

**First**

**Impressions**

**of**

**Bloomer, WI**

**by**

**Arcadia, WI**

## As you approach the community.....

### I. What was my perception before visiting? What did I expect?

This was my first visit to Bloomer so I did not have a perception of the community. I expected it would be an agricultural community • unsure about industry base.

I had no perception before my visit because I had not talked to anyone who had been there. I expected a community that was mostly farm oriented.

I've never been to Bloomer-very objective perception.

No expectations • have never been to Bloomer before.

None • Had never been there.

### 11. The “five minute” impression:

Good signs on both ends of town. (2 large signs). Older buildings but nicely maintained. Highway 40 runs through city. Athletic field looks run down.

Good signs for hospital. At 10:00 a.m. • few people on main street, mostly older people.

The five minute impression was very positive--a nice clean community.

Good feeling from community-well kept, with a few exceptions. Nice downtown oriented town. Downtown bustled with activity. City hall really grabbed my attention as looking new and professional. Some signs were poor. (Church signs on Highway 40 coming into Bloomer looked too old.)

Nice Bloomer signs on all three entrances. Signs along Hwy 53 advertising Bloomer. Community looked neat everywhere. Good community churches sign. Housing in good repair although a couple need paint. Cannot see high school sign coming from Hwy 53. Attractive new public library. Hwy 40 entering town from north is narrow until reaching the downtown area.

### As you “drive” around town:

I found that in the older part of the town, zoning had not been enforced in the years past.

I found that in the older part of the town, zoning had not been enforced in the years past. The new additions were very nice, and, as a whole a nice clean town. People were very nice and were willing to give of themselves.

General appearance very good. Business and residential clean and well maintained. Excellent industrial park area. Nice parks • lots of ball fields. Good looking schools, crossing guards doing a good job. Negative • Metal building behind bowling lanes, on the street side had very objectionable graffiti on it. Off color language. FmHA housing looks nice, no junk cars laying about. Downtown neat and well kept. Downtown could be improved if original store fronts could be restored and aluminum and stucco removed.

Martin Road was very rough and bumpy. 2/10 of a mile south of the Industrial Park, both sides of the road looked awful. Junk all over the one on the left and on the right vacant and run down building. Where are the signs for the Fair Grounds on Riggs Street? Very neat looking North Lake View Apts. near 8th Avenue and Thompson Street. Fence needs attention on George's Memorial Field. Very nice looking, large high and elementary schools. All public buildings looked good. Water tower looks like it has been primed, but never painted. Golf Course looks like it would be very challenging, would like to try it some time.

### 111. Driving ..evaluate EACH entrance.

Highway **40** North • exit off Interstate • truck stop about 1/8 mile from stop sign • looked busy! Highway **40** runs through city. (East). