

First Impressions

Compiled Report Form



Community Visited: Galena **Date(s) Visited:** (a.) Tuesday July 30, 2019
(b.) Tuesday, July 30 (c.) Saturday, August 3 (d.) Tuesday July 30

1. **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?

- a. The city's website is very informative but, like all small towns with limited manpower and financial resources, it could use a few tweaks (copyright on the site is 2016; missing photos of city employees; etc.). I could not find anything about available medical care, and almost nothing on the library except a listing in the city hall directory.
- b. The website and Facebook of the City and Schools were very good but the LoveSmallTownAmerica.com/galenaks was the best place to get good information. The information from the websites, Facebooks and LoveSmallTownAmerica accurately reflect what we saw and did a good job of preparing us for the visit.
- c. I found interesting information readily online. Especially interesting to read the history of Galena. I would say the pictures don't do Galena justice; the downtown is much nicer in person than the pictures online.
- d. My first glance at the website was very favorable. The format was pleasing to the eye and easy to move around in. Most of the information was current. That being stated, some of the info was related to 2018, possibly intentional. The photos of the departments was a nice touch. Would have been nice to have photos of all the city council. Overall it was favorable but would be helpful if more current.

2. **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. The layout of the town makes it appear to be a much larger community than it is. On the east side of town, I was blown away by the medical and housing complexes. They looked like something you would find in a much larger town. We drove north on Main St. and after crossing the railroad tracks, it was like a different town. Found out later that was Empire, an unincorporated community. Appropriate signage from all directions into town. There were two lovely murals at the intersection of Route 66 and Main St. and you could see some fantastic street lights on Main St. Appeared to be lots of businesses on Route 66 and Main St. Most areas were neat and well maintained. Saw several for rent/lease/sale signs for buildings and some homes.
- b. The Schermerhorn Park with Shoal Creek on the south side of town and the Orthopedic 4States Surgery and Medical Centers on the state line were the two biggest attractions to me. The school’s performing art center was very nice as well as the murals on the walls of buildings downtown reflecting Route 66 going through town. Since Route 66 came through their downtown there are murals and several buildings that reflect the story of Route 66 coming through down town. The street signs, street lights, hanging flower pots, banners, and murals all downtown were very nice. There was not as much signage coming into town.
- c. The light posts are beautiful! The potted plants really added color. The downtown buildings seemed to be in fair shape, nothing a little work wouldn’t fix. I like how the nice light posts extend the entire downtown; it indicates long-term vision. Wonderful murals, really made it pop! The beautiful park and river on the south side. The highway is very well maintained. Some buildings on the west side need cleaned up, they just don’t match the rest of the town. The trailer homes on the west side could be spruced up.
- d. We drove in from the west and it was a pleasant entry into town. The industrial complex provided a positive impression about job availability for the community. The majority of the area was well-maintained and very presentable. Going out east was likewise very much a positive with the new buildings and the medical complex; a tremendous asset to any community. Showed a great amount of pride of ownership. Plenty of signage from the east and the west. Went quite a ways north and it was nice as was the entry from the south. However from the north and the south, signage was missing. Could not tell what you were coming into as far as town or city might be. Suggest some signage for out of town travelers. Older signs on buildings that were vacant or out of business should be removed. The 66 murals were definitely an eye appealing asset.

3. 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?)

