

# First Impressions

Compiled Report Form



**Community Visited:** Lindsborg

**Date(s) Visited:** a,b,c,d) 6-29-18 (Friday)

e) 5-18-18 (3-6 pm) (Friday)

**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) I was not impressed with the website. It felt hard to maneuver around.
- b) NA
- c) Found information online easily. Website is well organized. I did expect to see the bright yellow graphics with the Swedish woman and Coronado Heights found on the printed materials on the front page of the website. I think bigger homepage graphics would draw people into the website more.
- d) The website was not impressive. It did not “draw me in.” It did not match the printed materials or what we eventually saw.
- e) It took me about 4 tries to get where I wanted. Did it accurately reflect what you saw? Website was an outdated feel. Pictures not updated or very professional. FB was not kept current and only new info was the web address. The video was not a help. Did you have difficulties obtaining information on the community through a web search? Not after I dug deep on the website. You have to do that to really learn anything. It isn’t set up in a user friendly way. The Swedish Village and the Mill were not on the front pages to make me want to visit there for that. So when I got there and almost didn’t go to those items because they weren’t made a focus, I nearly missed the best thing to see! I went there (and had no clue from downtown the direction), and only had 20 min. left. The woman there let me go through without paying since they were shortly closing. The museum part could be spruced up, but the mill room itself left me speechless! It is awe-inspiring with the natural wood and the height of the bins and the scope of the pulleys. How did I almost miss this?! I beg you to Market, Market and more Market this mill room. Maybe the locals are used to it and take it for granted, but when I got there, I thought it was all about the downtown, and yet it was the mill that knocked me over. I can’t say this enough that this treasure should be the focus and proclaimed in many different ways all through the downtown and signage through the city. I missed the village tour, and now I am afraid there were wonders there I should have started with. Since I went earlier than the other group and they don’t know what I’ve said, see what they say and if they visit the mill and if it is a focus for them or not due to the marketing.

**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. The signs leading towards downtown were beautiful. Signage was everywhere and was great. Wasn't hard to find things in town. Welcoming feeling. Lots of great signage. Made me want to check Lindsborg out.
- b. Signage surrounding downtown was attractive. Finding places other than downtown was a challenge. Looked like a highway entrance. No streetscape.
- c. Signage was the first thing I noticed. Big, consistent and easy to see. Very professionally done. Downtown appeared vibrant and beautiful. Overall clean community. Found the college right away. Overall great impression.  
There were several Lindsborg billboards on the highway. It got you excited about your visit and made it feel like you were headed to a very happening place! The archway and flags that lead you downtown are a fantastic entry point. They were very prominent - and caused a lot of anticipation when entering downtown. Again, noticed college facilities right away.
- d. Scott's grocery store presented well, Bethany was impressive, the archway and the light post signs that lead to downtown were very fantastic, love all the trees throughout town and more specifically downtown, GREAT signage (eye catching and consistent), nice signs at the middle school tennis courts, prairie trail was exciting to see.  
There were so many signs on the highway. It led me to think that Lindsborg must be a happening town. From the north Bethany College looked good and caught our eye.
- e. We went in the most advertised way, and that end of town was very attractive. The 8 or so billboards setting up the town were well done! Liked the 100 Best Small Town Sign. Put that on your FB and Website. Brought my husband along as he likes to golf on trips. That was an experience! Waaay out in the country, and only one sign from the main street in town. Need a sign on Svensk Rd. He wouldn't golf there again. No real serious maintenance on the greens. I was impressed with the beautiful housing (senior?) on the way in town. Made me want to live there! FB and website that plus?! East Lincoln was a total surprise with the neat lamp posts. Nicest area EVER for a cleaned-up co-op. Someone did amazing planning. Nice music Downtown. City Hall vibrant color is really welcoming.

