First Impressions

Compiled Report Form

Community Visited: Osborne Date(s) Visited: 7/29&31/17; 8/3&11/17

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?

*It was easy to get on the internet. They had a lot of information covered – churches, transportation and the history of Osborne.*

*Googled – Found Discover Osborne right away. Liked the site except the calendar was very empty. Nothing going on? Other than that very pleased with the website.*

*Typed in Osborne, KS and discover Osborne popped up. Lots of good info. No info about daycares on website. Web page was easy to navigate. Lots of useful info except calendar was blank. Need to update with info.*

*No access to web.*

*Not much info on school website. Lots of info about and for businesses on city website. Churches and organizations listed but no events/activities. City website is well designed, accurate description of town.*

*Googled “Osborne, KS” and brought me directly to discoverosborne.com.*

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.)

*I have a good impression of Osborne besides the trashy houses. They didn’t have many signs downtown and most of the streets were clean. Some buildings look junky.*

*There were some very large houses. Signage lacking. Didn’t notice way finder signs right away. West side of town pleasant. East not so much. NE rich part. Liked the Roadside Park info & mailbox. Water fountain needs to be removed if not working. Very school spirited town. Go Bulldogs! Didn’t notice signage to welcome us in. Buildings seemed to be well kept except city hall need paint. Junk yard?? Not sure, no sign – lots of old trucks, cars, etc.*

*Nice town. People either take pride and have nice yards or their property needs lots of help. West side of town nicer than east side of town. City Park on North edge of town neat. Really liked how you could leave a note in the mailbox. We didn’t notice any welcome signs.*

*Not much as far as signs to let you know where to go. Later located them with street signs. Homes were either very nice or very poor kept. Entered from the south on 281. Not much signage. Ordinary streetscape with a few nicer homes.*

*Empty buildings on Main Street. Nice industrial park and ball fields. Fair was happening-nice event and fairgrounds. Beautiful up-kept houses and yards. No signs. Clean landscaping and streets. Appropriate buildings on HWY for travelers/tourists.*

*Roadside Park clean, new paint on shelters would help. Sidewalks?? Looks like a clean town, nice houses besides some that look run down and unlivable. Coming from North, welcome to Osborne sign. Flowers would add life and attention to this. It was hard to find.*

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?)

*Some of the buildings need to be maintained a little more. The window displays aren’t that great. There was a large variety of businesses. Was not greeted in the hardware store. They had a large selection for a small town.*

*Lots of empty buildings. Like that some store fronts had a display in window even if store was out of business. One building, north side, has something hanging down on top, looks dangerous! Drug store, appliance/furniture, flower shop/gift shop, banks. Greeted everywhere – drug store, hardware store, appliance/furniture, flower shop, Rusty Spur.*

*Wayfinding signs on top of street signs were easily missed. Several downtown buildings empty. Some store fronts in bad shape – need paint, spruced up. We stopped in Pharmacy. Good selection of gifts. Staff friendly and helpful. Ate at Rusty Spur – good food and friendly staff. Flower shop was closed. Furniture & appliance store had a nice selection of furniture/appliances. True Value – neat store, friendly staff and got to meet “George” the cat. All businesses we stopped at were friendly.*

*Business area quiet, empty of retail stores with un-kept buildings on both sides of street. Eye doctor, flower shop which was closed that day for business, lawyer offices, appliance/furniture store, small variety store, credit union, senior center. Was greeted by clerks in all stores visited and were more than happy to assist you.*

*Some buildings need painted, renovated, tore down. Nex-Tech office is good, free wifi spots are awesome. Most buildings look to be in decent shape, just empty. Furniture, health, guns, flowers. Jewelry store closed. Most small businesses not open very often. Employees were polite, kind and helpful. Willing to stay after hours if we needed them to.*

*Curious about downtown stores – are they open or closed down? There are items in the windows. Drug store looks like they sell nice items. Clothes sold @ Flower Shop. They look like quality clothes.*

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?

