

First Impressions

Compiled Report Form



Community Visited: Mound City **Date(s) Visited:** October 20, 2020 (a,b,c)

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. Good information at www.moundcity.org, seems to accurately reflect what we saw on our visit.
- b. The web site was easy to find. Yes, what was on the site was there. No problem with web search.
- c. Found website easily- good basic pages with basic information available. Nice history pieces/articles on site.

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. Very picturesque drive coming from the east on the winding road. Welcome sign was almost missed but could have been because of foggy, misty weather. Sign on west end much more noticeable. Homes along the highway seemed well kept. Plenty of cars parked in front of businesses.
- b. Saw many stores, banks, gas stations. Lots of nice homes. No pets running around. Downtown: had so many flowering mums. So pretty. Also the beautiful court house on the hill stands out, so cool. They have nice stone signs. We almost missed one, just a little hidden; but still nice signs to welcome us.
- c. Beautiful drive into town from/on Highway 52. Nice houses, neat-looking. Looked mostly clean and orderly and lovely to drive through. Lots of businesses available, good roads. Smaller sign on 52 Hwy, almost missed it. The *large* sign on the other side of town was very beautiful! Nice houses on entering, good signage on roads, etc.

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. Beautiful flowers and fall decorations in front of most businesses. Buildings seemed older, but in good condition. Nice variety of services/stores available. Several businesses had closed signs displayed. We walked up and back both sides of the street, looking in the windows. Most stores seemed to be well-stocked. We visited a coffee

shop, we were not greeted. After a few minutes, one in our group approached the gentleman and they had an interesting conversation.

- b. Many older buildings, but have been maintained. Most buildings had signage to tell us what they were. We went into Stone Tree coffee and pottery. It was a very nice older building. A lot of work went into cleaning it up. It was awesome. The owner was a little shy at first but then he was very proud of his buildings. Yes, at most places we were greeted and so wanted to welcome us. Had one stop where he may have not been sure what we wanted, but he had a lot of information.
- c. Clean. Older building, but kept up well. Lots of parking. Some flags on the street, but not consistent. Those huge mums in planters were *nice*. Very pretty to see mums everywhere. We saw banks, real estate, antique/specialty shops, gas stations, tractor company, grocery store, Dollar General, coffee shop. Some businesses closed while we were there- possibly due to Covid 19? We really only went in the coffee shop- most others were closed. Owner was not interactive until we asked questions, then he was open and friendly.

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

- a. We did not observe any amenities. Easy parking. Lots of beautiful mums and fall decorations.
- b. Not sure if the amenities were closed due to Covid 19 or unavailable. The street was clean, parking was easy and again there were huge mums on sidewalks downtown that were so pretty. Sidewalks were wide and in very good shape.
- c. Did not see public amenities. Lots of parking, clean streets, easy access to all businesses we saw. Loved the mums all over town.

4. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

- a. Good variety of stores available. Good access and look very nice with mums and fall décor.
- b. Downtown main street, the shops had hours marked. Window displays were nice; it let you know what was in the shop. The doorways were nice and clean and easy to access.
- c. Variety of stores/ businesses available through town. All accessible and clean looking.

5. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

- a. Did not seem to be a defined area.
- b. There were areas on the edge of town where maybe an industry could locate. They did have three that I saw: grain elevators and storage.
- c. Did not seem to be a defined area.

6. Health Care Services

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

- a. Community Health Center.
- b. They have a Southeast Community Clinic, which can do day to day care.
- c. Community Health Center of SE Kansas was only medical care available. No hospital, eye doctors or dentists.

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

- a. Community Health Center seems to fill need of community.
- b. At the clinic they have two doctors available. No dentist or optometrists, they are an hour away or less from Kansas City.
- c. Community Health Center of SEK- nice "new" building/area. Other services are in Ft. Scott or KC area.

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

- a. None.
- b. None available, but they do have a place that delivers Meals On Wheels.
- c. N/A, but they do have some senior Meals On Wheels program in town.

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. Observed a real estate agency. Did not go in and inquire about availability of housing.
- b. We were told there are a few houses for sale. The neighborhoods were very nice homes with clean yards. Not many homes need to be removed. We saw some new construction.
- c. Mostly one-family homes in town. Some apartments above shops on Main Street. Didn't see an abundance of "For Sale" signs.

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

- a. City hall maintains a list of landlords. Some rentals are located on the second floor of businesses in the downtown area.
- b. N/A
- c. Asked at City Hall and they have a list of rental property owners available. Most rental homes are owned by residents. Some apartments above businesses on Main Street.

8. Schools

What schools are present? 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?

- a. Two schools: K-6, 7-12. Seems adequate in size and well-maintained. Good sports complex.
- b. They don't have a Head Start, but they have a nice elementary school. The grounds were very well maintained. The high school was also nice. It had green houses.
- c. Elementary and High Schools noted. Both were nicely up kept and mix of old and new parts of buildings. More than adequate in size.

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

- a. Good school website. KSDE.org (building report card) accredited and Title I.
- b. Yes, the schools have their web sites too.
- c. Yes- Some.

9. Childcare

What childcare services are available? Is it affordable?