## 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?)**

- a. The downtown buildings were so neat. They made me want to go in every one of them. Wasn't hard to find things due to signs and maps. Everyone was welcoming and friendly. The Courtyard gallery was amazing. It was like walking into another place. The brick street and open courtyard feeling. So neat. Hemslojd was very neat. To be able to see the process of how the horses were made/painted was very cool. And they were very friendly. Although we didn't get to try the bike rental out, that was a really neat idea. Connected was a neat store and the ladies were so great. Everyone was friendly, welcoming and helpful.
- b. Uniform signage, lighting, various trees. Businesses were artistic, boutique, high quality goods. The customer service was great. We asked for recommendations and they were all very helpful.
- c. We visited Lindsborg on a very warm day and appreciated the trees downtown that provided some shade. Everything was very 'walkable' and picturesque. Kids riding around on their scooters, people visiting outside a store on a bench. Of course, the horses add such a nice element to downtown. So neat in person and fun to take selfies with! Our group commented several times on nice flowers and other signage in front of stores. We noticed the mural with the 150th Anniversary right away. A great teaser for residents and visitors. We visited many shops downtown. Everyone was extremely friendly and offered advice on where to eat lunch and places we should visit while in town. Downtown was warm and inviting.  
Small World Gallery was our first stop (had seen in Marci's Guidebook). Briana was very friendly and I was blown away by the items in their gallery. Beautiful hand-crafted jewelry, artwork, photography, interesting books, and other neat gifts. Very well-lit, well-organized shop.  
I really enjoyed Hemslojd. There was so much stuff specific to Lindsborg and Kansas. At times it almost felt overwhelming. Really enjoyed seeing how the horses are made. Signing the 'guestbook' was neat. The clerk was nice and offered brochures and catalog. Rendezvous Adventure Outfitters was a great stop. I couldn't believe the top-name brands sold in a store the size of Lindsborg. I was very impressed by the quality of merchandise. There were discs for sale but the clerk didn't know much about the sport or the course – would be good to have a map or brochure in the store.  
Also enjoyed The Fair Trade Store and the Hands of Time Gallery. Didn't make it into the toy store but I was surprised to see that type of store in a small town.  
We visited the Courtyard Gallery and the clerk was working on a computer and did not greet us when we entered or ask if we needed help. But the space was very neat.
- d. The snow cone shop caught our eye immediately. The mural was depicting an event was nice. The numerous signs (a-frame), benches, horses, flowers, free library box.....makes the downtown look alive.  
Public restroom and signage/map was great.

The Swedish store, Hemslojd, was awesome!!! The people were friendly and kind and engaging.

Small World Gallery was our first stop and we were thrilled by the selection of art, jewelry and books. It was hard to have to move on as we would have liked to spend more time. Briana Zimmerling was amazing! She shared about her artwork, the community, and the store owners. She was positive and fun!

Rendezvous Adventure Outfitters...my first word was "wow!" I loved the store and was amazed at the name brands that they sell. Rick was helpful and kind. We were glad to see that he sells discs for the disc golf although it would have been helpful if he had maps or a little information on the game. Overall, an excellent store!

Hands of Time Gallery and Connected were excellent shops.

I was surprised by the quantity and quality of the shops downtown. Everyone, was engaging and kind and the selection was amazing!!

Somewhere we saw the words, "one people, love all" .....nice!!

- e. Very well cared for downtown except for one empty building by the souvenir shop and one at the other end across from the coffee shop. That one was an eyesore. Loved how the theatre did their advertising on the brick walls. Found bathrooms on that side of the street.

Signage by the Courtyard Gallery for restrooms in there would triple foot traffic and sell out the bakery even further. Loved that area. Needs a way to bring people in there better. A-sidewalk sign maybe?

Loved art on the side of the building, and the flower pots around. One said, "I'm glad you're here." That was cool! Visited the Good Merchant, and Clothes Line with a great sale and helpful customer service. Spent some money at the restaurant too. I liked the merchandise and it had a lot of variety. I was greeted and treated well, even allowed to use a restroom that was for employees.

