First Impressions 

**Team Report Form**

Community Visited: Courtland Date Visited: 3/16 & 4/4/2018

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?

*Good website info, positive, (RepublicCountyKansas.com). Could use utilities, phone numbers or links and more pictures of any kind. Rentals need some updating – nice to offer this link. YEC looks like a great idea.*

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.)

- *A farming community. The great feel of a small town environment. Met by friendly waves throughout the town. No grocery store! Coming in from HWY 36 there is large sign that points towards the town. From the south entrance not much as far as signs. Street signs on Main Street updated but on side streets some signs in need of paint but overall pretty good. Would be nice on the large sign on HWY 36 if it had signs about what businesses the town offers.*

*-Saw the welcome sign on the mile north of town. No business signs outside of the city limits.* *Some farm implement places needed extra parking. Some businesses not labeled very well. Most were. Streets needed holes repaired. Did not notice any churches or we did not go on the right streets. Later we saw three different churches.*

*-Main Street lots of shopping. Kept up store fronts. Not many vacant buildings. From the south, nice equipment center – they need a better sign to advertise. Awesome brick sign coming into Courtland from HWY 36. Nice pool, no grocery store. Hard to find a gas station (very important).*

*-Came into town from the north. It would be nice if family clinic occupied a vacant building downtown.* *Business “NS” – hard to see what it is. Coop could use some paint. Street signs leaning, some other signs too. West side of Cantina (front) looked good, south side, Firestone, not at all. City Hall looked well maintained. Covered up the windows – not attractive, but the building is very beautiful. Loved the architectural elements above the fire department but those overhangs with the shake shingles really ruin the feel and seem dated. City building, on the east side, the garage needs painted. Firestone needs to have tires picked up. Radio downtown – why? Not a good thing for me.*

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

*-Clean and well kept up. Rustic feel. Need more window advertising. Elevator – are they painting? Antiques, 2 salons, Nex-Tech, Pinky’s, Post Office, Tebow Plumbing – need to know what they do, bank, family clinic, newspaper, city hall. Didn’t get a chance to go into businesses. Benches, public restrooms, trash receptacles. Benches at Pinky’s. Pots on corners of streets. Benches everywhere.*

*-Saw a Methodist Church sign. It’s nice. A nice time clock but wish it gave business ads. Some neat old buildings but needs accented more. Elevator needs paint. Dr. Office, Senior Center, vacant buildings boarded up, bad. They need attention.*

*-Love how the community trying to make the most out of the downtown area. City has some vacant buildings downtown that could improve overall look downtown by some paint and simply clean-up of window appearance. Community had an antique store and salon along with bar and grill. A small gas station in which you could pick up a variety of small things for drinks/snacks.*

*-Nail salon on east side is painted brick, not attractive. Arboretum – sand on sitting/walkway, unkempt. Art Center – lucky to have this! Wonderful resource that works in many ways for the community – love the old arch – this could be a wonderful garden/outdoor meeting area. Cars downtown! Most businesses were service oriented so I felt strange going in somewhere to look around & I didn’t know if there would be merchandise to look at. Where I did go in I was greeted – friendly and welcoming. Found benches and public restrooms. The sand on Main Street could use cleaning. Small “dumpster” – one by Pinky’s, not attractive. Lot by Pinky’s was mostly cared for (large logs in lot, just hanging out). Great Art Center area.*

1. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

-*Very nice, The Escape?*

*-Needs work – the HVAC business. Restaurant on the east side – attractive antique side and great smells coming from the kitchen.*

4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

-*No information on this – rural area might be room for manufacturing is needed – looks like there is room for expansion.*

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?

*-Family care clinic, Fire Station, No EMT sign.*

*-Family Health Clinic, Fire Department?*

*-A Health Care building, no dentistry or optometrist, etc., but this is available with 20 minutes*

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 few available houses though not many. I saw a few places for renting purposes but do not know the cost.*

*-Variety of housing. Only saw a few for sale signs and no for rent signs.*

*-Online-not much listed for Courtland. Not many houses for sale.*

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 asses the quality of the educational system?

*-The school was for elementary ages. It looked very attractive and adequate for small towns.*

*-The cross walks need painted.*

1. Childcare

What childcare service are available? Is it affordable?

*-Didn’t see any listed anywhere.*

*-Asked and found out there are two providers in town.*

*-Was told that there are two people in town who have childcare services. Did not ask about affordability.*

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?

*-Noticed 3 churches in town.*

*-At least 3 churches – they are well kept.*

*-4 churches – clean and well kept. No advertisements that involved community.*

1. Civic

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

Did you observe any evidence of civic organization activity?

*-Didn’t see any.*

*-4-H, Head Start, Schools, City of Courtland, Typical small town groups.*

*-Did not note any signs of nonprofit organizations.*

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

*-Streets in need of repair. All the downtown areas kept clean and general appearance from street was adequate. Was received very well upon entry to city hall. Was given information about the library and community hall without even asking for information.*

*-Streets need repairs and street signs could be painted.*

*-Well Kept. Not bad potholes. Arts Hall, City Hall, Senior Center but didn’t have a chance to go into these.*

Police/fire protection:

-*Fire Station noted*

*-There is fire protection and police protection is offered through the county.*

Library:

-*Was not open. Was told only open one day of the week. No windows to look into the library to note the size.*

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

*-City park downtown. Small pool. Plenty of benches. The ball field was very minimal. The park near the ballfield was nice and large and had public restrooms but they were locked during the day. Great picnic area. One visitor felt the trash dumpster at the park should be moved.*

*-No signs to get to the park.*

*-Saw several parks etc. They looked attractive. Benches at ball field could be repaired, painted, etc.*

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?

*-Courtland Fun Days*

*-Pawnee Indian Village, Depot Market, Love the farm mural*

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

*-The Art Center online.*

*-Antiques*

*-Saw no upcoming events, but may not have gone into the right places.*

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

*-There is Pawnee Indian Museum not too far from the community. There is an art center downtown but did not go into because it appeared there was a meeting being held there at the time of visit.*

*-The arch downtown – that area could really be capitalized on!*

*-The Depot – cool! Farm mural, Arts attractions, Lovewell Lake – 20 minutes – need a sign to tell you! Pawnee Museum – 10 miles*

*-An antique place was available otherwise saw nothing.*

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.

*-City Hall*

*-The online info was helpful and good.*

*-There was an open city office. It was ok for a small community.*

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

*-There is a bar and grill downtown and there were meals served at the antique store downtown. No sign outside that you would know that food was served there unless you entered and discovered it. The senior center downtown was not open.*

*-The restaurant on east Main Street was unmarked as a restaurant. Smelled good! Nice people working there. Locals just stared at us. (Typical, we do that too!)*

*-Pinky’s – not very clean but the food was good.*

*-I might come back to see if more business signs are displayed to advertise and if streets are improved. And empty building more presentable to the public eye.*

1. Wrap-up

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

*-The people were very friendly. Most houses were well cared for.*

*-Well kept, lots of attractions for a small town. Few minor things would make for a great small town.*

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

-*Dirt on and condition of the streets. Some downtown businesses need exterior updating, cleaned up. Unkempt private property (homes and businesses).*

*-Need better signage. Downtown is nice.*

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

-*The welcoming people and small town vibe.*

*-Welcome sign – very nice (modern). Antique shopping. Not easy to find things – needs better signage.*



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