

# First Impressions

Compiled Report Form



**Community Visited: Beattie**

**Date(s) Visited:**

- a) 1-14-22
- b) 1-13-22
- c) 1-20-22 Thursday 5 pm
- d) 1-13-22

## **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) Beattie Milo Festival Truck Show – 500 followers. Pretty impressive video of the trucks coming into town from Hwy 36. 6.2K viewers of the video. 15 years and very well attended. Kids pedal tractor pull, Lots of kids on bikes, cornhole tourney, greased pig contest, milo & corn contest, carnival, pony rides, food, BBQ, well done and well-advertised. Very impressive! City of Beattie – One reference on travelks.com. Not very detailed. Legends of Kansas Website. [Legendsofkansas.com/beattie-kansas](http://Legendsofkansas.com/beattie-kansas). Nice article. Some pictures. 2010 Census: Approximately 200 people. “Milo Capital of the World.” Laid out in 1870-1871. 90 households. School located in Marysville. Ten years ago – 277 people, 107 households. Population is declining by 27%. Zillow – One home for sale 2 BR, 2BA 1120 sq ft for \$90K
- b) Found some information doing multiple searches.
- c) I could not personally find a webpage that the town owns and manages. Wikipedia search, travelks, mapquest, legendsofkansas, were all pages that popped up with info on Beattie. All those pages were helpful in finding out what they are known for: “Milo Festival” and about their churches and shops and things.
- d) Easy to find a bit of historical information but not much on the current state of the city. If you google specific things like "childcare" you might get a result, but nothing on general search of the city.

## **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) Nice “Welcome to Beattie” signs on both entrances to town on the highway. Can see a bit of storm damage that isn’t cleaned up yet. You can tell this is a very ag-focused community. Large Coop, lots and lots of Semi’s parked around town. Some very nice, well taken care of homes, new storage unit building/business, RWD building is very nice/new. Big Co-op. Streets are in good repair and all of the lawns and homes seem to be mowed and taken care of with nice landscaping except for some storm damage.
- b) The Community appeared depressed. There were some nicer homes but far more that need house and yard maintenance. I realize that landscape is not as attractive this time of year but it was evident that most yards had little care or landscaping. The Main Street was quite small and unattractive. The parks and recreation areas were nice. A few newer/nicer commercial properties. The City signs at two of the three entrances were very nice but lacking in landscaping. Coming in from the south, once you are past the elevator, the newer buildings are nice.
- c) Town is unique and very spread out. Some mobile homes but some really nice houses, nice water tower and park, large Coop area as you can tell Ag is a crucial part of the community. No restrooms available anywhere in the town. Beattie signs into town for two out of 3 of the main entrances to the town.
- d) Nice entrance signs from south and east - Tank sign from west was unique but maybe not as inviting. ☺

## **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) Downtown business area is small. The bank occupies the majority of the North side of the Street. Looks modern and has an ATM outside, which is a big plus. Some small businesses on the south side. Store fronts look good for the most part. Nothing was open on Friday afternoon about 2:00 except the bank that we could see. There is a Hair Shop, one restaurant (open 11 AM – 1PM), Bank, JD Construction (office) and a Big Coop. Gas Station on the Corner. Nice museum/historical building & lot – not open. Businesses were closed and did not go into the bank. Did stop and talk with a lady in front of the Twin Valley apartment building and she was very nice and helpful.
- b) The two service station areas are nice to see and attractive. The RWD building was attractive, inviting and well landscaped (probably the most attractive business in town). The bank looks nice and well maintained. Beautiful architecture of the building. The access to the north side of main street is definitely an issue and the empty storefronts are unattractive. These window fronts could maybe be “dressed and maintained” even

if they no longer house a business. Possibly display windows for their museum. The grassy area with gazebo is nice and I can see it being very inviting during warmer months. The museum was not open. The restaurant was closed but looked inviting and the menu looked good and posting it outside was a nice idea. The Library door was opened but unmanned. The inside was not nice. Did not enter the Mop Shop. She had a customer and we felt it may be an intrusion. The exterior of the building could use some updating. The Construction Office appeared to be well maintained. There did not appear to be any retail businesses which is not unusual for towns of this size.

