

First Impressions

Team Report Form



Community Visited: Hoisington

Date Visited: **11/14/2023** (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?
 - When looking, found the website for Hoisington easily, was organized with information for everything. When looking at the departments, it had information for each and how they serve, contact info for most, but no addresses or where to find.
 - Very easy to find the town website and Facebook page. Both promote the community well.
 - Hoisington website was easy to use and there was a lot of information on the website. It was cell phone compatible and everything was organized in a usable way. I noticed there was section for dining options and local attractions but not one for local realtors.
 - Additionally, there was not a community Facebook group where a person could go to find out business and community event information.
2. **The “Five-Minute” Impression:** After taking a five-minute drive through the community without stopping, the following reactions were noted.
 - The signs when entering and leaving town were older and the same. Quiet peaceful town. Not much activity at 11am. There were several empty buildings along main street and neighborhoods looked clean.
 - Hoisington is a nice town. The hospital looks to be a huge asset to the community.
 - The school is old but looks to be very well maintained.
 - Not many buildings on Main Street are being utilized to the fullest.
 - Nice metalwork banners on Main.
 - Hoisington is very comparable to Kingman. The size of the community and the infrastructure seem very similar to Kingman.

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

- “Welcome to” signs were old and color faded. Main street had empty buildings and haven’t been kept up if nothing was inside.
- The welcome signs were outdated, but they were there to greet people.

- Entering from the south end of Hoisington, there were some dilapidated properties and a few empty businesses (some looked like they were being used for storage only). There were also some cute businesses as well.
- The hardware store and the boutique were nice. The north end is fairly new and was in good shape. Welcome to Hoisington signs were present, but they could use a touch up.
- Streets were marked and the metal sculptures are amazing!!!

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

- Occupied buildings had nice signs and well-kept exteriors. Others were bare and some run-down. There were painted stars along the sidewalk; some with names and some without.
- Not many buildings have shops in them. On some buildings we couldn't tell what was in there due to lack of signage.
- Main Street Metal is a great concept and I found it more appealing than the banners a lot of cities place on their main streets. The power lines are somewhat a distraction and could be buried. Infrastructure was appropriate. Some of the buildings would benefit from a façade improvement program. And the buildings used as storage were a big eyesore.

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

- Apparel shop for local team clothing, Tap Room with souvenirs, Hardware and feed store (had exactly that inside), Boutique with a salon, signs, clothes, and snacky items, and several banks.
- Visited the Tap Room. It was a fun place but it was not a lunch option like we had thought.
- Had lunch at Mi Tierra – good food and nice staff.
- Visited a boutique, feed store/lumber yard and a thrift store. Nice variety of goods available in town, nice staff – very friendly to talk to.
- The downtown business area had several vacated buildings, but there was a pub, hardware store, thrift store, boutique, and professional services. The boutique merchandise was trendy, and the hardware store had some items other than those related to hardware. It was a little early to enjoy the pub, but it seemed like it would be an awesome time.

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

- We were greeted in every establishment we went into and they were all very friendly. They easily answered any of our questions and were open to give us suggestions on things to do.

- Very good customer service. People were friendly and helpful wherever we went.
- We were greeted at the businesses we entered, and customer service was very good. We asked a lot of questions and employees were patient and answered them.

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

- Inside the municipal building, there were public restrooms. Along Main Street, there were several benches spread throughout the downtown area. There were also several trash cans, all surrounded with the metal art.
- Benches were observed. The bike rental program at city hall was noted to be a positive observation.
- Benches and trash receptacles. City Hall is located near downtown and it has several amenities, including a public restroom. There were no signs indicating where City Hall was.

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

- From my observations, the streets were wide and parking was easily accessible for all sizes of vehicles. It was also nice to park in one area and be able to walk and access all shopping areas. When we visited, parking was not a problem, as the streets weren't all that active.
- Easy parking on Main Street and easy to walk there – a nice and clean area.
- Parking was easily accessible and everything was within walking distance.

4. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

- Shopping was mainly downtown, but there were other options for groceries and dollar store type items north of town.
- East – grocery store, food chains, bowling alley. West – Dollar General, Family Dollar
- Dollar General, Family Dollar and a grocery store. Areas were easy to park in, clean outsides. We did not go inside these businesses.
- The north end of Hoisington is newer with several newer restaurants and retail stores. We did not go into any chain establishments, but all appeared well-kept and accessible.

5. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

- Didn't notice any specified area but did notice the Power Plant East in town and Superior Essex outside of town to the east. Looked like newer plant on outskirts, but couldn't tell if that was in city limits or not.

