First Impressions

Compiled Report Form

Community Visited: Bird City Date(s) Visited: May 4, 2016

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?

*Web search was easily obtained with web-page design very user friendly. Number of businesses mentioned included “home-type” companies which provided a wide variety of services/products available.*

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.)

*After a 5 minute drive through, we basically felt Bird City was a very nice small community with a very strong faith base due to the number of well-groomed churches.*

*Upon entering the city from the east, the initial reaction wasn’t positive due to the elevator, large pile of cement rubble as well as older grain bins in disrepair – something that would be costly to make attractive. Signage on the east side was more numerous than on the west side.*

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?)

*The buildings on the north/south business street represented older, abandoned buildings, however the east/west business section seemed more vibrant. We observed Fire/EMS Building, second hand store, historical museum, senior center, Post Office, grocery store, community foundation, hot brush lettering, American Legion/community building. First stop was grocery store – very clean, organized and well-stocked. Met by friendly staff. Second-hand store also had friendly staff and very organized.*

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?

*Benches and drinking fountains were not available in the downtown business area. We did happen upon the park area which provided public restrooms. Streets are nice and wide with approximate 50/50 of paved roads and well-graveled roads. We did not experience parking issues.*

1. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

*Café was easily accessible – restroom facilities could only be reached by going outside of the restaurant part.*

4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

*With several abandoned buildings, new industries could easily locate/expand to this community.*

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?

*A medical clinic was available in the business district area with limited hours. Ambulatory services did seem to be available. No noticeable long-term care facilities. A low-rent housing complex was present.*

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?

*A nice mix of houses available. Several were for sale. Renting was very limited and could be an issue.*

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?

*School located at the south end of town. Well maintained facility with pre-school thru high school available. Consolidated with another small community – Cheylin.*

1. Childcare

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

*No community child-care center and no information in regards to private day care.*

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?

*Numerous religious denominations represented with well-kept facilities. Signage was present outside.*

1. Civic

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

*None available.*

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?

*Street clearly marked with wide streets – part paved others graveled. Overall, most properties were maintained to an attractive level. No land use planning observed.*

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

*City office was easy to locate. Received by friendly staff and provided a pamphlet.*

Police/fire protection:

*Sheriff cars observed in community with fire station.*

Library:

*Available with limited hours.*

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

*Very impressive park once we located it. Signage on highway gave address but we felt there should be more directions once in town. Clean restrooms with sand volleyball area and large building. Very beautiful. Swimming pool facilities.*

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.

*Yearly Antique Engine and Thresher held end of July. Nice grounds for such event.*

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

*The Antique Engine and Thresher Event.*

13. Wrap-up

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

*Obviously working to make improvements to better the community. Park was very nice. They take pride in their community.*

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

*Clean-up of elevator area on the north end of town.*

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

*Attractive park.*

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.