated from Macksville and she told me I needed to stop in there to say hello. Turns out he knew who I was as soon as I said we were from Little River…. I look exactly like my mom!) I loved how he had old sports pictures all over the walls. He recommended we eat at JT’s. Everyone there was very welcoming and nice. The food was delish as well! The auto body shop next to JT’s is where I found to be a very neat place. The man there does metal sculptures. They were so awesome! We must have stayed 45 minutes visiting with him and how he got started. We were greeted everywhere we went.
3. Small and rundown. Hard to tell what buildings/businesses are still up and running. Lot of boarded up windows. Country Store was very clean and nice selection for its size. Steel gallery looked interesting didn’t make it into it. Gentleman said hi and that was about it. Nice though.
4. Pretty bare. The City’s buildings were marked. The banks looked nice & well-kept. The empty buildings on Main look to me like they have been that way for a lot of years. West Service Station. Iron Man Studios—really neat place. JT’s Café- Good food at a Fair Price. Service was 4 star at JT’s and the food was good. Had a neat visit with the owner of “Iron Man” Brian Williamson.

**What public amenities were available (drinking fountains, benches, public restrooms, etc.) Comment on appealing landscaping and street scaping. Did you have difficulty finding parking? Could you access multiple services from where you parked?**

1. Restroom at park were obvious and labeled well. There were benches at the park and a few on main. I didn’t feel there was very structured parking. Streetscape and landscape could use some love. When parked you could easily get where needed.
2. The park had restrooms and working drinking fountains and benches. Landscaping and street scraping could use some work. Possibly some flowers and bushes. There weren’t any problems with parking that I saw.
3. Saw restrooms at park that looked up kept and clean. Didn’t go inside. Had to park along highway where most of the action is.
4. City Park looked very accommodating. All the above are covered. I really liked the rock structures in the park. Cool place. No trouble parking.
5. **Other Retail Shopping Areas**

**Describe other retail shopping areas. Were the areas attractive and easy to access?**

1. The businesses on the Highway were obvious, Downtown, not so much. Like I said before, it just wasn’t clear if the buildings were anything or vacant.
2. All of the areas were easy to access. Most were right off of the highway.
3. No Comments
4. No Comments

**4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas**

Is there a defined area where manufacturing industries could easily locate/expand? If so, describe.

1. It seemed along the highway but I didn’t notice a sign.
2. There was some open space on the main street where you could easily expand new businesses. Or possibly fix up some of the old main street businesses and expand into those.
3. Didn’t see anything labeled or developed.
4. No Comments

**5. Health Care Services**

Comment on the availability and apparent quality of hospitals and emergency medical services.

1. We did see an EMS building on our second drive through. Unclear how available the service was.
2. There didn’t seem to be any hospitals. What looked to be a nursing home didn’t look open wither.
3. Looked like a nursing home was there but didn’t look occupied any longer.
4. N/A

**Comment on the availability and condition of facilities for physicians, dentists, optometrists, public health and other healthcare providers.**

1. EMS Only
2. No Comments
3. Didn’t notice any
4. N/A

**What long-term care services, assisted living or nursing facilities exist in the community?**

1. No Comments
2. None
3. Previous Page.
4. No comments

**6. Housing**

Give a brief description of the existing mix of housing stock. Does the local market have housing that would appeal to all income wages? What challenges do you see in regards to finding acceptable housing? (Neighborhoods, size, properties for sale, etc.)

1. Noticed a few on the market. I would say it appeals to all budgets but only if you want to do work. I didn’t see a house that I would just really want if I had to move there.
2. Most of the homes looked to be older homes. There were some that with little work could be restored to look amazing. We did not notice but a couple of newer homes.
3. 4-5 houses for sale. All houses looked more in the lower income level. Didn’t see any houses I would move into. No nice houses ready to move into.
4. Saw a couple of homes marked for sale. Also see a wide variety of homes ranging from sizes large to small and old to newer.

**What kind of rental properties did you observe for persons interested in building or simply living in the community prior to buying housing?**

1. Maybe a vacant apartment building. Couldn’t really tell. Later found an actual functioning apartment building.
2. I didn’t see any “for rent” signs out in any yards. The city hall was closed so we weren’t able to ask for a list either.
3. Not sure which houses were rental.
4. Did not see any for rent. Maybe an open apartment?

