

# First Impressions

## Team Report Form



Community Visited: **Inman, KS**

Date Visited: **07/16/2020**  
**07/24/2020**  
**08/03/2020 (2)**  
**08/09/2020**

- 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?
  - The website was up to date and accurately reflected what we saw in town.
  - Good website. I tried to pull up photos and there were not available. There was current information listed.
  - Photo Gallery not working. No pictures came up. Could not get the calendar page to load when I went there.
  - On Chamber part of city website, Business of the Month is behind. No businesses listed on the Businesses pages. Rest of website was good, good information, nice look, inviting.
  - Felt that the website was very functional, though the first page was a little busy with all of the photos on it. For whatever reason I could not load the community calendar. I appreciated the fact that they had emails and contact names for many of the organizations. Overall for a small town I thought it was a good website.
  
- 2. The “Five-Minute” Impression:** After taking a five-minute drive through the community without stopping, the following reactions were noted.
  - Very clean community with good streets. The storefronts were also attractive.
  - Nice, wide concrete streets. The houses, both new and old, appeared well kept. Yards were trimmed and mowed. Didn't notice any old vehicles or debris in yards. Even the alleys were well kept. Quite impressive. Everyone seemed to have waste management carts.
  - Very clean downtown and well kept homes. There looked to be a fun park with a great new community building.
  - Great signage. Very neat and clean with a beautiful park, well kept homes and yards. People out and about in the community.
  - We came across from Hesston, KS. I felt like when we first came into town that it was an attractive place to be. Coming in from the east there were attractive houses and a

recently updated city park which looked great. One of the first things I noticed about the community was the wide roads throughout town. Even the side streets seemed wide. It made it feel nice. The other thing I noticed is that most houses looked modern with above average yards. They yards looked maintained.

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

- Coming in from the south and then coming in over the railroad tracks – nothing really eye-catching either direction.
- Before arriving from the highway – a nice big attractive sign. Entering from the highway on the west. The elevators needed some paint. Noticed some tall grass. Thought it would be just another small town. All other entries were nice.
- Good signage for where things were located, but could not find the country park outside of town. Did not see a sign for park or motocross.
- Overall looked nice, did notice some type of scrapyards or automotive business that had a lot of machinery outside.

### 3. Downtown Business Area Describe the buildings, signs, infrastructure, etc.

- Downtown buildings were all in good shape. Signage was good as were the sidewalks. Very clean. Did not see one building in need of repair.
- Downtown was clean. The windows were clean and most buildings occupied.
- Almost all of the buildings had businesses in them. The grocery store was nice and the downtown was clean.
- Very well kept. Didn't notice a lot of vacant buildings. Beautiful museum/historic area across from city hall.
- We visited on a Sunday, which limited the ability to go into any buildings as they were all closed, even restaurants. We planned on getting a bit to eat in town, however we were unable to do that. The downtown area seemed to have a mixture of newer buildings with older ones. I like the signage that was throughout the downtown area letting you know where things were. It made navigation easier.

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

- Grocery store was small, but had a good variety of products and a friendly staff. Neufeldt Variety was a small variety store with a good selection of gifts and cards. Very friendly staff. The Herb Shop was very unique. We ate at a pizza place downtown. The owner was great and they had good food.

- The hometown grocery store was small, but neat. Produce looked fresh and the meat counter was fresh and inviting. Observed restaurants, insurance, floral, plumbing, antiques, Herb store. All had a down home feeling and most buildings had something in them on the main street!
- Several eating places, a gift shop, nice appliance store. The city building had a storefront similar to a retail store, but was clearly labeled.
- Very nice gift shop, the owner was very friendly. Nice restaurant. City building very small, but neat, more of a storefront type appearance.

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

- Customer service in town was excellent.
- Asked for assistance, but all were friendly.
- Yes, I was greeted. Very friendly service.
- Only went in one – owner was very friendly and informative.

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

- Nice trash receptacles. There were also benches and a public restroom at the community center.
- Noticed benches, public restrooms, and trash receptacles.
- Don't know about wi-fi.
- Noticed benches on Main Street. Park also had places to relax and restrooms.
- We didn't notice much in the way of public amenities downtown.

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

- There was ample parking downtown. We could access all businesses from where we parked.
- The parking was fine. Landscaping and streetscaping was good.
- It was easy to walk to all stores downtown from the parking areas.
- Parking was easy and you could walk around town easily. Again, very neat downtown.
- Parking wasn't a problem. The wide streets made it feel very comfortable driving around.

#### 4. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

- Fabric country store on the north end of town looked very nice, but we did not go in.
- Not fancy, but homey and easy access to most.
- Noticed a material/sewing store across the highway, but no other retail shopping areas outside of downtown.
- Everything retail seemed easy to get to.

