First Impressions 

**Team Report Form**

Community Visited: Clyde Date Visited: May 17, 2018

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?

*The Clyde city website was easy to find and access. The website is full of information. The website has links to other interests within the town, such as the school district. I felt the website was pretty accurate.*

*City website was very informative and appeared to be up to date. Very easy to find information about the community via city website and Facebook. Especially liked that the schools tab listed higher education choices in the area and the distance to each.*

1. The “Five-Minute” Impression: After taking a five-minute drive through the community without stopping, the following reactions were noted.

*Clyde is very clean and well kept. Yards and homes were very neat and tidy. People wave when driving past their homes. Areas of town that had large vacant areas were mowed and well kept.*

*Main Street had a nice variety of businesses, benches, American flags and eagle statues. Houses were well kept as well as lawns. Street signs to identify where areas of interest were located (i.e. pool, ball diamond, cemetery, etc.). No real convenience store, which was unexpected. Looked like only 1 place to purchase fuel.*

*The amount of business downtown was impressive. Some businesses however did not have hours of operation posted and some you could not tell what they were until you went in them. Grocery store had no sign other than those in the window. Houses looked well-kept and clean. Lots of trees. Everyone we passed waved to us and made us feel welcome.*

The following observations were noted when entering the community from major entrances (signs, streetscapes, buildings, etc.)

*The signage at each entrance was large. Brick sign with message “Welcome to Clyde”. Beside that was a sign listing the churches in town. Street signs were placed in visible locations and there were very visible signs with arrows directing the way to parks, schools and other public areas.*

*Nice brick sign at both major entrances (south on HWY 9 and east on HWY9) that included the date of founding and signage about the churches in town. The church signs on the southern entrance was partially covered by a tree and was difficult to see. Very easy to find downtown from either entrance.*

*Signs were clear and easy to read. Arrows gave good directions on where to turn. Clyde brick sign was beautiful.*

2. Downtown Business Area

Describe the buildings, signs, infrastructure, etc.

*Buildings are in great shape. Empty buildings are painted and well kept.*

*Buildings were nicely maintained, unfortunately some did not have identifying signs or hours listed, others had the name of the business on the storefront but no way of knowing the type of store. Adequate parking available downtown, appropriate number of street lights. Digital sign was very nice and easy to spot downtown.*

*Some of the buildings – even the ones open, had no hours posted or you could not figure out what the business was. All empty buildings still looked clean and maintained.*

Explain what type of businesses you observed and give a description of the variety and quality of merchandise displayed.

*Grocery store, Jewelry store, Farm and Home Supply, Clothing/Department store. There was a large selection of merchandise in each of the businesses. The only problem is there are no hours posted at any business. That makes it difficult for visitors.*

*Car repair shop, Napa auto parts, mortuary, senior center, car dealership (no information on how to contact them), Farm & Home Store, 2 banks, seed store, bar/tavern. Hotel, salon, library, chiropractor, post office, healthcare office, grocery store (no identifying sign), City Hall, jewelry store, and several thrift shops.*

*The Farm & Home Store was just amazing! Like a small-town Walmart without the hassle of actually going to Walmart. All items were at reasonable prices. The person working there was kind enough to let us use their restroom as we couldn’t find a public restroom downtown. She did tell us the only other public restrooms were at the pool.*

*Blackwood Department Store had a lot of cute items, but no hours listed, reasonable prices.*

*Grocery store was fantastic for a small town, but no identifying sign. Decent selection of produce and frozen items. All prices were very reasonable. Had supplies for school projects (poster board, markers, etc.). Had generic brand items as well as name brand.*

*We had lunch at Twinks. Unexpectedly spoke with a lady we were acquainted with shortly after we arrived as we were walking downtown. She gave us a heads up to get to Twinks by 11:45 am as there would be a chamber of commerce meeting that day and more people would be eating than normal. The food and prices were good. Surprising menu selection. Given the number of people eating that day, the service was quick. Wait staff was a little behind on getting drinks refilled but it was understandable given how busy they were and there was only 1 waitress. Was very impressive that one person was able to man the grill/kitchen for the entire time we were there. Restrooms were clean. There wasn’t any information on how to pay. We sat for quite a while after we finished and finally had to catch the waitress to figure out how to pay. From the outside, there was no way of knowing they served food, it just looked like a bar.*

*Both the grocery store and the Farm & Home had a wonderful variety of products and reasonably priced. From the retail shops available you could really get everything you needed.*

Describe the customer service received when you entered those retail businesses. (Were you greeted? Did you have to ask for assistance?)