**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. We parked downtown in front of the Small World Gallery and there was no problem getting around. We walked up and down the main street. The trees were awesome, it was a hot day and the shade that they provided was wonderful.
- b. Restrooms, trash, benches.
- c. We noticed drinking fountains, benches, public restrooms, trash cans and the nice Visitor Information Center. Loved being able to grab a postcard from our travels (and enjoy a bit of AC on a hot day). We didn't have trouble finding parking. It was a Friday morning and traffic was pretty low. I enjoyed being able to park and walk up & down both sides of Main Street easily. Everything seemed 'within reach' of downtown.
- d. We saw drinking fountains, benches, restrooms, trash receptacles, and they were all plentiful.
- e. Found those mentioned. Glad to sit down in the bakery away from the heat. Parking great except at the museum.

### **3. Other Retail Shopping Areas**

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

- a. Didn't notice many "other retail" areas.
- b. No other real shopping areas.
- c. The only other retail we encountered (other than on Main Street) were the grocery store and pharmacy. Both seemed extremely clean and presented well. Always great to see a local grocery store thriving in a small town.
- d. Other than a bit of retail on the main street in town with the grocery store we didn't see any other retail.
- e. Good hospital signage and lots of services downtown

### **4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas**

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

- a. We found the Industrial Park. Nothing too exciting there.
- b. There was some industrial areas, but could not tell if there was room to expand.
- c. We sort of stumbled on an industrial park. It did not appear to have a lot of businesses and had some room for expansion.
- d. We stumbled upon the industrial area.
- e. Space seemed limited for growth. Didn't see much industry there. Made me think it may be mostly tourism.

### **5. Health Care Services**

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

- a. We found the hospital when we were doing the initial 5-minute drive through. They were doing construction.
- b. Community Hospital. Older small building and ER renovation/expansion
- c. We found the hospital, which appeared to be undergoing a renovation or addition. We did not notice a lot of signage for the facility.
- d. Drive-through pharmacy was nice. We stumbled upon the hospital.
- e. Looked adequate. Nice that the hospital has a satellite there.

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

- a. We didn't really check that out.
- b. Didn't see any.
- c. I did not notice any other healthcare facilities.
- d. NA
- e. NA

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

- a. Bethany Home looked like a nursing facility and there were kids having water balloons with the residents. That was neat to see.
- b. Bethany Home Assisted Living Housing.
- c. We found Bethany Home as we drove around town. There appeared to be independent housing outside in addition to a larger building that was more of an assisted living/nursing home type facility. It was very inviting, and residents were outside participating in an activity with young children.
- d. Bethany Home looked "cute." The residents were outside for an activity with some children!
- e. Saw 2 that were interesting and well maintained.

**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.)**

- a. The trees caught everyone's attention. There were hardly any houses for sale from what we saw.
- b. Variety of housing, found a couple for sale. Lots of apartments. Low amount of available houses.
- c. I did not notice a lot of homes for sale. It appeared there was a good mix of homes in all income levels. We drove around and found a sub-division with newer housing. We did notice a few apartment type complexes and duplexes.
- d. NA
- e. Lots of houses for sale. Never saw a city with such a uniform neat look. That takes a lot of buy-in from the community and it worked! Lots of variety for housing.

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

- a. NA
- b. Apartments. Didn't see a house for rent.
- c. We did see a few homes for rent, but not many.
- d. NA
- e. I didn't see a lot of rental.

## **7. 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. We didn't realize the school was the high school that we had seen when we were doing our drive thru. It appeared like the college to us at first.
- b. Elementary, Middle and High School. Bethany College. They look adequately sized and well-maintained.
- c. We didn't find all the schools initially. We noticed one and had to google the location of the others. The schools appeared well-maintained. Nice playground at the elementary school. Great entry to the high school. School was not in session so not a lot of traffic.
- d. We had a little trouble finding the schools. The school tennis courts and signage were nice. We didn't realize the high school was right there until we were heading up to the castle and broke out in "Ah, there it is!"
- e. Schools looked great! Very nice campuses. I didn't see the college and didn't notice signage.

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

- a. No Answer (NA)
- b. No
- c. NA
- d. NA
- e. Didn't look.