- a. Three licensed daycares in city limits. Affordable.
- b. They had three day cares. They are affordable. One is \$21/day, some less or more. It would be what a person's needs are.
- c. In home childcare services (3). No preschool or Head Start services.

10. Faith/Religion

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

- a. Observed 5 or so churches. Well-kept buildings. No evidence observed of faith-based community services.
- b. We saw many churches so you would have choices. Just that some churches are for just classes, not worship services, but faith-based.
- c. We saw about 5-7 church buildings, found out that a couple buildings were not used for worship anymore, but for other purposes. Didn't see faith-based community services posted anywhere obvious around town.

11. Civic

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

- a. Masonic Lodge, VFW/Legion. Did not see evidence of civic organization activity.
- b. N/A. We did ask: they do have a VFW, Legion and a Masonic Hall. Did not see evidence of civic organization activity.

- c. We asked- they have a legion and Masonic Hall. Didn't actually see them, but we were told about them. No evidence of civic organization activity.

12. Public Infrastructure

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

- a. Good streets. Noticed more houses in disrepair off of Main Street.
- b. As I mentioned, streets are good, street signage. Has major highways on both sides of the city. Had lighting downtown. Had flags on poles but only one side of the street.
- c. Streets are overall really good- didn't notice lots of potholes or anything. Street signs adequate and readable. More homes off main street were in need of repair and some messy yards, but not in large quantities.

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

- a. Staff at City Hall were extremely helpful and welcoming. Each employee we spoke to were friendly and knowledgeable about many areas beyond their assigned duties.
- b. City Hall, we stopped. They were all so nice. Had information. From City clerk, Police Chief and City Maintenance workers. They were so helpful and when answering questions, you could see they were proud of their town.
- c. City Hall very friendly and helpful. Staff- we talked for a long time. Very knowledgeable about things going on- proud of their city and the work they do. Lots of info available in entryway/bulletin board. Nicely arranged.

Police/fire protection:

- a. Volunteer fire; Police- 1 full, 2 part-time.
- b. There are a full-time police chief and two part-time officers. The fire protection is from county volunteers.
- c. Police- one FT and 2 PT. Fire protection comes from county volunteers.

Library:

- a. Nice building, friendly staff.
- b. We visited the library. A nice building with lots of windows, very friendly staff.
- c. We had an extended visit at the library. Neat and clean and very friendly staff. Nice outside- more mums!

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

- a. Great sports complex. Several parks and churches with play equipment.
- b. We saw two parks and a ballpark that had a paved walking trail, very nice. Also has benches and exercise stations. Nice play areas for children.
- c. Saw two parks and a ballpark complex for the High School. There was an exercise/walk path around the ballpark complex.

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. Arts and Crafts, Lake
- b. They have a huge craft fair in the fall, but due to Covid-19 it was cancelled.
- c. Known for Arts and Crafts Festival in fall, but was cancelled due to Covid this year. Historic Court House was really neat- nice attraction for the city.

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

- a. No answer.
- b. N/A.
- c. N/A 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. Old time village would be great to visit (post Covid) and promote.
- b. They have a lake nearby for camping and fishing. They also have the Linn County fair but N/A.
- c. They have a LAKE! We didn't get to visit. It's about 5 minutes away and they upkeep the grounds. Linn County Fair is held there- Mound City is the county seat.

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. No chamber/visitor center.
- b. N/A but stop at City Hall or the court house for much information.
- c. No Chamber- just the City Hall for information.

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

- a. We ate lunch at Garrett's BBQ. Excellent food. Friendly staff. Also visited with other patrons in restaurant. Very friendly people.
- b. I would go back. Garrett's restaurant was so friendly. The food was awesome. I would like to try the coffee at the coffee shop. They had other restaurants too.
- c. We ate at Garrett's BBQ- very friendly, great food- clean. Very helpful people. Was a fun lunch. I would go back to the coffee shop too and visit again to try their coffee.

14. Wrap-up

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

- a. Friendly people, good variety of businesses, good sports complexes/parks, pride in downtown appearance.
- b. Anyone you talked to was very passionate about their small town. It is the county seat and has many beautiful older buildings and lots of history. Civil War, Jayhawkers, the court house.
- c. Friendly people! Lots of businesses/shops. Nice looking town; clean, well-kept. As county seat, it draws people there for business.

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

- a. Houses needing demolition/removal.
- b. Like all small towns having more young people stay or move to your town.
- c. Probably the need to keep yards cleaned up/ old houses demolished as needed. This is very challenging.

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

- a. Great food. Friendly helpful people. How big it seemed compared to our town with a similar population. Historic courthouse.
- b. How much care they had taken of the older buildings; not tearing them down. The magnificent court house, the people that work there and the history. It is the second oldest working court house in Kansas. I have never been to Mound City. I will go back. The roads there have beautiful trees that will change in fall, how wonderful. I would like to say thank you to Shelby, Paul, John, Zack at City Hall for showing us and taking time to talk about Mound City.
- c. Food at Garrett's BBQ. 😊 City Hall is info center for all happenings. It was larger and had lots more businesses than our town of comparable size. I attribute that to being the county seat?? Historic courthouse is really neat to see.

PowerPoint Presentation is posted at:

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

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