- a. The street lights with live hanging plants (automatic watering system!) and PA system was fantastic! Lots of trash receptacles. It made you want to hang out along Main Street. Most of the buildings were well maintained and some showed signs of being rehabbed (old city hall) while a few others, mainly toward the north end of Main St., needed refurbished. There were more empty buildings than there appeared to be at first glance. Some buildings had nice signage but when you actually approached the building, the business was no longer open. I saw several restaurants, a hardware store, tourist attractions/museums, and law office and lots of variety/flea market businesses. I saw a sign for Blessed and Distressed on the west side of Main St. stating it had moved to the northeast corner of the intersection at Route 66 and Main St. I walked over there only to find the business appears to be closed. While walking back north I saw a nice sign for Xtreme Wingz and More with a well-maintain building exterior but when I got to the doorway, there was a sign stating: PRIVATE PROPERTY NO TRESPASSING. I stopped in at the graphic shop and saw a wide range of products. In talking to staff, I found out the owner had moved the business there from Joplin about two years ago because she had grown up in Galena and wanted to come back home (yay!). We had lunch at the Main St. Deli and it was a wonderful. Staff and owner were courteous, helpful and a trove of information. Lucky Miner Sales was amazing. Can you image having formal dresses from Dave's Bridal available for purchase in such a small town?!! Found out the deli owner moved there from Oglesby, which is not too far south of us, at the request of his brother to help with a business. He told us his menu started out being more refined (my words for lack of an adequate description) but the demand has been essentially people wanting real food, some who drive in from Joplin daily to eat lunch.
- b. The street signs, street lights, hanging baskets, banners, trash cans, etc. were very nice downtown. There was also music coming into the downtown area. There was a nice visitors' area downtown with bathrooms, gazebo, and pictures of the history of Galena. There were quite a few downtown buildings that had been refurbished and there were some that needed to be refurbished that were sitting vacant. The streets and sidewalks were very nice. There was a Route 66 visitor's center that was not open at the time we were there. A lot of the downtown buildings featured the Route 66 concept. We ate at Main Street Deli in downtown Galen, which was a former bank, also attached to four other buildings that had new clothes and new articles as well as slightly used items. All five buildings were full of merchandise. There was a nice hardware store that had a little bit of everything in the hardware line. There was a very busy Mexican Restaurant downtown and another American food restaurant downtown. There was a small car lot, car repair shop, Route 66 visitors building that was closed the day we were there and several other thrift shop types of business. There were several vacant buildings downtown. There were a lot of businesses on the west and east entrances to town, industrial buildings, eating

establishments both brand name (Dairy Queen and Pizza Hut) and home town, a motel, new Casey's Convenience Store, 3 banks, and other businesses. We were greeted when we went into all of the businesses that we went into and the owner/operator of the Main Street Deli had a nice long conversation with us. Two weeks previous my wife and I came through town and stopped at Casey's Convenience Store that has sandwiches, and the service was very good.

- c. The buildings are in fair shape, some broken windows. So much growth potential with available buildings. A lot of work has gone in to making the downtown appealing. Nice antique stores, yummy bakery/cafe, very good Mexican restaurant (which has a very nice interior and inviting exterior). The only other business open downtown (besides the Mexican restaurant) was the hardware store, this was disappointing. We were warmly welcomed in the businesses, except at the hardware store. The one staff was busy with a customer, other customers were waiting to be helped.
- d. The hanging flower pots, with the automatic watering system was a great touch as was the music (speakers on the light poles). It made the downtown experience enjoyable. The downtown gazebo area was very nice. I suspect it was muchly appreciated by tourists. We walked up and down the main drag and it appeared that the businesses that were open were doing well but as with all small communities, there were plenty of vacant buildings. I would suggest that the signage on the vacant buildings be removed. It would make for a more successful looking area. I personally visited your hardware store and it was a great asset to Galena. They have a little of everything and appeared to be of a very helpful nature. The Main Street Deli was a delightful place. Food was excellent and the owner was extremely helpful and proud of Galena. Being an insurance agent, I did note however that the entry should be changed somehow to be handicapped accessible. Every place I visited had great customer service and pride of ownership by employees and owners.

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?

- a. The little park (Pappy Litch park) at the southwest corner of Main and 5th was a delight! The public restrooms were clean and well-maintained. The gazebo was lovely. One of the benches was broken but I couldn't tell until I was nearly right in front of it (contacted the city clerk and she said they would get that taken care of immediately). I loved reading the various plaques telling about the history of the area. Lots of trash receptacles. My phone was only able to find one free Wi-Fi, which was for Pizza Hut. There was lots of parking available until lunch time and then things filled up fast. From where we parked on 5th St. by Main St. Deli, we were able to walk at least a couple blocks north and south easily. Landscaping and

- streetscaping, details above, was fantastic, especially along Main St. north of Route 66.
- b. In the downtown area there were benches, public restrooms, trash receptacles and a gazebo that was very nice and newer. There were drinking fountains and bathrooms also at the City complex and in the convenience stores and eating establishments.
 - c. Very nice and sturdy benches downtown. The parking downtown is good, the streets are wide. The landscaping is very nice. The streets were in good shape.
 - d. Appreciated the area around the Gazebo. Bathroom and trash receptacles were available up and down the street but you had to look for them as they blended in so well. Parking was fine. I must state however that it was in the 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM time frame and there were a lot of cars downtown. Business was great.

4. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

- a. Along Route 66, there is Dollar General, Sonic, a car wash and laundromat, numerous unique eating establishments, farmers market area, flea/antique markets, bait shop, Casey's, motel, bank, medical clinic, DQ, Pizza Hut, and orthopedic surgery center. Most of the areas were well maintained and easy to access. A few areas on the west and east side of town appeared to be a bit shabby but these were obviously older structures so not really surprising.
- b. There was a relatively new Dollar General store on the west side of town that was busy but had good parking. We did not see a grocery store. All of the eating establishments, doctors clinics and Orthopedic Center, banks, motel, auto dealers, auto repair shops, dining, funeral home, law offices, all were in good repair and had adequate access.
- c. The retail really stretched from one end of town to the other. This may be difficult for those without a vehicle, but it gives the appearance of a larger town.
- d. You looked to have a decent overall shopping experience available. I did note that out on the East part of town, 1001 E 7th, there is damage to the front of a vacant building (façade) that really detracts from the area. Not sure how long it has been that way but it appears to have been this way for some time. Sad since things look so good coming in from the east but then this.

5. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

- a. The main industrial park along Route 66 entering town from the west appears to have several industries operating and appeared to have room for growth. There appears to be other sites along that area where businesses had closed so those locations could be used for additional industrial growth.
- b. Most of the manufacturing industries were on the southwest side of town along the highway coming into town from the west. All of industrial sites looked like there was room to expand and the sites were in good shape.
- c. This is what really surprised us. Galena is fortunate to have the industries on the east side. These were very well maintained. The industries on the west side were busy, but not very nice to look at when coming into town. Definitely seemed to be room to grow.
- d. The industrial area looks very prosperous and appears to have room for growth. That being stated, do you have the manpower for expansion?

6. Health Care Services

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

- a. Unbelievable! While the town doesn't have a traditional hospital/emergency room (was told emergency patients could be stabilized at the hospital prior to out-of-town transport), the relatively new medical complex on the east side of town includes physicians' offices, a pharmacy, physical therapy and aquatic rehabilitation, durable medical equipment, MRI and imaging lab (no referral needed?!), surgical center with inpatient and outpatient hospital, as well as the popular Red Onion Restaurant and cafeteria. Mercy also has a family medicine clinic just east of downtown on Route 66. There is also an optometrist and at least one dentist but I did not find information for a chiropractor.
- b. There is an Ortho 4 States/Stateline Surgery Center complex that is huge and well done on the east side of town near the Missouri state line. In that complex is a surgical hospital, doctors' clinics, Pharmacy and several other medical clinics. It is well planned and has plenty of parking. There is an Optometrist in town, 2 skilled nursing home, and several home health businesses.
- c. My husband has had two back surgeries at the hospital there. This is definitely a gem in their community. The most beautiful hospital I've seen, and the staff are absolutely the best!
- d. This seems to be a MAJOR positive for your community. Lots of services for everyone. Things appear to be fantastic.

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

- a. See above
- b. All of the medical facilities that we saw were relatively new and very well done and attractive.
- c. All clinics looked professional and clean. The ones between the hospital and downtown could use better signage.
- d. NA

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

- a. Galena Nursing Center - skilled nursing, rehabilitation, home health care, hospice care, adult day club and pet-friendly according to website but didn't see anything that stated how many rooms were available. Emerald Pointe Health and Rehab - no website so couldn't really determine what services are offered.
- b. There are two skilled nursing homes that do rehab work: Emerald Point and Galena Nursing and Rehab.
- c. Did not see any of these and no signs.
- d. NA

7. 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.)

- a. A quick check of realtor.com, showed 35 properties for sale in Galena with vacant land ranging from \$2,500 -\$120,000 per listing and homes ranging from \$10,000-\$140,000 per listing with most having 2-3 beds. I saw a few properties with "For Sale By Owner" so know there are more than 35 properties for sale/rent but there doesn't appear to be an available housing glut. All the homes on realtor.com appeared to be older homes, one or two appeared to be in excellent shape while the rest were either in various states of disrepair or refurbishment. It was really hard to tell about the neighborhoods but several appeared to be more rural rather than in town. This supports what we learned at city hall from the clerk. She did mention that the building trades program at the local high school had worked with a builder but the instructor had left so they wouldn't be able to do that again. What an excellent and invaluable learning experience for the students! Code enforcement is an ongoing issue.
- b. In our visit with City Hall, they told us that the City Council had just approved two new housing development areas within the City Limits. To me new housing areas was an issue in the town. But with these two new housing developments, this will provide a place for new homes to be built. There are HUD rental homes by the City Park, there is a sizeable rental complex that is called Galena Estates that was built in 2016. I could not find out how many rental units are in the Galena Estates but it is a large 3 story complex that is income based. The City of Galena also has a lot of lower