**7. Schools**

**Do the following schools appear to be adequate in size or do you see the use of temporary classrooms? Are the buildings and grounds well-maintained?**

1. Schools looked great, active, well maintained, didn’t see any signs for a Pre-K or Daycare.
2. School looks like it has been added on to multiple times. Looks like they have all students in 1 building…. or close to each other. The building and grounds looked well maintained. Unknown about head start or preschool.
3. School looked clean and up kept.
4. K-12

**Were you able to find print information in the community that helped assess the quality of the educational system?**

1. Lots of “Go Mustangs” but didn’t notice any schedules or upcoming events posted anywhere.
2. No
3. No
4. No
5. **Childcare**

**Were you able to determine if childcare was affordable and available?**

1. Didn’t see any.
2. Not sure.
3. Didn’t see any.
4. Not that I saw.
5. **Faith/Religion**

**Comment on the number of denominations and the physical appearances of the churches represented in the community. Did you observe any evidence of church-sponsored community services?**

1. 3 nice churches, and noticed a building downtown with bible verses. Maybe youth group related?
2. There were four churches from what I saw. I didn’t see any signs for church sponsored community events.
3. 3 denominations looked welcoming and active.
4. Churches looked really nice. I did not see church sponsored community services at the time I was there.
5. **Civic**

**Tell about the variety of nonprofit organizations and clubs within the community.**

1. Senior Center, wasn’t active when we were there.
2. No comments.
3. Saw a senior center with no activity.
4. N/A

**Did you observe any evidence of civil organization activity?**

1. No.
2. No comments.
3. No
4. No
5. **Public Infrastructure**

**Comment in general on the streets, street signage, sidewalks, parking, lighting, restrooms, landscaping, and streetscapes in areas other than downtown. Did you observe land-use planning?**

1. Streets were labeled. I liked that there were curbs pretty much everywhere. No observe land-use planning.
2. Street signs looked nice. Didn’t see a lot of sidewalks. The park was landscaped very nice and clean. The restrooms and extra buildings in the park seemed to be in good shape. No land-use planning.
3. All sand roads that was kind of rough but had plenty of rain lately. Sidewalks looked overgrown with weeds and uneven. Some overgrown property. All signage is a little rough when you get off the highway. Maybe some land-use planning North of town.
4. Your city park is very nice! No land use planning observed.

**Comment on city/town hall (How were you received? Was there information about the town available?)**

1. Easy to locate, closed the day we went. Peeking in the windows I could see lots of information though.
2. City Hall was closed for the week.
3. It was closed after lunch because clerk had doctor appointment.
4. City Hall was closed at time of visit.

**Police/fire protection:**

1. Noticed police truck at the city building.
2. No comments.
3. Saw fire and police buildings.
4. Fire Station. Stafford County Deputy at Café where we ate lunch.

**Library:**

1. Easy to locate, had a sign, closed when we drove by.
2. No Comments
3. Closed when we went by. Clearly labeled /noticed it unlike other buildings.
4. No comments

**City parks (walking tracks, ballparks, playgrounds, sportsplex)**

1. LOVED! I hope it gets utilized for community events.
2. City park was awesome. We saw a ballpark and a football field. There was a pool as well.
3. City Park is very nice. Great place to host event or relax.
4. Very nice city park!
5. **Recreation/Tourism**

**Is the community well-known for any particular attraction or event? Do they have a community slogan that capitalizes on that asset?**

1. I saw something on Facebook about a country Christmas but didn’t see anything in town.
2. No
3. No
4. Not that I saw or found on the web.

**Did you see any indication of significant events taking place in the community that would be of interest to both visitors and residents?**

1. No
2. No
3. No
4. No

**Elaborate on any significant natural or manmade features that have the potential of drawing people to the community.**

1. No Comments
2. No Comments
3. None
4. No

**Is there an obvious visitor’s center, chamber of commerce office, main street office, or other facility that serves the needs of visitors? Comment on the staff, facilities, signage, visibility, etc.**

1. City office, very visible if you go downtown.
2. Not that I saw
3. No
4. Not that I saw

**Are there any restaurants, specialty shops or attractions that would bring you back to this community in the near future?**

1. 2 restaurants, 1 antique/thrift store. Would have checked out the store but it was closed. Would not go back for it.
2. Yes! The place that does the metal sculptures was awesome! I loved it there!
3. Ate at Edna’s decent burger 2 roaches on the floor crawling around. Would not make special trip back.
4. The Art Gallery is a neat place for sure, and if It was dinner time I wouldn’t have any problem eating @ JT’s, good food at a fair price.
5. **Wrap-up**

**What are the most positive things you observed about the community?**

1. The park, schools and churches
2. Very friendly small town! Great park, pool and many churches.
3. 2 restaurants, 2 gas stations, great city park. Very active swimming pool.
4. Two Filling stations, Two places to eat and two banks. Diversity in the churches.

**What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?**

1. Getting people to want to move in, or move back after graduating. Getting new businesses, liveliness.
2. Need more businesses…. that would maybe help bring people back to town. (Jobs) It’s very hard to accomplish this one though.
3. Housing and creating jobs for people to move into the community.
4. Losing any more of the small businesses!

**What will you remember most about this community six month from now (positive or negative)?**

1. I think I’ll just remember thinking they have a cool park.
2. Positive…I have already told people about the metal sculpture place!
3. Neat park and clean school and swimming pool for size of town. Run down property not much activity going on.
4. There is a big difference in our town compared to Macksville. Just because it is different, doesn’t mean it is wrong! I was not disappointed at all with my visit to Macksville.



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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Stations and Cooperative Extension Service

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