## **8. Childcare**

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

- a. Didn't see anything about childcare.
- b. Didn't see any.
- c. We did not notice any childcare facilities, but assumed many were in-home versus large daycare centers.
- d. NA
- e. ???

## **9. 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?**

- a. Beautiful churches. We didn't realize there were as many as we saw listed in the brochure.
- b. We found four churches of various denominations, all in good condition. Saw some church sponsored signs.
- c. We noticed several churches, including Methodist, Lutheran and Evangelical. All appeared well-maintained. We also noticed some signage around town (little yard signs on stakes) that appeared to be affiliated with churches.
- d. Methodist...building good, lawn okay; Lutheran...building and grounds great; Evangelical...landscaping nice
- e. Liked the "churches welcome you" sign on the one end of town. Baptist Church that moved -- needs to sell and no for sale sign in yard. Turning to blight. Ask them to help find a way to repurpose it?

## **10. Civic**

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

- a. NA
- b. Lions, Rotary
- c. There was a sign with civic groups (Chamber, Lions Club, etc.) as we entered Lindsborg.
- d. We thought we saw a sign as we entered town. We saw that some civic organizations had donated to the public works of art.
- e. Not obvious. Did not observe any civic group activity.

## **11. Public Infrastructure**

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

- a. NA
- b. Streets were in relatively good condition. On street parking. No streetscape or landscape.
- c. Community presented well. Nice streets. LOTS of trees. Good landscaping. Brick streets in pretty good condition.
- d. Bricks streets are nice and in good shape. Streets overall a 6-7 on a 10 scale.
- e. Felt like the downtown was amazing but the area around the museum and mill and the Swedish Village was not nearly developed with lamp posts, flowers and walkways and the feeling of "we are expecting and welcoming you." The museum cost was so low...raise and use for fixing that area up some?



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

- a. The red building definitely caught your attention. I never actually went into it.
- b. NA
- c. (See comments above about travel info center. I did not stop in City Hall – others from our group may have).
- d. NA
- e. Liked brochure room, but surprised YOUR town's info wasn't at the best eye level spot. TOUT the MILL big time in there. Banners, if you have to!

**Police/fire protection:**

- a. NA
- b. Nice police and fire station.
- c. Nice public safety building. Love that they have embraced Lindsborg's 'brand' as well.
- d. NA
- e. Saw in the neighborhood

**Library:**

- a. I never went in the library, but those that did were not impressed.
- b. NA
- c. Others from our group entered the library. I did not. Appeared small. I believe there was a 'little library' where you can take a book/leave a book somewhere in town.
- d. The library was disappointing. The book selection was not good and the books in the bookstore were old, not current. We did not feel good about the library.
- e. Local, Downtown.

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

- a. We found the disk golf course, walking trail, skate park (which we thought was pretty cool thing). Every park we found had wonderful signs.
- b. Parks were hard to find. Little to no directional signage.
- c. City Parks were clean and had great identifying signage. Loved the small amphitheater in one park. Very large shelters for events. Walking trail was very nice. Loved having disc golf along the route. Pool was full of kids on the hot day. Skateboard park looked well-loved. Saw a biker riding across a bridge. Wish we would have had more time to walk across the bridge and see where the trail went. Loved all the variety of recreation activities Lindsborg had.
- d. NA
- e. Nice! All over.

## **12. 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. There were horses everywhere. From the statues downtown to even small ones on the homes. Definitely felt the Swedish.
- b. They “exploit” their Swedish heritage. It is everywhere.
- c. Loved the consistency of incorporating the Swedish heritage into the entire community. From seeing the dala horses downtown and the small versions on houses, to the architectural details, the entire town was truly an experience.
- d. We did see signs for an event that took place prior to our visit. Trail! Skateboard park! Disc Golf! Needs signage!  
Park Signs at every corner!! Amphitheater! Shelters at the parks were nice sized, playground looked well cared for, Heritage Square...well cared for and beautiful!
- e. Yes they have a slogan, but they could do more with it.

