

# First Impressions

Compiled Report Form



**Community Visited:** Weir

**Date(s) Visited:** September 29 (Tuesday)

## **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. I was not able to access the city website. The page was down, and said it was being worked on. However, their City Facebook page was very active and had a lot of information on it. You could tell from the Facebook page that the city was trying to get the community involved in activities.
- b. Web site was down- being worked on. Facebook page was very active.
- c. The website was down for maintenance but they do have a very active and informational Facebook page.

## **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. I noticed that there were not many businesses. However, the businesses that they do have are in decent condition. I noticed a lot of trailer homes in poor condition and many yards that needed to be cleaned up. I noticed the Welcome to Weir signs upon entering the city.
- b. Businesses were thin on Main Street. Library appeared to be a new structure. Lots of rundown mobile homes and unmaintained yards. We saw a welcome to Weir sign coming into town.
- c. There were a few houses that the yards needed to be cleaned up and mowed. It's really a quiet town. Entry signs are street signs that say Welcome to Weir Kansas

### **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. I saw a library, bank, post office, Quik Shop, funeral home, and Ag Choice. The only business we were able to enter was the Quik Shop. We were all greeted upon entering. It was a decent convenient store with several hot food options.
- b. Very old empty buildings. Ag Choice, Funeral home, Quikstop, post office, library. Quickstop was open. Friendly people, several food choices.
- c. Bank, Library, post office, funeral home and a gas station. The library was closed so didn't get to enter but the gas station was pretty nice and the people were friendly. The lady at the gas station was friendly and greeted you when you walked in.

**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. I noticed a public restroom at the city park and picnic tables. I didn't see any drinking fountains. The parking in the downtown business area was good. If you were to park on Main Street you could access all of the businesses within a short walking distance.
- b. Public restrooms, trash containers, benches, play area. Parking was fine. Chip and seal streets. Business access was ok.
- c. There are public bathrooms and benches at the park and also bathrooms at the gas station. You could access everything from one parking spot and parking is easy to find. Everything seemed to be clean and well kept.

### **4. Other Retail Shopping Areas**

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

- a. The only retail shopping we saw in within the city was Ag Choice. It was one of the last things we saw while driving through the town so I would say it was harder to find but it appeared to be a nice business.
- b. Ag Choice was very nice.
- c. Ag Choice: it looked to be kept up and organized.

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

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

- a. N/A
- b. Didn't see anything
- c. There is an Ag Choice but didn't look to be like much room for expansion.

## **6. Health Care Services**

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

- a. There are no medical services offered within the city. The City Clerk said that most people travel to Pittsburg, Columbus, Joplin, or Girard for any medical needs.
- b. Pittsburg/Joplin/Girard Hospital.
- c. N/A

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

- a. No availability within the city.
- b. Citizens commute for health care and dental.
- c. N/A

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

- a. I did not see any nursing facilities but did see Suncrest View Apartments. I assume this is low income housing.
- b. Didn't see a nursing home, but did see low-income housing
- c. There is SEK-CAP, not sure if that's assisted living or low-income housing.

## **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. I noticed a few really nice homes, but definitely noticed many homes and trailers in poor condition. I personally do not feel like the housing market would appeal to all income wages. I only noticed one house for sale in the city.
- b. There was one really nice home for sale. I didn't see what you would call curb appeal. Lots of older mobile homes.
- c. Most of the houses were trailer house or manufactured homes. There are also some very nice homes around town. Saw at least two 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?**

- a. I didn't see any rental properties available.
- b. Did not see any rental houses.
- c. Didn't see any for rent and also didn't see any ads for houses for rent.

## **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. There is a consolidated Elementary School but no High School. The Elementary School was nice and the building and grounds seemed to be well maintained.
- b. Elementary School was new, very nice, but no high school.
- c. There is an elementary school. It's a newer building and seems to be of adequate size for the town.