- Not that stood out.
- I did not see an industrial park, but there was manufacturing within Hoisington. There is a plant on the northeast side of town that looked like it was probably a major employer. The land adjacent to the plant was farm ground.

6. Health Care Services

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

- The hospital was large and looked nice and well-kept. There seemed to be apt parking available. You could kind of tell there were some older and newer parts of the hospital due to renovations after the tornado.
- The hospital was a very nice facility.
- Hoisington is home to a large healthcare system. Quality is hard to measure, but the Great Bend hospital shut down and the Hoisington hospital did not. That tells me it must have a quality healthcare system as well.

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

- Only spotted the hospital and a local chiropractor in town.
- The pharmacy was a nice facility. Did not notice a dentist or optometrist anywhere.
- A quick Google search indicated there were healthcare services beyond the hospital. There does not seem to be a reason to travel unless one needed specialty care.

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

- When we drove around, we saw what looked like an old retirement or nursing home, but it looked like it's recently been sold to an individual. We didn't see any other current facilities like that.
- No long-term care facilities were seen.
- I observed a nursing facility and possibly senior living.

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.)

- We saw Equal Housing Apartments. Several newer homes and new additions on the outskirts of town. When looking on Zillow.com, the prices were lower than we've been experiencing in our area. It was also mentioned when we visited the chamber that they've had several "blighted structures."
- There seemed to be a good mix of houses. I only noticed a few for sale signs, so not sure if they have a proper inventory for buyers.

- There were not a lot of homes for sale in Hoisington. There was some new development, but most of the houses seemed older, although less old than those located around the city center in Kingman.
- Nothing seemed terribly bad, so code enforcement must be doing decent work. And as a bonus, the sidewalks seemed to be in good shape and easily walkable.

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

- We did not see any rental signage when driving through the neighborhoods, but when we asked individuals in businesses, they stated rentals were easy to find and affordable. There is a hotel on the West side for easy visitor access. It was also mentioned that the code enforcer keeps up with houses and properties that are lacking and need cleaned up.
- I could not tell about rentals from driving through town, but the city office said they could provide us with a list of landlords.
- I also do not remember seeing any apartment type housing, but I made note that low-income housing was available. When I asked at City Hall for a list of rental providers, they did not have one.

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?

- High School – older original building, but well-kept. Looked large from the outside and there was a nice pro-style football field directly behind the school.
- Middle School – newer building but noticed no playground
- Elementary School – didn't make it over to see that school
- Elementary, Junior High, and High Schools were observed. We were told there was a preschool in the elementary school.
- Buildings and grounds were very nice and well maintained. The high school football field was a great facility.
- It appeared all levels of education up until 12th grade were present. All grounds were well-kept, and nothing looked over-crowded. The schools varied in age and the limestone bleachers were pretty cool to look at while driving past.

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

- Yes. Information was available.
- The City's website linked to the school district page which is very convenient. One resident mentioned Hoisington's run at a football championship and the upcoming

pep rally. Unfortunately, most of the information on the district website required login information.

9. Childcare

What childcare service are available? Is it affordable?

- There was a Kids Club over by the middle school, which we were told was a day care. It's been noted that there's a lack of daycare options for those working at the hospital, but that they were looking to get a place for employees.
- We saw a Kids Club. By visiting with people, we learned childcare was an issue in town.
- We were told there were childcare providers and drove by something called the Kid's Club which appeared to be a childcare center.

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?

- Appeared to be one of each denomination. Several throughout town. Attached to the Catholic Church, there was a large gathering hall.
- There were many churches observed during the visit.
- Also noticed a Knights of Columbus hall.
- There were several denominations of Christianity. I noticed signs for a food bank which I assume is faith-based.

11. Civic

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

- We noticed a couple while driving around: The Lodge, Legion, K of C, Columbus Club
- Knights of Columbus, Legion, Masonic Lodge.
- There were several community organizations including a Chamber whose director provided a lot of information about the community.

Did you observe any evidence of civic organization activity?

- Toys for Tots flyer and we were told of the Community Basket.
- There were flyers around town and businesses advertised upcoming events.
- We also observed a flyer for a ladies shopping night, and the booster club was sponsoring several events.

12. Public Infrastructure

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

- Yards and lawns looked well-kept, not many with an extreme amount of things outside. Street signs were easily read. Streets themselves were kind of narrow in some spots which would make parking on the sides difficult for 2-way traffic.
- There was a very nice park system. Kids play area, dog park, pool, and baseball fields.
- Everything was in good working order and the sidewalks were in good shape. Restrooms at the park and at City Hall were clean. Signs were marked.
- The city is on municipal power and although there were some dirt roads, all roads were well maintained.