*We were greeted at each business and made to feel welcome.*

*The assistance at the Farm & Home Store was great. We could tell she was hesitant to allow use of their restroom (don’t blame her for that) but she went out of her way to help us. She also told us that if we were going to eat at Twinks, we needed to get there early on the day of our visit due to the chamber meeting. Shared that the town went for a while without a restaurant and there was a negative effect on the town. Everyone was so happy to have a place to eat again. We asked her about a convenience store to get drinks on the way out of town. She did say how sad they were they didn’t have a convenience store and that the grocery store did carry some cold drinks.*

*The service at Twinks was good given how many people were eating there over the lunch hour the day of our visit. As we were paying, the waitress apologized for being a little flustered while waiting on us.*

*Very friendly, all greeted us and asked if we needed help. We were peeking into the library since it was closed and a lady opened it up to see if she could help us with anything.*

What public amenities (drinking fountains, benches, public restrooms, trash receptacles and Wi-Fi, etc.) were available?

*No drinking fountains or public restrooms except at the park which is a distance from downtown. The restaurant has public restrooms. Access to Wi-Fi is at the library. Trash receptacles were placed in several locations around town.*

*We found a small water spigot at the park near the pool, but there didn’t appear to be any public drinking fountains in the downtown area. There were nice benches along the main street and the reflection park. The digital sign was very nice. The only public restrooms were at the pool. While there was toilet paper and paper towels in both the men’s and women’s restrooms, the cleanliness was lacking. The trash cans downtown were very nice and matched the stonework the light poles were made of. The opening of one trash can was facing the incorrect direction (toward the building) and it was nearly impossible to get anything into it. This could have been due to the lid being placed backward by maintenance personnel. We didn’t notice if there was Wi-Fi available as we left our phones alone so we could focus on the visit.*

*Lots of nice benches and trash receptacles. Only saw one public restroom at the pool – it was open but full of bugs. Drinking fountains at the park.*

Comment on landscaping and streetscaping. Did you have difficulty finding parking? Could you access multiple services from where you parked?

*Parking was accessible and street lights matched the trash receptacles which looked very nice.*

*There wasn’t any difficulty finding parking and we were able to walk through downtown easily.*

*Easy walk from anywhere you parked. Park downtown with benches was nice and clean. Cars did seem to go fast down main street.*

1. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

*There were no other retail shopping areas. There seemed to be a lack of gas stations, we only found one and there were no hours posted so not sure if it is available in the evenings for visitors.*

*We did not notice any other retail shopping areas other than the downtown area.*

*Did not notice any other retail shops other than the ones on Main Street and around the corner. Would be nice to see a larger convenience store to get drinks, snacks and use the restroom.*

4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

*There did not seem to be a designated area for industry, but there are open areas on the edge of town in several directions.*

*It did not appear there was a designated industrial park or commercial area. There was a nice seed supplier on edge of town.*

*Outskirts of town looked like they could be expanded if necessary.*

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.

*There is a Chiropractor and a Family Physician office which both seemed to be well kept. There was an office downtown that was a Family Cary Center we tried to go in but it was closed. There were no dentists or optometrist. All facilities were very well cared for.*

*There were 2 locations for health care services in town. The family care center was easy to access downtown. We stumbled upon Clyde Family Physicians. We saw the cross on the building and originally thought the building was part of the church that was to the east of it. As we drove by and saw the sign, we realized the cross indicated a physician and not a church building. It’s very impressive that there are 2 health care option in town. The facilities for the family care center downtown were easy to find and the signage was easy to read. It would be nice to have hours posted. Clyde Family Physicians is off main street and it might be nice to have one of the blue directional signs showing how to locate it. Signage on the outside of the building could also be larger. We weren’t able to visit either location as they were closed. We wondered if there was a pharmacy in town since there were health care facilities or if residents had to travel to nearby towns to get prescriptions filled. We were very impressed there was also a chiropractor in town.*