- c) United Bank that was not open until 5. Beattie Community Café only open from 11-1pm Monday- Saturday; JD Construction; Beattie Heritage Museum; Library that looked like it had never been open; very dated buildings which do provide some history; what looked to be a gas station- was not open at 5pm. No Merchandise sold anywhere from what I could see
- d) Post office on corner. Bank, Hair/Barber salon, Construction office, Water district building, Cafe, Co-op, Twin Valley services building, Blue Valley building, and several homes that appeared to be trucking businesses. Unfortunately, when we were there we didn't notice a lot of activity anywhere - there were people in the hair salon and someone came out of the water district, but that is really the only activity we saw from all these places. Public restrooms at park but they were locked-likely winterized right now.

**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) The park on Main Street is fantastic. Public handicap accessible restrooms. Nice paths and equipment that is well maintained. Has a shelter house, trash receptacles, water hydrant, and some decorative lighting and benches. Another playground by the old school building, not as nice, but well taken care of. Nice ball diamond, but the city recycling center is adjacent and looks a bit trashy. Nice basketball court by the Catholic church. I did not see any Wi-Fi. You could park on Main Street and walk anywhere. No difficulty in find parking spots.
- b) Did not notice any drinking fountains; benches and public restrooms at downtown park were nice (restrooms were locked so did not see the inside); Did not see any postings for wi-fi but could have missed them; the gazebo area looked inviting but did not have seating, possibly a seasonal issue. Landscaping to me is vital and I found the town in general lacking landscape appeal. Streetscaping was poor. Parking was not necessarily difficult but access to the sidewalks on Main Street was particularly poor.
- c) Nothing was open not even a restroom. Nice benches were found - but nothing else was: No wi-fi, no trash cans, no unlocked restrooms. No difficulty finding parking in a small town like this – Yes of course we could access multiple services.

- d) Public restrooms at park but they were locked-likely winterized right now. Not a fan of having to parallel park on main street - and the north side of main street sidewalk was about 1 ft above the street - making it very difficult to access, would be impossible for handicapped and very hard for elderly/disabled. Only parking at park was on the street.

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

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

- a) Didn't see any other retail shopping areas.
- b) No answer
- c) Not applicable (NA)
- d) Everything very aged - not seemingly well-kept or updated.

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

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

- a) There is some vacant land around the town, but most of the lots are taken up by the Coop and/or Studer Trucking.
- b) It was evident that the south edge of town was a commercial area and there were a few smaller lots within the town utilized for commercial businesses
- c) Farmers Coop is here and very prevalent. You could expand anywhere in this city as it is very spread out
- d) Seemed maybe the southwest area of town, around the grain elevator would possibly be?

#### **6. Health Care Services**

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

- a) We did not see any health care services, however, there is a building north of the Community Center that had a sign on the door about the elderly, so not sure what that is. Could be a clinic setting. There was no sign identifying the building.
- b) No answer.
- c) Didn't see anything – don't know what Twin Valley services is but it was not open.
- d) None.

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

- a) Did not see any of these services but there seems to be ample space in the old grade school which is marked "Twin Valley Services," as well as the Community Building and the Building to the North of the Community Building.
- b) No answer
- c) No answer
- d) None

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

- a) There are several more modern housing units around town that look similar (small apartments) and the lady we talked to said they were Twin Valley buildings/homes for the disabled/elderly/handicapped. We did not see any signs though so no idea really.
- b) The special needs facility looked very active. I liked the outdoor areas that were available for their residents. The facility could use a little upkeep on the exterior. Did not go inside the facility.
- c) No answer
- d) Twin Valley Services - developmental/social services. No nursing/long-term care facilities were seen - were a couple buildings that appeared to possibly be more commercial housing but no signs??