*There was a drinking fountain in roadside park (did not work). Some of the sidewalks were cracked. Not downtown. Yes, because most all services are downtown.*

*Didn’t see a working drinking fountain. Didn’t go in city office and I know the city clerk – Jackie. Yes there were benches in parks. Crossing Hwy – wow! Liked the street lights.*

*Bathroom downtown by fountain was locked. Noticed other bathrooms in City Park by school but didn’t check to see if they were open. No drinking fountains, no benches. Parked for lunch at Rusty Spur and walked uptown. Lots of buildings. Surprised so many were empty. Parking was not a problem anywhere we went.*

*Nice little area downtown with seating. A cute water feature with flower garden. Had a bathroom but it was locked in the middle of the day, also a drinking fountain in north side park didn’t work. Ample parking for businesses we visited. Noticed quite a few people on street for number of empty buildings.*

*Outdoor public restrooms were locked (understandable). Didn’t see any drinking fountains. More benches would be great – especially in park. Awesome landscaping on Main Street, plenty of parking available. Fountain is neat. Main Street is nice with library, park, courthouse, etc.*

*I could not find restrooms, went to gas station. Found water fountain @ roadside park however it didn’t work.*

1. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

*There was a hardware store that was very attractive and it was easy parking.*

*Not much other retail.*

*All stores were easy to find. Store front parking.*

*Visited a hardware store north edge of town. Nice store, friendly people, nice parking lot, along with Pizza Hut and historic area and a restaurant which was closed for vacation.*

*North side of town – clean, well maintained. Would have to drive rather than walk. Accessible from highways.*

4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

 *The industrial park looked like it was filled with businesses.*

 *Signage needed and weed control.*

*Nice industrial park on the east side of town. Updated runway at airport. Airport could use new sign. Kind of faded and needs new paint.*

*Large industrial area! Some buildings marked well with large signs.*

*East side of town – nice area. Many businesses in industrial park – not for sure if there is much room to expand. Airport needs work – paint, repair, signs, info.*

*NW part of town could be expanded.*

5. Health Care Services

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

 *I liked how the emergency room was right there.*

*Hospital looked good.*

*Hospital and clinic close to each other. Hospital looked like it was in good condition with easy access to clinic across the street.*

*In the past had to use the emergency room. They were quite helpful. They offer a lot of services for a small hospital.*

*It was hard to find the hospital – very few signs. Two clinics and mental health. Don’t know where EMS is located.*

*There is a hospital on the west side of town with an ER. Very important when looking at small communities.*

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

 *I liked how the clinic was by the hospital and easy to find.*

 *Eye doctors, dentist, doctors.*

*Dr.’s office building outside looked nice. Don’t remember seeing a dentist office. Eye doctor’s office was locate downtown, as was health department.*

*Hospital is easy to find and access for impaired patients.*

*Saw health department, dentist, eye doctor, pharmacy all either on or near the main street. Two medical clinics and a hospital.*

*Health Department, Mental Health services, long term care, dental, chiropractor, optometrist – many health services online @ the discoverosborne.com website.*

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

 *I didn’t go into the nursing home but from the outside it looked well kept.*

 *Skilled nursing.*

*Can’t remember name, but seen retirement facility towards the north end of town. Looked very nice and inviting.*

*Very nice nursing home on north side of town.*

*Parkview located in northern part of town – assumed that was long term care. High Plains Mental Health center branch office.*

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.)

 *I saw a few homes for sale, mainly middle income.*

 *Several houses for sale and received a list for rentals.*

*We noticed there wasn’t many houses for sale. Houses on east side of town are more run down, un-mowed yards, junk cars, trash in yards, furniture on porch or in yards. West side of town had properties that were better kept, yards mowed, flowers planted.*

*Seen only a few homes with realtor signs in yards. Most were average income families. Chamber office had a list of real estate agents.*

*There seemed to be an acceptable size housing market. Houses of different sizes and different neighborhoods. Mostly nice houses.*

*It looks like there is one house on the market according to Zillow. A couple houses for sale were noticed while driving around.*

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

 *I don’t know.*

*Fixer uppers to move in ready.*

*Housing apartments on south east side of town – looked nice and well maintained. City Hall/Chamber gave us a list of people to contact for rental properties.*

*None were seen but check with Chamber office who supplied us with a list of people to contact for rental properties.*

*There’s land available and advertised. Didn’t see signs for houses for rent but there’s a couple houses online. Don’t know if there are apartments, low-income housing?*

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?