*Impressed with the health care and chiropractor facility. Pharmacy or a drug store would be nice to supplement the above mentioned. Did find a family physician office in town, not well labeled and we thought it was a church at first.*

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

*We found one Nursing Home that offers long term and short term care. They also have adult day care and Meals on Wheels for seniors.*

*As we drove by Park Villa Nursing Home, everyone who was outside waved, which was very nice. Residents as well as workers appeared very happy. It was nice to know they provide respite care as well as day care. The outpatient programs are also very impressive for a small town. It appears the nursing home is a large employer in the community. The grounds and facility were very nicely kept and the signage was excellent.*

*Nursing home looked large and well maintained. Easy to find.*

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.)

*Clyde has a diverse assortment of houses but only saw 4 for sale signs.*

*We noticed there were many older houses in Clyde and they were all extremely well taken care of. Most of the older houses kept the traditional paint schemes, which was very charming. There was a nice mix of older homes and newer in varying sizes. When we asked the lady at the city hall, she indicated that most individuals selling houses did so on their own without a realtor so we would need to search the internet or look at the city website for housing that was available. We saw approximately 4 houses for sale so there would be multiple options available when house searching. We did notice that the lot sizes throughout the community seemed to be larger than most small towns. There were a few yards that were not nicely kept.*

*Not a lot of houses for sale. Nice range of house sizes, but if looking to relocate here it would be difficult to find a house. Nice big lawns and yards.*

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

*I did not see any for rent signs in yards and there were none listed on the website. They have a large apartment building available for low income people.*

*We were told at city hall that rental properties were very hard to come by and if any did come available they were spoken for usually the same day.*

*Apartment building showed rentals available. City clerk said rentals get picked up quick. Did not have a list of available. Would be nice to have an updated list to pick up and possible landlords to contact.*

7. Schools

What schools are present? (Head Start, Preschool, K-8, High School, Post-Secondary, etc.) Do the schools appear to be adequate in size? Are the buildings and grounds well-maintained? Were you able to find online information that helped assess the quality of the educational system?

*The high school is located in Clyde for their school district and the grade school and middle school are located in the nearby town of Clifton. The city website has a link to the school district website.*

*We learned at city hall that Clyde was part of a unified school district with Clifton. The grade school and middle school were located in Clifton (a short drive away) and the high school was located in Clyde. It was nice to know that bus routes picked children up at their homes instead of bus stops on the way to the grade and middle school in Clifton. The high school seemed to be a nice size. The buildings were well maintained. The parking lot was showing some age. Individuals were maintaining the football field the day of our visit. We did notice that parking may be a bit limited at the high school for larger events such as football or basketball games. It was nice to see the high school appeared to have a weight room/gym. It was also very nice to see the high school had a student of the month and that person had a reserved parking spot. The USD 224 website didn’t really indicate the grade and middle schools were located in another town. There wasn’t much information on the USD 224 website that would be helpful in assessing the quality of the school. It just contained basic information that would be useful for those already a part of the district. Would be nice if there was a tab or place to click for someone new to the area/district. I felt the city website was more helpful in obtaining information about the school than the USD 224 website. I found it very helpful that the city website listed that USD 224 was close to higher education and listed the options which were less than 1 hour away.*

*High School well maintained. Parking looked small, especially for home games. Seems like it would be crowded. Nice football field.*

1. Childcare

What childcare service are available? Is it affordable?

*There were 3 childcare services available, all in home. We were not able to find any pricing.*

*The city website listed several options for childcare. We were unable to obtain information on affordability. When we asked at the city office, the lady wasn’t sure of the cost. She did say that the daycares were in home, licensed providers.*

*Several in home daycare providers. City Clerk did have this information for us.*

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 3 churches in Clyde. I did not see any evidence of church sponsored community services. On the website there were 2 additional churches listed within a few miles of town. There were a large number of youth and adult church organizations.*

*There were 3 churches located within Clyde according to the city website, a couple rural churches which we did not visit. The churches in town had nice signage and were nicely maintained. There was a nice variety of denominations. We could tell Clyde is a tight knit community as there was a sign at the grocery store indicating they would be closed for 2 hours in the afternoon to attend a funeral at a local church. The two cemeteries were easily marked via the blue directional signs and were nicely kept.*

*3 churches – list of churches welcomes you were nice signs at entrance of town.*

1. Civic

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

Did you observe any evidence of civic organization activity?