## **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) Yes, there is a nice mix of smaller and larger homes, all pretty well taken care of. We only saw one "for sale" sign though, and there didn't look to be any other available housing.
- b) There were a lot of houses in varying income levels. Did not see any "for sale" signs posted.
- c) One house up for auction. Saw everything from a new build to a run-down shack. A lot of open lots with no signage
- d) Not a lot of options for housing - there are a few nice well-kept homes, mostly older. Finding housing here would definitely be a challenge. Didn't see any properties 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) Did not observe any that were so “marked.” No marked apartment buildings.
- b) Looked like there were income-eligible and rental units available and one building resembled an assisted living or nursing home facility but there was no signage. Again, did not find anything on my internet search.
- c) Don’t see anything “for rent” signage wise
- d) none

## **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) No schools in the town remain open. Marysville School District. The old grade school building is used by Twin Valley Services.
- b) Not Applicable
- c) Saw some ball fields but didn’t see anything else. Looked like it could be lit well
- d) None seen

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

- a) We did not unless you go to the Marysville School District Site.
- b) Not Applicable
- c) Unsure as I couldn’t find anything about Beattie, KS
- d) n/a

## **9. Childcare**

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

- a) We did not see any “childcare” services signage, however, one home on Main Street has a fenced yard and appears to be set up for day care beside the park. Not sure though.
- b) Was not quite sure but looked like there was a daycare facility in the housing area. That would be a great asset.
- c) Nothing apparent or known
- d) Google showed an in-home daycare in town.

## **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) There is a United Methodist Church and St. Malachy's Catholic Church. Very nice and well cared for.
- b) St. Malachy Catholic Church: A beautiful older architectural catholic church that clearly has been well maintained; parish house, sports court and grounds, hopefully well utilized for church picnics and youth activities. United Methodist Church: Older facility but nice to see this available
- c) Catholic and Methodist Churches in town – they were very well kept
- d) We saw 2 churches - St. Malachy Catholic (brick) and Methodist church (white)

## **11. Civic**

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

- a) Didn't see anything besides the Twin Valley building. There was a sign blown down and laying on the ground that said "Beattie Community with Pride" sign.
- b) No doubt there are some but I did not see any promotional signs
- c) Did not know what Twin Valley Services was – when I google its states it's a developmental services agency, but the website is not valid. I didn't see civic organization activity.
- d) Didn't find any information on these; judging by the nice state of the city park - someone is keeping that nice.

## **12. Public Infrastructure**

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

- a) Streets were pretty good. Street signs are good, but there is a general lack of signage on buildings/businesses. Very difficult to figure out what services are provided without the signs.
- b) No answer
- c) 24-hr gas pump it says but didn't try to use it. Post office is a small house – looks dated. Town looked to be well lit.
- d) Generally unimpressive landscaping - streets not terrible - but just didn't generally appear that people were proud of their yards/homes.

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

- a) The City Hall is located in the Library building, but both were closed when we were there. Did not see any information online if we were trying to move into town (like a list of services, businesses, and what service providers were around).
- b) Did not see a town hall facility.
- c) There's a community center that looked a little dated from what I saw – didn't see any info there.
- d) None seen

**Police/fire protection:**

- a) Didn't see any police stations or police activity. Very nice, new fire building. Not sure if they have EMS services in the building or not and the sign just says Fire Department.
- b) New Fire Dept. Building was very attractive
- c) Must have missed it if there was some
- d) Nice new fire station with small playground outside.

**Library:**

- a) Library in a building on Main Street. Looks to be well-stocked, but tired. Hard to tell since it wasn't open. Didn't see any computers in the window.
- b) Needs work on facility, book display and overall esthetics.
- c) Did not look open or like it would be anytime in the future – no hours no nothing
- d) Library: seemed to be self-help, not well kept, dirty, and unorganized.

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

- a) One very nice city park. Public playground at the old school. Nice ball park.
- b) Downtown City Park was nice. Baseball Park was nice. Church ball court was nice. Additional play areas, I assume were public, were sufficient.
- c) Very well kept city park area with small playground area and closed bathrooms. Ball Park area for both football and baseball. Basketball court in town also.
- d) Park was very nice. There's also the ballpark for baseball in good shape, and a basketball court near the catholic church that seemed in decent shape.