- income homes and middle income homes. When the two new housing development areas are established, then Galena should be in good shape for all types of homes.
- c. The housing looked diverse. Nice income based, nice selection of mid-income homes, and some higher end. Did not notice a whole lot of homes for sale.
 - d. Previous comments take care of it all as far as I am concerned.

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

- a. I didn't find any apartments listed for rent on realtor.com in Galena and didn't see any homes with "For Rent" signs posted while driving around town but understand there is an apartment complex on the east side of town near the medical complex with units for rent.
- b. Since the Galena Estates rental complex was built in 2016 and is income based this property has taken care of a lot of people moving to that area. City Hall said that the people that built this rental complex is getting ready to build another complex just like Galena Estates over on the east side of town to take care of more people.
- c. I only saw one home for rent. The apartments looked wonderful! Indicates that Galena is open for business!
- d. Did not look at that part in very much detail but other visitors covered it well.

8. 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?

- a. Galena has a head start program, two elementary schools (pre-K – 2nd and 3rd – 5th), a middle school and a high school. It's amazing that there are at least three large school districts in the Galena/ Riverton/Baxter Springs area. The buildings and grounds appeared to be well maintained. I understand the façade for one of the building at the school complex includes a WPA project so it's nice the community has chosen to retain this.
- b. The following schools are located in Galena: 1.) Galena Head Start, years 0-5; 2.) Spring Grove Elementary School PreK-2nd grade; 3.) Liberty Elementary School grades 3-5; 4.) Galena Middle School grades 6-8; 5.) Galena High School 9-12 grades. The schools appear to be adequate in size and buildings and grounds are well maintained.
- c. The high school was easily spotted. There is a super kid facility close to downtown with wonderful play equipment, but due to no sign, was unable to identify what it is.
- d. Have been to the high school several times over the past years for sports programs and have always been impressed with the facilities but honestly a number of fans leave a lot to be desired in many ways. It has never been a place that I cared to go to for competition, especially football. It seems that the administration is ok with the prevailing attitude shown by these fans. It rarely changes.

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

- a. Overall, the Galena USD has a C+ ranking on niche.com which is consistent with what I found on datacentral.KSDE.org.
- b. There was an online score for the schools but I don't know how these were determined. The following are the rankings on the schools: High School-3; Middle School-4; Liberty Elementary School-4; Spring Grove Primary Center and the Head Start were not ranked.
- c. The school website is nicely done and user friendly. It was nice to see some upcoming activities listed and the school supply lists on the site.
- d. Other visitors covered this well.

9. Childcare

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

- a. An online search of KDHE's site shows the following child care services in Galena, excluding the head start and pre-school programs: Cathryn's Play and Learn Day Care (licensed for 10), First Steps Daycare (10), and Little Land Daycare Home (10). All inspections by the state appeared to be current and none of the providers were required to have a corrective action plan although they did have some infractions such as no health assessment on file for a child, no immunization record on file, no emergency medical release on file, no medical record/health assessment on file, or provider was lacking some training. This are a total of 30 slots which in all likelihood means that many children are being care for by family or friends. I was not able to find information online about the cost for any of the childcare centers so don't if they are affordable.
- b. There were 4 Daycare/Childcare providers listed on the internet: Cathryn's Play and Learn Day Care, First Steps Daycare, Little Hand Daycare and Galena Head Start. Galena Head Start is income based but the others were not. The Galena Head Start can handle 34 children and the other 3 could handle 10 children. Per City Hall, there are several home day care businesses that handle a few children each. I was able to reach Cathryn's Play and Learn Day Care by phone and she charges \$18/day or \$90/week for each child which seems reasonable.
- c. I did not see childcare centers, but there are several listed online.
- d. Did not take the time to look into this in that much detail as other visitors handled it well. Looks like you have suitable services but have no way if it is adequate to satisfy the needs.

10. Faith/Religion

Comment on the number of denominations and the physical appearances of the faith communities represented in the community. Did you observe any evidence of faith-based community services?