*I liked how close the high school and grade school were, they do look big on the outside. They look good from the outside.*

*Grade and High School, great community school pride.*

*Liked how all schools all together. Nice looking school-well maintained.*

*Schools seem to be adequate in size. Parking looked like it might be short of space for size of building. Exterior in good condition.*

*No signs around schools, didn’t know where they were at, which buildings were which, pre-k, kindergarten? Schools are in a good location, had to search for track/field but it was well maintained, more guest seating would be great.*

*I saw an elementary & Middle/High school. The playground was very well taken care of and there was a sidewalk around the school.*

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

*All I seen on the website was the junior/senior high school picture but it didn’t list information.*

*Good web site.*

*No info about school education quality. Lunch menu for August already posted.*

*No internet access.*

*Creating a home page would be great. There’s not much info about the school, just info for current students. I read somewhere that graduates get many scholarships, no info or proof? Good school calendar.*

1. Childcare

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

*Riding through the area I didn’t see much.*

*Asked at city office. 3 available but all full.*

*Didn’t notice any daycares. City office gave us 3 names of providers to call.*

*None were visible but again chamber good place to check. They said only 3 in town and were all filled up.*

*In home daycares, looks nice on the outside.*

*I did not see any.*

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 were a lot of churches.*

*Lots of churches.*

*Lots of churches – all denominations. Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist churches all looked like they were maintained and used.*

*Osborne has quite a number of churches and look well kempt from outside appearances.*

*Churches are easy to find on website and online. Physical appearances aren’t very good – it was difficult to know which ones were active. Methodist church sign.*

*Is Baptist Church still in use? Church on HWY by Dollar General still in use? It’s very overgrown.*

1. Civic

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

*I saw a VFW while going around.*

*Didn’t notice any.*

*Seen sign for gun club.*

*Seen Senior Center downtown.*

*Scout cabin – boy scouts, county fair – really nice*

*One Rotary sign was the only thing I noted.*

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?

*The trees looked good, but the streets and sidewalks needed some repair.*

*No unlocked public restrooms.*

*Streets were all in decent shape. City was patching holes. Not many sidewalks in residential areas. Restrooms are there – if they are unlocked. Fountain, benches and flowers were attractive, however benches were old and could use paint (one by fountain).*

*Some streets in need of repair. Signage lacking. Not many sidewalks in residential areas, parking adequate, and nice looking street lights downtown, public restrooms lacking.*

*Streets are in good shape, parking and landscape good. More sidewalks and lights by the pool would be great.*

*Signage from 281HWY to football field could be improved. Sidewalks are in poor condition and at times non-existent.*

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

*The staff seemed cold and didn’t give a lot of information.*

*Nice – yes*

*Only one person went in as Jackie may know us. They gave info about rental properties and daycares.*

*Town hall combined with chamber office. Ladies at desk seemed to be a bit standoffish and a bit reluctant to help since the chamber clerk was not in her office to help.*

*City Hall could use paint. I did not go in.*

Police/fire protection:

 *I didn’t see any.*

 *Seen empty cop cars on streets.*

 *Seen a couple of cop cars. Don’t remember seeing fire station. Must have missed it.*

 *Didn’t visit but seen station – small.*

 *Didn’t notice fire/police, maybe by the courthouse.*

Library:

 *The library was beautiful on the outside.*

 *2*

 *Two libraries side by side – not sure why they have 2*

 *Nice, newer building and older historical building close by*

 *Libraries look awesome – two of them in great shape, great location near park.*

 *Library seems very nice for this size of town. It seems to be well kept.*

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

 *Their parks are really nice and the baseball fields are nice.*

 *Nice parks.*

*Ball fields on west side of town very nice. Looks well taken care of. Hard to tell when empty if there would be enough parking if all 4 fields are being used. Like the parks located around town.*

*Golf course, nice playgrounds, lots of small parks, well kept. High school track and football field in good condition but parking not the best, too small.*

*Nice baseball complex and signage. A walking track would be great.*

*No sidewalks around the parks. The football field was hard to find.*

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?

