

# First Impressions

## Team Report Form



Community Visited: Lyons

Date Visited: 9/16/25 (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?
  - The website was easy to get to after a search.
  - A lot of great information.
  - One broken link found, but everything else worked fine.

2. **The “Five-Minute” Impression:** After taking a five-minute drive through the community without stopping, the following reactions were noted.
  - The courthouse square was very cute.
  - The intersections are confusing, but it’s a highway.
  - Noted a few closed businesses on the drive through.

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

- Coming in from the north – the entry on this side of town was rough.
- Noticed they were a “purple heart city” – and wondered what that entailed.

3. **Downtown Business Area** Describe the buildings, signs, infrastructure, etc.
  - We liked how the vacant buildings still had a fake storefront.
  - The signage on stores was good – easy to see and read.

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

- Not much in the way of retail, but a lot of business in town, much of it services.

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

- Everyone was friendly.
- Very nice people.
- Did not have to ask for assistance.

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

- A lot of seating downtown.
- Beautiful flowers.
- There was an entertainment space downtown.

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

- No problem parking – plenty of spots available.
- Big pots of flowers on the main square were observed.

#### 4. Other Retail Shopping Areas

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

- Easy access to retail on the west side of town. All were beside each other.
- Easy to pop in and out of for errands.

#### 5. Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

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

- There is an industrial park in the north part of town.
- Not sure if there's room for expansion.

## 6. Health Care Services

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

- Impressed that there's a hospital, assisted living, and independent living all in one area.
- The setup of the facilities looks so cute.

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

- Looks like there was good access to healthcare providers.
- Noticed a clinic across from the hospital.

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

- Yes, in the same area as the hospital.

## 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.)

- Visitors were shocked to find lower-priced homes compared to Scott City.
- Some for sale and rent signs around town were observed.
- Most neighborhoods are well-maintained.
- Learned about 14.46% of housing was vacant.
- About half of homes are 10 years old or older.
- Average housing cost is approximately \$105,500.

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

- A lot of housing is available to rent.
- The apartments looked nice. The lawns needed to be mowed, but there was a lot of rain recent to the visit.

## 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?

- Very nice schools and playgrounds.
- The newer junior and senior high schools are very pretty.

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

- Yes, information was readily available about the quality of education.

## 9. Childcare

What childcare services are available? Is it affordable?

- There were several childcare providers available according to the director of the Rice County Foundation.
- Not sure about the cost to say anything about affordability.

## 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?

- There were many churches in town. Everywhere we drove we saw multiple churches of different denominations. Approximately 8-10.

## 11. Civic

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

- Noted that Lyons has Rotary and Kiwanis.

Did you observe any evidence of civic organization activity?

- Nothing observed.

## 12. Public Infrastructure

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

- For the most part infrastructure was good around town.
- Parking at the recreational areas was all great.

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

- Yes, information about the city was available at city hall.

Police/fire protection:

- Very visible police and fire protection.

Library:

- The library was very accessible.

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

- All very accessible with bridges for people to get across waterways.

### 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?

- Lyons is known for salt and the salt museum.

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

- Not at the time of the visit.

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 salt shaker and mural.
- Salt carts around town were very cute.

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.

- The Chamber of Commerce is in the courthouse.
- There is a community foundation on Main Street – very helpful.

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

- The County Seat Bar & Grill, Dairy Queen
- Outside seating.
- The coffee house looked amazing as well.

#### 14. Wrap-up

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

- The Celebration Center is awesome.
- The town is clean and friendly.
- Nice schools.
- There's a hospital here.

What are the biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

- Very little in the way of retail other than for hardware or farm and ranch needs.

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

- So quaint and look very nice.
- Would be a great place to live.

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



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