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

- a. Yes, there is a website-usd247.com
- b. Yes, there is a web site for school.
- c. Yes, there is a website for the school system.

## **9. Childcare**

**What childcare services are available? Is it affordable?**

- a. The City Clerk said that there were a couple daycares in town but she didn't know what their fees were like.
- b. None was posted publicly.
- c. There are a couple of options for child care but I'm not sure of the names of the providers.

## **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. Methodist Church-In decent condition with a playground for kids. Baptist Church-could use some work. Faith Tabernacle-did not see but City Clerk said it was there within the city.
- b. Baptist Church, Methodist Church and Faith Tabernacle.
- c. There are three Churches in the town. One of them had a playground and basketball court.

## **11. Civic**

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

- a. I noticed the Masonic Lodge and Civic Center.
- b. A civic center/masonic lodge. Maybe a 4-H Club. The city clerk said the civic center was active.
- c. There is a Civic center and it's pretty active in the town. We didn't observe any activity, but heard they just put on a movie for the town to come out and watch.

## **12. Public Infrastructure**

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

- a. I noticed that the streets throughout the city were in good condition. Much better than I expected since they do not have a Public Works crew.
- b. The streets were chip and seal, not too bad. Not a lot of sidewalks.
- c. The streets are mostly chip and seal but they are in good shape. The streets are marked and seem to have good signage all over town.

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

- a. The City employees were very welcoming. We met Amy the City Clerk and the Superintendent. They were both very friendly, showed us around City Hall and gave us a lot of information about the town. There was information available about the town. Also, some neat old pictures of the city.
- b. Good information was available. The City Clerk and City Superintendent were very nice and very informative.
- c. Greeted warmly and the staff was very friendly. Saw a few things on the wall with different information about the town

**Police/fire protection:**

- a. There is a fire department attached to City Hall. No police department; Cherokee County covers Weir.
- b. Volunteer Fire Department. Policing is done by the County.
- c. There is no city police department but they do have a contract with the county police where they come in and patrol the town for them. They do have their own fire department as well a county fire department in town.

**Library:**

- a. There is a newly built library. Sadly, we were not able to go inside, it was closed, but it looked very nice.
- b. A new building, but it was closed when we were here.
- c. There is a library but it was closed so we were not able to go in; it is a new building

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

- a. (No Answer)
- b. City park looked ok. It had a playground.
- c. There is a baseball field which is in decent shape, three different parks: one is the city, one is the church's and one at the school. There is also an arena owned by the saddle club.

**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. There are no particular attractions or events that the city is known for. The City Clerk did tell us that Weir is the "home of the fly swatter."
- b. Home of the first fly swatter.
- c. Home of the Fly Swatter

**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, I did not.
- b. I did not see anything at this time.
- c. No not that I'm aware of.

**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. N/A
- b. None that I saw.
- c. There is an old brick hand laid water tower that is pretty cool.

**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 only place I saw would be City Hall. There were no signs showing how to get there and it wasn't located on Main Street. Not necessarily hard to find, but not right in front of you either.
- b. City Hall is where we got our info; very friendly and helpful.
- c. City Hall the staff is very friendly.

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

- a. No restaurants or specialty shops.
- b. No.
- c. No.

#### **14. Wrap-up**

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

- a. Weir had a nice school district and library.
- b. School was very nice. City clerk and staff seemed to be trying to get community involved in things.
- c. There is room for expanding and the town is trying to get the community more involved in public events.

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

- a. The biggest obstacle facing this community is the fact that they are so close to other big cities.
- b. Small town with a lack of funds to move forward very fast.
- c. Dealing with the EPA on the smelting issues and being so close to such a big town.

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

- a. I will mostly remember how kind and welcoming the staff was at City Hall.
- b. Staff was very friendly.
- c. The old water tower and the very friendly people, didn't see very many people but the ones we did were nice

**PowerPoint Presentation is posted at:**

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



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