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

- It was kind of difficult to find the office, which was in the municipal building which held many other uses. No info was easily accessible unless we went inside the clerk's office.
- We stopped by city hall. Nice response, questions were answered and information was provided about the city. Also stopped by the Chamber and received more great information.
- City Hall is located in an older building with the library and other event space. There was some information about the city, but there was not a list of realtors or rental providers. It was a bit hard to find and there should be better signage at the entrance. They do have a Trap, Spay, and Neuter program which is pretty cool.
- The City also has public transportation and a new activity center.

Police/fire protection:

- Police and Fire were both attached to the municipal building with access to the police by the front door.
- Police and fire services were both observed.
- Hoisington has a fire station apart from the city building.

Library:

- The library was also attached to the municipal building, with a separate entrance from the outside. It was closed when we were in town.
- Noticed the library, but it was closed during our visit.
- The library was closed but is in the same building as city hall.

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

- We saw 2 parks:
 - Bicentennial Park – this was the larger of the 2. Walking trails, playground, pickleball, demo derby arena, ball diamonds (several). The pool was also in this area.

- Heritage Park – smaller with a playground, but had good equipment for the kids.
- Park, pool, dog park, disc golf, golf course, and pickle ball court. All observed to be nice facilities.
- There was a large city park that along with the aquatic center, new pickle ball court, ball diamonds, and walking path, also had a demolition derby pit. That's something a lot of cities would like to have. The parking was adequate if the grass lot to the east is for parking. There was also a small park closer to downtown that had a picnic area.

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?

- We were told several times about the Labor Day Celebration held every year. We were also told about Bike Barton, which seemed like a really neat opportunity to experience the town and surrounding areas.
- There is a big Labor Day celebration here that we learned about.
- It's close to Cheyenne Bottoms and local wildlife is used in artwork on Main Street.
- I think the motto/logo is the Heart of Cheyenne Bottoms. The pamphlet available for tourism attractions is very dated. But they have one. They have a large community event once a year (Labor Day weekend) and several residents suggested that we needed to come back.

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

- There were flyers in the businesses and when we asked, everyone was eager to tell us about the events.
- There were signs around town for the upcoming turkey bingo event.
- The Labor Day weekend event is the community's largest and several people talked about it.
- There was also a ladies shopping night coming up that seemed fun. They have a small museum as well. It was closed the day we visited.

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).

- There was the Historical Museum in town, the new Main St Metal (signs and trashcans all had neat images on them), and Cheyenne Bottoms as local attraction.
- Cheyenne Bottoms is nearby and the city did a great job of bringing some of that into town with the artwork.

- They have Metal on Main and it is an incredible collection of 62 metal art pieces attached to poles that line Main Street. Hoisington is also close to Cheyenne Bottoms.

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.

- We drove by Chamber the first time, and there were no cars, but we stopped by after lunch and they were friendly and willing to answer any questions and were very helpful with information about the community.
- The Chamber office – nice staff, easy to locate because of signage.
- There is a very obvious Chamber of Commerce. It is easy to find, and staff was extremely helpful in answering questions about Hoisington. Hoisington is also an E-community and a Main Street Community.

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

- We visited 'The Farmhouse' which had a salon in the back, but also had clothing, décor items, things for the kids, and snacks. The Rec Center looked like a great asset to the community. The Tap Room would probably be a good time to visit with friends and experience in the evenings or weekend.
- The Labor Day celebration sounded like it would be a fun time!
- I would love to see what the Tap Room is like at night.

14. Wrap-up

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

- The large park and 'sports complex' would be good for softball/baseball tournaments given the amount of ball diamonds. The people in the community were very friendly and the neighborhoods and streets were clean.
- Very nice people in town. The city is clean and pleasant. You could tell people in town want their community to thrive and see growth.
- The residents are friendly and can give you a long list of all the reasons someone should move to Hoisington.
- The metal art is incredible, and it is the classic small town with all the perks that go with that.

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

- When we asked what there was to do in Hoisington, several people said "nothing" and didn't seem too interested in talking up or encouraging visitors in their community.
- Housing and childcare.

- Without knowing a lot about the housing and childcare situation, I am going to say the lack of both of those are a problem.
- From actual observation, several buildings on Main Street need work.

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

- I will remember the Labor Day Celebration. It seemed like it would be a good experience and lots of things to see. Might have to make a trip up to visit next year.
- A nice town along Highway 281. A great place to stop if you're on the road.
- I will remember how the people who had just moved to Hoisington were most likely to tell me all the wonderful things about their community. I'll also remember Metal on Main because I am enamored by it.

How much money did you spend while you were in the city you visited? **\$15.00, \$75.00**
(Please include total purchases: Gas, soft drinks, food, purchases. No detail necessary.)



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