- a. I saw several churches, including one on the east side of town that appeared to be relatively new and extremely large, for such a small community. A quick web search lists at least 10 denominations represented in the community. This appears to be the norm in small Midwest communities. According to the city clerk, the churches are active in the community and help however they can, including clothing distribution, free meals, etc.
- b. There are 10 different denominations in Galena. Per Galena City Hall the Galena Assembly of God has a food and clothing pantry and several of the other churches provide hot meals during the week to those in need. The churches we saw appeared to be in good shape.
- c. It was great to see so many churches. The absolute best was the old Presbyterian Church by downtown. Saw a nice variety of churches.
- d. City clerk explained all of the services very well. Sounds like you have a fantastic group of organizations and people involved in working with and for the community.

11. Civic

Tell about the variety of nonprofit organizations and clubs within the community. Did you observe any evidence of civic organization activity?

- a. An online search found the following nonprofits organizations and clubs in Galena: SEK Nature Center Foundation of Galena, PTA, Galena Educational Foundation, Galena Youth Sports, Galena Mining and Historical Museum Association, Elks Lodge, Masonic Lodge, Eastern Star, and Boy Scouts. There were signs for some of the organizations with the city's welcome sign along the main entrances to town. The most visibly active were the SEK Nature Center and Galena Mining and Historical Museum Association. There is a lot of activity around historic Route 66 but I'm not sure who/what is doing it. The Kansas Historic Route 66 Association forfeited its legal status with the Kansas Secretary of State in 2016 due to failure to timely file its annual report.
- b. There are eleven clubs and organizations in Galena: Elks Lodge, Masonic Lodge, Eastern Star, Lions Club, Galena Economic Development Committee, Kansas Historic Route 66 Association, Boys Scouts, Girls Scouts, Little League, Girls Softball League, and Galena Education Foundation. We could definitely see the Kansas Historic Route 66 Association activity since the whole down town is built around the Route 66 concept. Some of the clubs meet in the Main Street Deli where we ate at. The Galena Economic Development Committee meets monthly and has an active Facebook page.
- c. Saw a Masons sign and chamber of commerce sign on the large Galena sign on the west side. Did not actually see a Masons building or an office for the chamber.

- d. Eleven clubs is really impressive. If all of them only do a little in their own little world, a lot is being accomplished.

12. Public Infrastructure

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

- a. Nothing really stood out as far as infrastructure until you get to the east side of town where the medical center is as to landscaping and streetscapes. Many businesses had restrooms. Sidewalks appeared to be adequate in the areas we observed. We were there during the day so lighting wasn't a concern but there appeared to be adequate streetlights. Parking also appeared to be adequate.
- b. The streets, street signage, sidewalks, parking, and lighting were satisfactory on the four main roads coming into town. There were restrooms at the restaurants, City Hall, Railroad Museum, Casey's Convenience store along the highways. There was not as much landscaping and streetscapes on the roads coming into town as there was downtown which was very nice.
- c. Great lighting, beautiful landscaping, streets and sidewalks in good shape. Need to have signage for the hospital.
- d. Signage overall coming and going town was acceptable but to repeat, old signage should be removed. Downtown was definitely the best.

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

- a. City hall appeared to be an older but well-maintained building. We entered through the eastern-most doors on the south side of the building. The first thing I noticed was the plaque showing major donors to the city pool (nice way to recognize them!) and a stand with lots of brochures about the area. Then as we went through the second set of doors, I noticed the sharps disposal unit available inside the building near the clerk's office and police department (WOW!!). We were there during the day but the exit signs throughout the building didn't appear to be lit.
- b. The City Hall is a very spacious building that has a large city council chamber meeting room that I assume can be used for community meetings. We were greeted by the assistant City Clerk and then the City Clerk came up and we had a very nice visit and she told us a lot about Galena and their plans.
- c. Did not go in as we went on a Saturday.
- d. City Hall (City Clerk) is a blessing to your community. She exhibited a great desire to be helpful and promoted Galena well. Answered all of our questions and then some. Very willing to assist and spend the time we needed to learn more. Excellent representative of your community.

Police/fire protection:

- a. Police/fire protection appeared to be adequate for the community. I loved the message on the marquee for the fire department about making house calls!