### **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) The large Sign on Highway 36 – one-mile south of town states that Beattie is “The Milo Capital of the World.” Nothing in town capitalizes on that. From the web search, and personal experience, I know they host a massive Truck Show every year that is well done with a huge turnout. No signage around town or no evidence of that now. This would draw people to town.
- b) The Beattie Milo Festival still seems to be a popular event in the area. The signs on Hwy 36 need to be updated
- c) Beattie Milo Festival from what googled and heard from others – didn’t see anything that referenced this.
- d) Used to be the Beattie Milo Festival and huge softball tourney - couldn't find any information online about whether or not they still do this? They do still have a sign on hwy 36 that says "Milo Capitol," but nothing about the festival.

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

- a) None now, but that could be the time of year. Again, the Beattie Days Milo Festival if it is still going on, and the Beattie Truck Show are big events and are/should be well publicized. Perhaps the town could consider a permanent display, or video, at the library or the historical museum for visitors to view the events, and or past winners. Or signage for the year that publicizes the event and previous year's winner?
- b) No answer
- c) No
- d) Nothing that was visible.

**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) None
- b) Did not see anything visually driving through and no advertising or signage indicating an attraction
- c) Beattie Heritage Museum lot there on main street – did not seem like it was functional and did not see anything else.
- d) There was a museum - was locked but looking in the window looked to be one small room of local antiques/memorabilia - not particularly eye-catching.

**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 City Hall sign is a little sign in the window of the Library. No other buildings open at this time.
- b) Did not see anything or find anything on the internet
- c) Did not see anything
- d) No.

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

- a) We were hoping the café would be open to sit and visit over a cup of coffee, but it wasn't. They are fortunate to have a café open in town M-SA even for short hours. Very important to the community. We would probably come back for the Truck Show sometime in the future. It seems to be a full day of family type events.
- b) I think the restaurant would be nice to try if I was in the area
- c) Beattie Community Café open from 11am-1pm Monday through Saturday
- d) Would love to have tried the Cafe - menu looked nice - but they weren't open yet. Not certain I'd make the drive just to eat there but would certainly try if in town!

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

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

- a) LOVED the stone house on the North End of Whiting Street. Would love to know the story and history of that house. Perhaps it is listed on the National Historic Register, or would be open for tours at special times during the year (i.e. Christmas) Should have the history of the other major homes in the area in the Museum, but we couldn't go in that building. I'm also hoping that the Museum talks about the Milo Festival and the ag industry in the area (quarry that is closed?). Lots of interesting history about the town beginnings they should make sure to save and publish.
- b) Lot of industry to hopefully keep the economy moving. They still host a well-known event annually to bring people to visit. There did not seem to be a shortage of housing or apartments.
- c) There is a lot of potential in this town. There is space for more houses, buildings, businesses and so on. Nice welcome signs and potential for upbeat downtown area.
- d) The park was clean and well-kept and my kids I know would absolutely love it - would be a good place for a party or picnic.

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

- a) Declining population, Empty Storefronts. Need to put in better signs around town for the buildings.
- b) Need to revitalize the Main Street. Put some focus on landscaping projects and perhaps address year round landscape beautification. Marketing/Signage.
- c) The town is very spread out and needs some new buildings/updated facilities and a reason for people to come to Beattie.
- d) There's not much of a draw to bring anyone to town that I could see - no real areas of work or housing available.

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

- a) Absolutely love that old stone house. Would come back just to tour that. It's awesome!
- b) I think I should revisit in six months to see the town in another season
- c) There wasn't much to remember about this town – It is just an ordinary town. Oddly enough there was a fox that made him or herself known and that is what I will remember personally about Beattie.
- d) I will remember the park and if we are in town again with kids, most definitely will stop. Unfortunately, I'll also remember there basically being nothing else there to bring me back.

PowerPoint Presentation is posted at:

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

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