*Several civic organizations – Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, PEO, VFW, Clyde area Foundation, Beautification Committee, Historical Society. There was a chamber meeting taking place while we were there.*

*The only organization we found out about during the visit was the Chamber of Commerce. Several folks mentioned there was a Chamber meeting that day and if we wanted to eat at Twinks we needed to get there early. I referred to the city website to find information about other organizations. I was very impressed with the Clyde Area Foundation and that the website listed the foundation board members. The organizations page of the city website is very impressive for a small town. It would be hard to know about the majority of these organizations if it wasn’t for the website. I could see there was a VFW and Senior Center in town but both had very little information posted. Having multiple organizations for children is a great asset for the community. During the visit it was hard to tell if there was any civic activity. It was easy to see that the downtown area was well maintained and had great benches, trash cans, etc. but we didn’t know what groups helped provide or maintain them.*

*Chamber of Commerce was meeting at the restaurant while we were eating there.*

1. Public Infrastructure

Comment in general on the streets, street signage, sidewalks, parking, lighting, restrooms, landscaping, and streetscapes in areas **other than downtown**.

*The town is laid out in an unusual way as there are not cross streets intersecting to form blocks which was odd. Street lights seemed a little far apart for good lighting. Parking at the park and pool did not seem adequate. Also the baseball field did not have parking available. Streets and street signs were in good condition.*

*In general, I was concerned about parking in the areas outside of downtown. The parking lot at the high school seemed quite small for a football or basketball game. Additionally, the parking near the baseball field looked quite limited too. The park was very nicely maintained however, there were a few boards in the fence surrounding the park that could use some maintenance. The blue street signs were easy to see however the directional signs (how to get to the ball diamond, arboretum, etc. were somewhat small and hard to see unless you were within ½ block). The only public restrooms at the pool could use some cleaning, although it was nice to see there was toilet paper and paper towels. I could see where not having additional restrooms in the area could become problematic during a baseball game. Our visit was during the day so it was hard to determine if lighting was adequate. It did seem that there were parts of town where street lights were pretty far apart which could lead to dark areas around town in residential neighborhoods. The sidewalks appear to be in good shape. Some did have grass growing through the concrete in places and were a bit uneven probably due to age.*

*Side streets were clean and sidewalks clear. Trees trimmed back and did not obstruct sidewalk. No public restroom other than the pool. Parking seemed limited by ball field.*

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

*We were not there during normal hours which we found on the website but they were not posted anywhere on the building. The door was unlocked and we were able to ask the lady working several questions and she was very cordial.*

*The City Hall building had very different hours. According to the website, they are open 9 am – 12 noon the first 12 days of the month. We visited after the 12th of the month so we didn’t anticipate being able to access the building. Even though we didn’t except to gain entry, we tried the door and it was unlocked so we entered. I found the layout to be a bit strange. The entry way was very dark (may have been because it wasn’t really open, and the light wasn’t turned on). There were racks of pamphlets that looked like they had been there for quite some time and then a long hallway. I’d hoped the pamphlets would be about town and services offered but the majority were publications from the extension office. There was a door on the right with a sign that said “walk in” which wasn’t very welcoming. We didn’t know if this was the correct place to be entering or if there was something down the dark hallway. We took a chance and entered the “walk in” door. The inside of what I assume was the city office, was just a large open room with a couple of desks. The floors and walls were quite outdated (older carpeting and wood paneling). The lady working was nice when we entered and answered our questions. She didn’t really provide additional information about the town or seem to want to chat, so we didn’t stay long as we weren’t sure if the building was actually open for the public or not. There was a sign on the door indicating that dogs and cats had to be licensed within the city.*

*City hall had a not open sign posted and also when we went in no clear direction on where to go. Hallway was dark and city hall door closed with no welcome sign. Had to knock.*

Police/fire protection:

*We could not find evidence of a police department so maybe County Sheriff is the law enforcement.*

*There was a building for the volunteer fire department downtown, but we didn’t see any evidence of police protection. There was a sign at the park for Cloud County Crime stoppers. This led me to believe that the town was patrolled possibly by the Cloud County Sheriff.*

