First Impressions

Compiled Report Form

Community Visited: Morland Date(s) Visited: 9/1/16

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?

Found Morland on the Get Rural Kansas website. It is not included in the Discover Graham County website under the cities tab. The website has good information and lots of interesting history. Contact information needs to be updated.

1. 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.)

Nice welcome sign when turning off of HWY 24. An attractive little community when looking down from the hill before crossing the bridge. Morland has a lot to offer for the size of the community. Very clean Main Street. A few places could use some clean-up.

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?)

Mercantile is a wonderful store. Well stocked, has a meat counter, and even has a small library. Staff very friendly. The bank not only provides financial services but is also a tourist attraction with the comic book collection, the drawings and other items. Staff is very knowledgeable about the history and has a passion for the community. The restaurant is also a dual purpose facility, restaurant plus historical museum. So much to see! The incubator kitchen is incredible. Need to figure out a method for marketing this facility. The Foundation Building is an historic building but has several broken windows which need repaired.

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

 Main Street had nice planter boxes and was clean and attractive. The mini park filled in

 a vacant lot and was also attractive. Restrooms were found in the park and were clean.

 Nice benches to sit and relax.

1. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

NA

4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

Ag facilities are located on the north side of town on the west side of the road. Typical for a small community. The old school has been converted into a commercial facility but has changed hands several times.

5. Health Care Services

Comment on the availability and apparent quality of hospitals and emergency medical services. Comment on the availability and condition of facilities for physicians, dentists, optometrists, public health and other healthcare providers. What long-term care services, assisted living or nursing facilities exist in the community?

 NA

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

There is a mix of housing in Morland. Some nice homes with well-kept yards and also some older homes which needed attention.

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

 NA - converted for other uses

1. Childcare

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

Did not ask about this

1. 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?

There are two churches in Morland. At the Methodist church, the grass was mowed but the trees had overgrown the signage and we couldn’t tell for sure if it was an active church. Some maintenance is needed. The Assembly of God Church looked to be well maintained.

1. Civic

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

Morland has a very active Community Foundation. It is very evident Faye Minium was a strong leader for the community and the incubator kitchen is a wonderful legacy.

1. 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?

Streets were a mix of paved and sand/gravel but in good shape. Restrooms in the park.

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

Staff at city hall was very helpful and shared a wealth of information.

Police/fire protection:

 Very nice volunteer fire department. Law enforcement is through the county.

Library:

Small library located in the grocery store where folks can leave books to be exchanged. May want to consider getting books from the NW Kansas Library system and change these out on a regular basis.

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

City park is conveniently located right on the north side of town. Has nice play equipment, a good restroom facility and a nice memorial bench. Basketball courts are also located by the park. The ball field is no longer in use and could use some attention. Might want to explore some possible alternative uses.

1. Recreation/Tourism

Is the community well-known for any particular attraction or event? Do they have a community slogan that capitalizes on that asset? Did you see any indication of significant events taking place in the community that would be of interest to both visitors and residents? Elaborate on any significant natural or manmade features that have the potential of drawing people to the community. 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.

The city office and bank seem to be the places to find information on Morland and they are happy to share with you. The Morland Foundation has a small museum and also a meeting space. The bank houses the comic book collection, the drawings and several wooden models. They also have information on the archeological site located close by.

Prairie Junction restaurant is a treasure in itself. The baseball and old kitchen collections are impressive. Incubator Kitchen is an attraction which needs to be better marketed. Not sure what the old depot is used for. This could be turned into something really neat. There is also the Pratt Pony Bridge.

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

Prairie Junction has great food and atmosphere along with a variety of homemade ice creams. The incubator kitchen is another attraction.

13. Wrap-up

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

 Lots to offer for a community of about 150 people.

 Incubator kitchen, grocery store, and restaurant – incredible services

 Their own community foundation – shows the progressiveness of its residents

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

 Small population meaning many individuals are over-committed

 Keeping a business in the old schools so the buildings don’t just deteriorate

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

Everything it has to offer – grocery store, incubator kitchen, precision planting business, the restaurant and friendliness of the people.

First Impressions was developed by the University of Wisconsin-Extension and adapted for use by K-State Research and Extension. Funds for this program have been made possible by a partnership with the Dane G. Hansen Foundation, Logan, KS.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Stations and Cooperative Extension Service

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Works, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914 as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and the United State Department of Agriculture Cooperating, John D. Floros, Director.