#### 5. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

- There was an industrial park. Diesel and pickup specialist shop.
- Yes, it was located west of the old highway. The grain elevator was on the east side of the highway.
- Looked like plenty of outlying areas to develop. Some manufacturers, scrap/mechanical and grain elevators.
- It appears that most industrial places were located north of the highway, and I like this separation. The flour mill was the exception in terms of location.

#### 6. Health Care Services

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

- No hospital observed.
- There was a volunteer fire department – maybe it could provide for some emergency medical needs. The ambulance comes from McPherson.
- No hospital in town. Fully staffed medical clinic exists.
- We understood there was a clinic in town, but did not see it in our travels.

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

- There was one healthcare center with two doctors. Also observed a chiropractic office and dentist office.
- Saw a dentist office and clinic.
- Did not see any doctor or dentist offices. There was a wonderful new wellness center just south of the high school.
- Dental center in a storefront downtown – neat. Clinic, also neat and a nice building.

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

- Pleasant View Home – a 124 bed nursing home. 87 independent living units, memory care, home health services, therapy services. The property was beautiful.
- Extensive long term care and assisted living. Attractive buildings, beautiful landscaping and low income facilities.
- Awesome retirement/long term care facility! Very large.
- Pleasant View Home with independent, assisted living, and long-term options. Beautiful location, very well kept and inviting.
- Long term care facilities looked very nice.

## 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.)

- Some income-based housing on the Pleasant View property. Noticed 2 houses for sale that would appeal to lower income buyers. There is also a high-end housing district.
- Yes, there was housing that would appeal to all income wages, just not a lot of homes for sale.
- Most all neighborhoods are new housing. There are older homes north of Center Street and about 1 to 2 blocks south.
- Does not appear to be a lot of housing available. Good mix of quality of homes, even older, smaller homes are very well kept and nice looking. Many homes being revamped at the time of visiting.
- In general housing looked above average. It seemed that on the east side there was a lot of housing for upper middle class and as you move further west the housing looked a little older. Even the older housing looked maintained, just a little smaller and dated.

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

- No rental properties observed.
- Saw some apartments that were rental properties.
- No rental properties observed. If there are some, there probably aren't many.
- Did not see many. City clerk said very few rentals available.
- No rental properties observed.

## 8. 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?

- Saw preschool, K-8, and a high school. All of the buildings were nice and the grounds were well kept.
- The buildings and grounds were well maintained and seemed adequate for the size of community.
- Grade school – very nice building. Small classes and good open playground. High school/Jr. high – in one building. Had a greenhouse as part of the building. Class 2A.
- Elementary and Jr/Sr High school. Both buildings were very well maintained. Wellness Center attached/nearby. Nice greenhouse!
- The schools appeared small with not very modern playground equipment and little to do. The buildings and grounds were well maintained.

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

- The school website had adequate information about the schools.
- The USD 448 link on the inmanks.org website was broken and went to a page that couldn't be found. Had information on local/area colleges on the city website. Some of the school Facebook pages found in a search were not up to date.
- Link to school from website was not working. Was able to find other info in an Inman brochure.
- I was not able to access the community's school website from the city page, but could get to the nearby colleges via links.

## 9. Childcare

What childcare service are available? Is it affordable?

- There is independent day care available, but did not see information on pricing.
- Could not find any information about childcare.
- Did not see any information about childcare in the community. Googled one but couldn't tell if it was in business.
- We did not find anything related to childcare in town.

## 10. Faith/Religion

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

- Five churches were observed. A food pantry is offered and there is a ministerial alliance.
- Six churches were listed for the area and four of those were Mennonite.
- Appears to be mostly a Mennonite community, but other denominations also were there. Nice, neat, clean buildings.
- Somewhat limited in the number of denominations. The church buildings looked nice.

## 11. Civic

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

- Noticed the Lions Club, Rec Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Veterans Association, Senior Center, and Community Center.
- Saw that there was a Lions Club in town.
- There was a Lions Club meeting sign in the community building.
- Inman Arts Council had a nice, updated Facebook page.
- 4-H, Booster Club, Community Foundation (no current data – Facebook page outdated), Lions Club, an active Ministerial Alliance.
- Can't say that I saw any evidence of civic organizations or their activities.

Did you observe any evidence of civic organization activity?

- None.
- No.

## 12. Public Infrastructure

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

- Streets were excellent. Sidewalks were good. Landscaping and streetscapes were beautiful. Everyone takes pride in this small town.
- This was the most impressive part. Well kept and groomed in new and old parts of town. Great concrete streets!
- Well kept neighborhoods. Can see that people take pride in their homes.
- Everything very well kept and neat. Park was beautiful, streets neat and clean as were the neighborhoods.
- Other areas of town looked nice.