- b. This building was attached on the west side of City Hall and the premises were very nice and spacious. We did meet one of the police officers and he was very cordial.
- c. The fire station and city hall are very nice. The police station was hard to find. The only way we knew it was the police station was the numerous police cars, need better signage.
- d. Very impressive location and nice sign advising that they “make house calls.”

Library:

- a. Although I knew the public library was in City Hall, I had trouble finding it because we entered through the doorway closest to the city offices. I didn’t see any signs inside the building indicating there the library was located. I had to exit the building near the west side of the parking lot before I saw a door marked Library; it also listed the hours of operation (it was closed when we were there). I couldn’t find any information about the library online. The Facebook page is an unofficial page and doesn’t have any posts except a few pictures of food posted this year and two check-ins in 2017. In order to find any information about the public library on the city’s website, I had to do a search and found three results: a listing under Phone Numbers, one under City Hall, and one under Magazine Home. The Galena Archival Library is across the street from city hall but we did not visit it. According to Facebook, it is a genealogical library. It doesn’t appear to have had any posts since May 2013. The additional contact info link, www.galenalibrary.org, is for the Galena, IL, public library.
- b. There are two libraries in Galena, the Galena Public Library west of City Hall, and the Galena Genealogy Library which is right next to the Public Library. We did not stop by the libraries but they were nice buildings and the genealogy library sounds very interesting.
- c. The library looked appealing from the outside, but did not go in.
- d. Closed when we were in town

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

- a. We turned around at Schermerhorn Park/SEK Nature Center but didn’t see much of it. We saw the city park (from Main St.) and walked around Howard “Pappy” Litch Park (beautiful downtown space!!!) We also did a quick drive-through of Empire.
- b. 1) Galena City Park located south of downtown. It has a nice swimming pool, playgrounds, and nice walking tracks. 2) Pappy Litch Park is located downtown and is where the gazebo, public bathrooms, and sitting area is located. 3) Schermerhorn Park is located just outside of Galena on Kansas 26. This park is located along Shoal Creek and there is a long stretch of places to park, picnic and swim. SEK Nature Center is located at this park. 4) The Miners Park-we did not see this park.
- c. I was amazed and pleased to see so many parks. They were all well maintained and being used.
- d. All of the parks we observed were very nice and well-kept. Appeared to be very user friendly and open.

13. Recreation/Tourism

Is the community well-known for any particular attraction or event? Do they have a community slogan that capitalizes on that asset?

- a. Galena is known for a couple things: it is touted as the oldest mining town in Kansas and is located on historic Route 66. It has worked hard to capitalize on both those assets as well as the more recent fame from the movie Cars, for which the character “Tow Mater” which was inspired by the mining boom truck at the restored Kan-O-Tex service station museum, now renamed CARS on the ROUTE. The welcome signs play up Galena’s claim as the oldest mining town in Kansas, and much of the tourism is centered on that fact and Route 66. A lot of time, money and effort has gone into developing the nature center/park just south of town, and this is now a great place for family fun. Most of the museums and other tourist attractions were closed or had not yet opened for the day when we were in town.
- b. The biggest attraction is the Route 66 attractions downtown. There are murals and Tow Mater the inspiration for the Tow Mater (towing truck) from the Disney /Pixar movie “Cars.” This is located at the Route 66 old time gasoline station and Route 66 gift shop in downtown Galena. It appears that there are a lot of tourists that come through and stop at their downtown area due to all of the Route 66 attractions.
- c. We saw signs for a farmers market, but didn’t actually see one going. They are very well known for the truck and old time gas station resembling the movie Cars.
- d. Route 66 is being capitalized as it should be. Downtown is definitely taking advantage of this historic highway. Anything that can be expanded will simply continue to bring \$ and people to town.

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

- a. I didn’t find anywhere online that listed current or upcoming events outside of city or school-related meetings and activities.
- b. Galena has two annual events that happen at the same time: the Galena Days event which is held the first weekend of June, and the Galena Day Car Show which happens on the 1st Saturday of June. There is information on these two events on the internet.
- c. No events listed online and no signs indicating events.
- d. Not at this time.

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).

- a. See above
- b. The Schermerhorn Park where Shoal Creek comes through this area provides a large recreational area for many picnickers and swimmers. Shoal Creek is more like a river and it is very clear and has a rock bottom. The SEK Nature Center is also located on this property which is an extension of the Missouri rolling hills. It is beautiful. There is also the Galena Mining and Historical Museum as you come into Galena from the west
- c. The river on the south side, the mining museum, Mater and the gas station.
- d. The swimming area south of town might possibly be promoted a little more but it does appear to be a really significant area that is used a lot by many. Obvious asset.