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

- a. NA
- b. No
- c. Yes, there were posters from events in windows downtown. Loved how they used a vacant building to put up a banner from an event. Heritage Square was a nice location. No events going on currently but had heard about the festival that occurs every couple years. Neat space. Did not pay to tour the area.
- d. NA
- e. Seems to have great events planned.

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

- a. Coronado Heights!! Such a neat place! However there could be better signage for it.
- b. Multiple museums, painted horses, Coronado Heights.
- c. Coronado Heights was beautiful. Glad we ventured out there. We picked up a brochure at the Visitor Information Center and glad we did. No signage or printed materials at site showing the history or significance.  
Noticed a few museums. The Red Barn studio was not well marked and we almost missed it. Wish we would have had time to stop at the Old Mill.
- d. Coronado Heights...very cool but it needs signage! I want to learn about where I am and how this place came to be. The brochure information is nice but there needs to be signage on location.
- e. This is a working mill. That is amazing. What if you were able to turn it on with a tour and show more than just the one time a year? Does anyone else have that?

**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. The Information booth was awesome. Thought that was a great idea to have something like that, that's available 24/7.
- b. Yes, one kiosk and a convention and tourism office.
- c. See comments above. Love the idea of a TIC being by itself (outside of an office). Visitors can get info they need, no matter what day or time they stop. Noticed city hall and local conference center, but do not remember seeing a Chamber or Main Street organization.
- d. NA
- e. It seemed adequate.

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

- a. NA
- b. The Swedish Crown. Small World Gallery
- c. Small World Gallery was my favorite spot downtown. Wish we could have had more time to eat at Farley's and the Blacksmith Shop, as both were recommended by store clerks. The whole experience was great and would love to come back and visit.
- d. NA
- e. Food was okay. Husband said no to golf, ("they didn't even have yardage markers!") but I liked the shops, and would like to see the Village in full some time. And see the mill working.

### **13. Wrap-up**

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

- a. NA
- b. Welcoming, full downtown.
- c. Overall the community was great. I had heard such great things about Lindsborg and it really lived up to my expectations. It just felt so inviting as soon as you entered the community, specifically the downtown area. There were several moments when a kid was riding a scooter down the street or the biker was coming across the bridge and it honestly felt picture-perfect.
- d. NA
- e. The cleanliness and effort to look great says they care. The city government is doing an amazing job of seeing they protect their tourism.

### **What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?**

- a. NA
- b. Figuring how to keep businesses downtown, directional signage outside of downtown.
- c. I also noticed they do not have any large motels. I would assume if big tour groups come to town or during the times of their big festivals, visitors likely have to stay a distance away. Remembered seeing a few bed & breakfasts.  
I did not see clearly defined areas outside of the downtown. We had a little trouble finding hospital and schools.
- d. NA
- e. Getting past taking the mill for granted and to now take their tourism dollars and make the Heritage Square and mill areas as fantastic as the downtown area.

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

- a. I will remember how welcoming the town felt. I can't get over how neat driving towards downtown with all the signs lining both sides of the street. Was so neat. I would definitely come back. There is much more to see.
- b. Downtown shopping and dining, Coronado Heights.
- c. Friendly and inviting downtown...and just the uniqueness of the whole community. Truly an experience and a must-visit place. Great work, Lindsborg!
- d. I had been to Lindsborg once before and was unimpressed. I wonder now if it was on a weekend or in the evening. I just didn't get what all the hype was about. On our recent visit, I was blown away. Although it was a slow day without much going on, the downtown was alive, the signs were out and the shops were open and welcoming. As a small business owner, I would love to visit with the owners of these shops to find out how they're doing it! How they're staying alive in small town Kansas. Next time we head to Wichita to visit family, we will stop in at Lindsborg and visit the lovely galleries and shops. As a member of the group that visited, I did not realize how much time it would take to thoroughly cover the entire town. I could have spent a couple days to cover the entire "First Impressions" report. However, we had a great time in your community and you are doing good things! I will tell my friends and I will be back!
- e. Great deal I got at the store, the cleanest co-op area EVER, and how the Mill left me speechless in wonder...and then wonder how I almost missed it!

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