

First Impressions

Team Report Form



Community Visited: Victoria

Date Visited: 5/1/18

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?

It was easy to find the Victoria website. It was very informative and helpful.

1. The "Five-Minute" Impression: After taking a five-minute drive through the community without stopping, the following reactions were noted.

-Well kept community, nice and clean.

-I didn't see any welcome signs except for the ones on the light poles which were hard to read from a distance. Nice clean town.

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

-No large signs – the welcome signs are on light poles, small.

-The church is very noticeable. We found several landmarks but hard to tell where downtown was. Never found the urgent care that was listed on their website. Found the nursing home only to find it had been closed. But the sign was still up showing which way to go.

2. Downtown Business Area

Describe the buildings, signs, infrastructure, etc.

-The buildings downtown are well taken care of. It was easy to see the signs for each office. Streets seemed to be smooth to drive on and sidewalks were well taken care of.

-Very hard to tell what businesses were open. Signage was good on a few. Banks, chamber, salon.

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

-There were two salons but sure sure they are open. Insurance financial place, two banks, chamber office, gas station, liquor store, gift shop at the church office.

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

-Did not see retail businesses to go in except for the thrift shop. The ladies were working on stocking shelves and said hello as we entered.

-We went into the thrift store and the ladies were very nice and talked. We didn't see anyone at the church. Other businesses we weren't sure if they were opened.

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

-None

-I didn't see any public restrooms that were open, no benches, didn't find any WIFI.

Comment on landscaping and streetscaping. Did you have difficulty finding parking?

Could you access multiple services from where you parked?

-Buildings, sidewalks, streets were well maintained. No weeds growing. Parking space abundant.

-The whole town was very nicely kept. And streets were clean. All the buildings were in good shape. There was someone cleaning up the lawn where the nursing home used to be.

3. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

-I didn't think any of the downtown was very accessible except by the banks and the chamber office. Nice post office.

4. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

-Not too easy to locate.

5. Health Care Services

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

-The nursing home was closed but they still had a sign with directions on how to get to it. Even though it was closed there was a man working on the landscape.

-We saw the fire station. Never found the urgent care. Nursing home was closed.

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

-Did not see the First Care Center.

-Didn't find any of the above.

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

-It was closed.

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.)

*-We saw 3 houses for sale. They had signs in the yard and were well kept yards and exteriors.
-Neighborhoods were nice and clean and houses mostly well kept. Really liked looking in Don Weber's yard at his yard art. Several houses for sale.*

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

*-Did not see anything for rent.
-Didn't find any rental available.*

7. 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?

*-Grade school & high and middle school. The high school was pretty new. Both were well maintained.
-We found the grade school and the Jr & Sr. High. Nice new buildings!*

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

*-There was good info about academics, athletics and events
-Yes, there online websites are very good.*

8. Childcare

What childcare service are available? Is it affordable?

-Don't know.

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?

*-The Catholic Church very well taken care of. Did not see church sponsored services. Saw a second church on a map of Victoria but did not see it on the website or see it on our visit in town.
-Only saw the one church which is beautiful!*

10. Civic

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

*-Saw lots of organizations listed on the website.
-Didn't see any.*

Did you observe any evidence of civic organization activity?

-No

-No

11. Public Infrastructure

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

-Streets were smooth, plenty of parking available.

Some sidewalks but not everywhere. Street signs nice. The welcome ones are hard to read from a distance. We saw the Angus Memorial, the stones of the family that dies, and the beautiful cemetery. Love the old metal crosses. Some parking but not in some areas. No special landscaping. Pool was nice. No restrooms available.

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

-We didn't go into city hall.

Police/fire protection:

-All we saw was the fire station.

Library:

-No library

-Didn't find one.

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

-The swimming pool and park were clean and well taken care of.

-Small city park and nice pool.

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?

-The church

-Just the Church

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

-No

-Nice signs about the other places in town and we drove out to the Angus memorial, Grant Cemetery, the St. Fidelis Cemetery, land markers, Seth family memorial, Don Weber yard!

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).

-The metal cross head stones at the cemetery were unique.

-No

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.

-City Hall – large sign downtown

-Chamber office but we didn't go into the office.

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

-The Church

-No, unless to show someone the church.

14. Wrap-up

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

-The tidiness of downtown and the residential area showed a pride of community.

-Beautiful church, nice school, beautiful cemetery. Loved the old crosses.

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

-Signs on highways into town.

-Not very many businesses. Needs some flower pots around town. Signs entering town.

All the American flags we saw hanging around town (saw 3) were torn and raggy looking and needed replaced. They even have a drop off for old worn out flags to be left!

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

-The church and the cross headstones.

-A lot smaller than I thought and the church! And the crosses in the cemetery.



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