*Community fire and Ambulance as well as Crime stopper sign at park.*

Library:

*They have a nice large new library but it was not open when we were there. Someone working inside saw us and came out to the door to ask if she could help us. The library was the one place that did have hours posted.*

*The library building was quite impressive as it was an all brick structure. Our visit didn’t coincide with when the library was open, but the hours were plainly marked on the building. We could see a children’s section through the window and a selection of movies, which was nice. As we were looking in the windows, someone inside spotted us and unlocked the door to see if we needed anything. There was also signage advertising a summer reading program.*

*Library looked very big and had a children’s area. Was not open around lunch when we were downtown.*

City parks (walking tracks, ballparks, playgrounds, sports complex)

*The ballpark and playground are at the City Park. The swimming pool is also at the City Park. There is an arboretum within the town which is very nice.*

*The main park was well maintained and had equipment available for a variety of ages. There were trash receptacles and 2 picnic areas. Several boards on the surrounding fence could use some upkeep. There was no trash or litter on the park grounds. There was a sign that was faded, and we couldn’t tell what it was there for. The ball park was a nice size and well maintained. There seemed to be adequate bleachers and the crow’s nest was nicely painted. As mentioned before, I’m concerned if there’s enough parking during a ball game.*

*City park and ball field were very clean. Park offered lots of different equipment for all ages. Golf course was out farther away and hard to see the turn sign. Pool did not have a lot of shade and no ADA accessibility.*

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?

*The Chamber sponsors a Watermelon Festival every summer which is a big event. They also have a Christmas Open House, Halloween Parade and hayrack ride and an Easter egg hunt. They have new digital sign in the downtown to advertise events.*

*According to the city website, Clyde is known for the Watermelon Festival. I was very impressed that the festival is over 100 years old. There is a brief description of the event on the website and pictures of past festivals.*

*We did notice signs for a Watermelon Fest*

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

*There were posters on some of the windows advertising a barbeque that is coming up but I do not know who is sponsoring it.*

*During our visit we didn’t see any indication of any significant events taking place in the near future.*

Elaborate on any significant natural or manmade features that have the potential of drawing people to the community. (Public art, museums, lakes, campgrounds, regional heritage locations).

*Clyde has a Tree Board who created an arboretum which is quite nice. The beautification committee maintains the downtown courtyard garden.*

*Having an arboretum in town was a very unique feature. It would be nice to have information on the website regarding how far lakes or campgrounds are. We found a museum in town but couldn’t find any additional information such as hours or what it is known for.*

*Did see a museum, however we did not see any signs of hours of operation. Took us a couple of drives past to see it was a museum.*

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 only office is the City Hall which has very limited hours and days open.*

*There is no obvious visitors’ center but I think City Hall would be the place visitors would go for information downtown. The varying hours could be an issue depending on when folks visited.*

*City Hall – lack of signs and couldn’t see any info on Chamber of Commerce, etc.*

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

*There is a nice restaurant and bar that we ate in while there but nothing special. The stores are all geared to service the residents, nothing to bring in visitors.*

*I don’t think there are any attractions that would bring me back in the near future.*

*Most of the shops provided necessities to live there, not necessarily to come back. Antique shops etc, would bring people back to shop.*

13. Wrap-up

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

*Clyde is one of the cleanest town I have been to. Everyone was very friendly.*

*The downtown area is very nicely kept and clean. It gives a very nice first impression of the town. It is very evident that the community tries to support their local businesses. It was nice to have local stores that an engaged couple could have a wedding registry at.*

*Very clean and friendly town. We were overall impressed with the size and the things it provided.*

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

*The town is geared to taking care of the citizens. Lack of restrooms makes it difficult for visitors to spend a whole day in the community.*

*The lack of public restrooms or directional signs to the public restrooms is challenging. Housing could potentially be an issue for new folks moving to town especially if renting was needed.*

*No big gas station/convenience store. Other restaurant options would be nice. More public bathrooms – the ones at the pool were not very pleasant to use. We had to go into a retail shop to ask to use a bathroom.*

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

*Clyde is a community of homes and businesses that are very well maintained and taken care of. You feel that everyone has a vested interest in the community.*

*The residential neighborhoods were all nicely maintained.*

*The town seems to have a lot of pride in their community and it shows greatly.*



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