*I don’t know, I didn’t see or hear anything.*

*Didn’t notice.*

*Discover Osborne listed high school state championships. Noticed bulldog merchandise (shirts) for sale in 2 businesses. Also felt like town had lots of school spirit and supported their school sports. Did not notice any specific attraction.*

*Not that I know of.*

*On the website it mentioned that it’s “Right in the Center”. The main town in a rural county.*

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

*No*

*No*

*Nothing in Osborne, Tipton picnic flyer posted in several businesses*

*No*

*The fair was going on but there were no signs, posters, info at local businesses.*

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

 *An old time scout house.*

 *Roadside Park.*

 *Didn’t see any.*

 *Rolling hills topography, junction of highways.*

 *Their fair grounds look like there could be potential.*

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.

*There was a chamber of commerce and the lady was not on hand.*

*Needs better signage and a paint job.*

*Park on north side of town was nice. Liked mailbox where you could leave a message. Chamber/City Hall could use brighter, better signage. Drove past it before we realized what it was. Way finding signs would stand out better than signs on top of street signs. We looked at street names and missed the other signs. Seen Christmas lights on top of main street buildings but not sure if they worked. Looked like they were missing bulbs.*

*Chamber of Commerce office and city clerk office one on Hwy 281 – chamber secretary was out of office. City clerk’s office not real friendly. Made one feel uncomfortable.*

*Chamber office, other offices on/near main. Good signage, easy to find, friendly staff and visible.*

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

*The Mexican restaurant would be something I would go back for.*

*Circle Inn was closed but looked nice. Rusty Spur – good.*

*No.*

*Not really unless I was just passing through.*

*Good variety of restaurant. Nothing in particular stands out but it’s a very cute community.*

*I would like to check out the North 40 Alpaca Store.*

1. Wrap-up

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

 *Their school spirit!*

*Friendly town – people waved. Overall fairly cleaned up but where it’s dumpy it’s really dumpy!*

*Friendly people. We got lots of waves! Some people stared but usually still waved. (We were sometimes driving slow and looking at things.)*

*This community has real strong support for its school sports as signs in yards, on cars, and pictures in the restaurants we visited.*

*Very cute, nice town. I would live here. Friendly people, rural community. Has a great variety of stores, really nice houses. Great parks/libraries for kids.*

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

 *Some of the properties were not kept up because people didn’t care.*

*Dumpsters everywhere!! Why? Signage, clean-up day – tires and old cars/trucks, getting downtown businesses.*

*Trash dumpsters, lots and lots of dumpsters. Some in alleys and some in front yards. Not sure why so many dumpsters in the town. Run down properties. People need to clean up yards. Haul junk to dump – very unattractive. Have community cleanup day. Empty stores on Main Street.*

*As with most small towns, lack of support for town businesses as many empty buildings on Main Street show.*

*Businesses (empty buildings) on Main Street. Updating school.*

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

 *Nothing positive and nothing negative.*

*Friendly, people out on the downtown sidewalks, dumpsters, extra-large homes, wood piles.*

*We (Lincoln) have a lot of similarities with Osborne. Some nice properties, some that could be torn down. Some well taken care of and some that could use a clean-up day and junk hauled off. We (Lincoln) have empty buildings on main as does Osborne. One thing I noticed is lots of people plant gardens. I think Osborne people garden more than Lincoln people.*

*The amount of public parks in community well taken care of and second thing the over-abundance of trash dumpsters in front yards no matter what condition the home and yards were.*

*It was great to find places such as the schools and hospital. More signage would be great. The houses and landscaping around town are nice and look clean and kept up.*

Recommendations:

* Updated signage – welcome and way finder
* Store front signage
* Main Street beautification
* Community clean-up days
* Customer service training
* Community events listed on Discover Osborne Website
* Links to school, county and businesses on website
* Promotion of the many recreational opportunities
* Promotion of our commercial/industrial/agriculture services available

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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Stations and Cooperative Extension Service

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