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.

- a. We saw where the welcome center is being established on N. Main St. but it is not yet opened. Galena does not have a chamber of commerce or Main Street organization. City hall appears to be the best place to get information about events, activities and tourist spots. The city clerk is a wealth of knowledge and clearly loves her town.
- b. The closest thing to a visitor's center, besides City Hall, is the Galena Mining and Historical Museum, which is the former Katy Railroad station. It is open every day of the week. There is a Route 66 Visitor Center downtown and it is open every day but Monday and Tuesday. Galena does not have a Chamber of Commerce office or Main Street office.
- c. I didn't see any.
- d. Closed when we were there.

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

- a. I might come back on a day when the museums are open so I can see what's there. I would also like to get a look at Liberty Hall and The Grace House Event Center. A historic/old home tour would also be a draw for me.
- b. We only ate at the Main Street Deli and it was very good. As busy as Mi Torito Restaurant was, the food must have been great there. The Schermerhorn Park with Shoal Creek running through it was a beautiful park that any town would desire. Also the medical/ortho surgery complex was something every town would want. Since the Route 66 Visitors Center was not open we did not get in to see it.
- c. Absolutely! Sweet Creek Bakery and the flea markets.
- d. Likely will bring my wife back to go eat at the Deli or the Mexican restaurant across the street.

14. Wrap-up

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

- a. Thriving downtown and relatively new development on the east side of town. The people we talked to were positive about their community and provided lots of information. Great access to medical, which is very unusual in such a small town. The proximity to the Kansas/Missouri state line and Joplin appears to be a plus in many ways.
- b. The huge Orthopedic Surgical Center, medical offices, surgical hospital, pharmacy on the east side of town was a wonderful thing that every small town would like to have. The Schermerhorn Park with Shoal Creek running through it was beautiful. Their newer 3 story apartment complex Galena Estates was built in 2016 and is a large complex. It is income based. They are getting ready to build another large apartment complex just like Galena Estates. The City Council has approved the building of 2 new housing developments in town which will provide areas for building new homes. There are still a lot of downtown buildings that are not open for business, but the Route 66 murals, outside visitor center with bathrooms and gazebo, and buildings that are open, and the outside music cause the downtown to have more positives than negatives.
- c. The pride and obvious hard work that has gone into making the downtown so pretty! The murals are eye-popping. The electronic billboard at the intersection of downtown is great!
- d. Positive attitude. Great medical community. Successful downtown and highway business areas are present. The flowers and music downtown are great positives.

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

- a. The proximity to the Kansas/Missouri state line and Joplin can negatively impact efforts to grow the community. Finding its niche as it relates to Joplin is a must, as it is for any small community near a larger metropolitan area.
- b. Filling up the unopen business buildings downtown with viable businesses.
- c. It looks to be businesses downtown, having them open, and then spreading the word to draw people to patron these businesses. So much work and care has gone into downtown, it really should be utilized to a greater potential.
- d. Like all communities, obstacle is being close to big city like Joplin. Small businesses find it difficult to compete. Must find a way to encourage new businesses to give it a chance but that is always difficult. We have the same issue and trying to figure out what might make a go of it is tough.

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

- a. The downtown area on Main St. north of Route 66: Pappy Litch Park, the beautiful streetlights with live hanging flower baskets and automatic watering system, outdoor music, and the Main St. Deli/Lucky Miner Sales.
- b. Nice downtown murals and Route 66 concept, very nice medical complex on east end of town, Schermerhorn Park and Shoal Creek, and the large 2016 Galena Estates apartment complex. I did not see this apartment complex but the City Clerk told us about it and the website for it was very nice.
- c. I will remember the beautiful downtown and the wonderful hospital (to include my favorite restaurant, Red Onion).
- d. Positive attitudes of the people we visited with about Galena at City Hall and the businesses downtown. Very friendly and willing to share.

PowerPoint Presentation is posted at:

<http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/civic-engagement/first-impressions/index.html>

First Impressions was developed by the University of Wisconsin-Extension and adapted for use by K-State Research and Extension. Restructuring made possible through a partnership with the Dane G. Hansen Foundation.

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, Gregg Hadley, Director.