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

- The city clerk was very informative. Sat and visited, took us to the museum which is one of the nicest museums I've ever seen in a small town.
- City clerk was friendly and took a lot of time with us. Explained how they managed to clean up the town and keep it neat. Also took us on a tour of the museum.
- Very well received at city hall. Were very willing to visit with us and share some of the things that they are working on and what has not worked.
- Barb and staff were VERY accommodating, answered lots of questions – very knowledgeable! Lots of information available – and a GREAT Inman brochure!

Police/fire protection:

- There's a police department with 3 officers and a volunteer fire department.
- The police station is next to the city building and there is a volunteer fire department.
- Police station is next to city hall and there is a volunteer fire department.

Library:

- Nice library. The librarian was very nice.
- Librarian was friendly and interested in what we were doing. The library was well kept and full.
- City owned library is by the city building. It wasn't open, but looking through the windows shows that it is nicely arranged.
- Nice corner "store front" library downtown. Was closed, but looked very nice and well organized.

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

- They have a beautiful, well-lit park with a pond and walking paths. Playgrounds had a splash pad – very nice. There was a sports complex at the high school.
- Really nice park. It had a pond and fountain, a splash pad and skateboard area. Did not see a swimming pool or sports complex.
- City park is beautiful! It has a fishing pond and new splash pad with play equipment. Ball parks are by the high school. Only 2 fields – average looking.
- Beautiful city park! Great asset! New equipment and splash pad. Walking path, fishing, community building observed. Ball fields need work, unkept looking in that part of town.
- The ballfields appeared to have limited seating, and limited trees for shade. Being a parent of middle school-aged children, the athletic facilities are important to us.

### 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?

- Museum – live nativity at Christmas. Slogan: A place people choose to call home.
- There is a motocross racing area.
- The Kansas Sampler Foundation is just east of town.
- Noticed the slogan “A place people choose to call home” on the website. The nativity scene seems to be what they are most proud of.

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

- Santa Fe Days, Chili cook-off, tractor pull, classic car show.
- There’s a great historical museum that was well laid out and has several community fundraisers.
- Didn’t see that they do.
- The car show could be of interest to people. Most towns now-a-days have some sort of car show, so I wouldn’t call this particular even unique.

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).

- Museum. They have a country park outside of town which has fishing pond and motocross racing. There's also a wildlife learning site.
- The museum is excellent.
- The museum was wonderful! Ralph Vogel was a great guide through the building and a champion for keeping this project continuous.
- City park, great museum, Pleasant View Home – well kept and easy to get to.
- Awesome museum and historical area across from City Hall. Beautiful Country Park city owned. Had motocross, fishing, picnic area, trails – AWESOME! HARD TO FIND.

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.

- Did not observe one.
- City office seemed to be the visitor's center too. They called Ralph and he came down to open up the museum :)
- Did not notice an actual chamber office, but city staff served us very well in answering questions and guiding us.
- We did not notice an obvious visitor's center.

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

- Museum (x2)
- Harvest Café was closed on Monday – would like to come back to eat varenike. Missed eating pizza as well.
- Did not get a chance to eat there, but would DEFINITELY come back to spend more time at the museum. Phenomenal!
- We were hopeful for Knackie's BBQ, but were unable to eat there on a Sunday. We would come back for that.

## 14. Wrap-up

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

- Cleanliness. All the lawns were mowed and clean. The alleys were clean. Good streets and sidewalks. A nice downtown and well kept homes.
- The people we visited with on the street were friendly and helpful.
- Neatness of homes, yards, and streets.
- The large truck service garage across the highway. I did not see a service station and I had a low tire light come on, but could not find anywhere to air it up. The truck service garage was able to help.
- Great people, great signage. Neat, clean houses and community. Active downtown. Great retirement homes/facilities. Beautiful park.
- The most positive thing I took away was how clean and maintained everything was. You can tell the city has invested in their infrastructure.

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

- No rentals. High property taxes.
- No swimming pool or sports complex.
- It was interesting that there was no community swimming pool.
- Is there a local place to get oil changes, a tire fixed, or cars serviced?
- Lack of service-type station/convenience store. No swimming pool. Minimal services (hairdresser, flower shop, hardware store, auto parts).
- 15-year-old daughter came along – loved the museum and wellness center, however said not much for young kids to do.
- One of the biggest challenges I see is one that many small, rural communities have. If you aren't involved in agriculture there is not much industry to keep people employed.

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

- Museum. Friendly atmosphere.
- Museum and cleanliness of homes.
- It is the home of the Kansas Sampler Foundation.
- A beautiful bedroom community between McPherson and Hutchinson.
- Hospitality of city staff.
- Ralph and the Museum.
- City park and retirement facility.
- The town is very well put together.



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. For more information, visit: <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/civic-engagement/first-impressions/index.html>

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 Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, J. Ernest Minton, Director.

Revised 8-12-2020