First Impressions

Compiled Report Form

Community Visited: Grinnell Date(s) Visited: October 6, 2015

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?

*Found school information, after harvest festival info, searches for liquor store, meat locker, golf course and State Bank*

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.)

*Nice park, sidewalks, looks clean. Downtown occupied stores. Park could use some trees for shade. There was a “Welcome to Grinnell” sign, civic organization signs, school mascot sign, 2012 Community of Excellence sign. Streets and buildings are in good repair.*

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?)

*People friendly. Businesses seen were grocery store, accountant, locker plant, salon, farm and home center, furniture store.*

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 along the west side of Main Street. Public restroom in the park. Not really any streetscaping or landscaping. Plenty of parking.*

1. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

*NA*

4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

 *NA*

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?

 *None apparent*

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?

*Nearly every home was lived in. Notices one vacant house.*

7. Schools

Do the schools appear to be adequate in size or do you see the use of temporary classrooms? Are the buildings and grounds well-maintained?

 *Adequate*

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

 *None available*

1. Childcare

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

*No*

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?

*Located a Catholic church and a Methodist Church.*

1. Civic

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

*VFW – Beautiful Building*

*4-H Club*

*PRIDE*

*Found the Heritage Center in the old town hall and the Senior Center where coffee is served*

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?

*Streets are well maintained. Many new sidewalks and curb guttering. Downtown sidewalks only adequate. No land use planning observed.*

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

*City clerk was not available.*

Police/fire protection:

 *Did see the fire station when we asked about city hall.*

Library:

 *Nice library – not open*

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

*Have a golf course. Nice big park. Very clean. Three play units, walking trail, new sidewalks, restrooms and frisbie golf. Tennis court on school property – very run down.*

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?

*None noticed*

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

*No*

*However there was a large sign on Main Street that announced a movie night outdoors. I liked that the sign was large enough to include multiple lines of information.*

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

 *One large old building needs restored. It has interesting architecture.*

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.

*No comment*

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

*No restaurant*

1. Wrap-up

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

*Very clean, only a very few run down houses and building. Almost no junk vehicles or other items in evidence. Nice yards and homes.*

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

 *A gas station with convenience items would be nice from highway into town.*

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

 *The fact that it was so clean and well kept looking.*

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