

First Impressions

Team Report Form



Community Visited: Protection

Date Visited: 5/24/2024 (3)

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?

- I Googled it and it brought it right up. Yes it showed some of what was in town.
- I did not see a city website or Facebook page that was managed.
- It was fairly easy to get information about the city online.

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

- The town was nice. It had looked like there were quite a few businesses on Main Street. There was a nice park, nice library, and people looked to be friendly.
- The houses look well cared for.
- Downtown looked to be busy.
- The town seemed very busy and had quite a few businesses. The town was also very clean.

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

- Big business out on the highway.
- Very nice houses on Main Street going down towards town.
- Nice large signs for some of the businesses.
- The city sign looked a little dated.
- Lots of cars on Main Street – a bustling area.

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

- Nice businesses. The storefronts were nice looking.

- The buildings all look well cared for.
- Buildings were very well kept. The signs were legible and neat and clean.
- There were some areas where the sidewalks were broken or overgrown with grass, but other spots where they were in good shape.

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

- I went to dinner on Main Street. It was very nice and people were helpful and friendly.
- There was a manufacturing place, a diner, insurance agency, grocery store, parts store and library.
- A café with friendly people. The library, knick-nak store, grocery store, gas station. Prices were reasonable.
- A co-op, city building, police station – all nice looking and tidy.

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

- Good customer service. People were nice.
- The waitress at the diner was very friendly.
- Businesses were friendly and great to visit with.

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

- The park was nice and looked like it was kept up well. It appeared it had bathrooms. The pool wasn't open. The ball diamond looked nice.
- Trash cans were observed.
- Lots of benches.
- Benches and trash cans were seen throughout Main Street. The city park was well groomed with newer playground equipment.

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

- Downtown had a nice appeal. Could park right in front of the diner and walk down the street easily to look at other buildings and a monument along the sidewalk in front of the old library.

- The city was mowed and trash cans were empty.
- Landscaping and streets were very clean and well kept. Parking was good – it was easy to park one place and walk to many different places.

4. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

- Saw a body shop which was appealing and in good condition – cleaned up.
- Library was very nice.
- Grocery store and parts store.
- There were antique stores, gas stations, and the library. Car dealer shops – all were attractive with easy access.

5. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

- It looked like there was a building that could be part of an industrial area that could be bought and made into businesses.
- There were some empty lots that might be a possibility for building or expansion.
- There were multiple industrial/agriculture parks and commercial businesses were well kept.

6. Health Care Services

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

- Maybe the fire station could provide some emergency services in this area.
- Nothing seen.
- Did have one clinic – it was small.

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

- Nothing seen.
- There was a very small highway sign.
- Other than the small clinic, did not see anything else such as a dentist or optometrist.

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

- One facility was observed.
- Not that I saw.
- There were actually two assisted living facilities 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.)

- Only one home was for sale. Houses were observed that would appeal to all income ranges.
- There was a wide array of housing for a variety of income levels. Nothing noted for sale.
- Housing was nice except on the east side where the houses were run down. Only saw one house 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 any.
- I did not see any.
- Did not see any rental houses. No empty lots available for sale.

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?

- School looked very nice and was very well maintained.
- The school building and grounds looked very nice.
- They have a beautiful school – K-8. Well maintained.
- The high school is in Coldwater.

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

- No.
- No.
- Yes, there was good information online.

9. Childcare

What childcare service are available? Is it affordable?

- Nothing noted.
- No facilities were seen.
- Only one childcare facility was seen.

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?

- Saw some churches. They appeared to be in good condition and well kept.
- Several nice looking churches.
- There were 4 churches. All looked very well taken care of.

11. Civic

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

- None noted.
- I did not see any.
- Did not see any organizations.

Did you observe any evidence of civic organization activity?

- None noted.
- No.
- No.

12. Public Infrastructure

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

- Some side streets were paved, some were dirt.
- The streets were nice. The west side of town seemed a lot cleaner than the east side.
- The town looked very clean.

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

- No observation.
- Nothing noted.
- Building was seen.

Police/fire protection:

- Police station looked nice.
- No observation.

Library:

- The library was a nice looking facility.
- Very nice, big library.
- No observation.

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

- Park and ballpark both looked to be good facilities.
- They had newer equipment in the park. It looked nice.

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?

- Nothing noted.
- Not that I saw.

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

- Nothing noted.
- No.

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).

- Nothing noted.
- Not that I saw.

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.

- No – but we ate at the diner and the waitress was able to answer all of the questions we had for her about the city. She was very nice.
- Not that I saw.

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

- Nothing noted.
- Don's Diner – it was very nice.

14. Wrap-up

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

- Was a pretty clean town.
- Streets were very wide.
- There were a lot of people downtown.
- The town was very clean and well kept.
- People were very friendly.

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

- Some houses were pretty run down.

- Lack of jobs for new people moving in.
- Location in the rural area was a challenge but they are a strong community.
- The café is closing in June – this is a huge meeting place.

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

- The diner.
- The number of open businesses they had for a small town.
- The clean town and friendly people.

How much money did you spend while you were in the city you visited? _\$0, \$40____
(Please include total purchases: Gas, soft drinks, food, purchases. No detail necessary.)



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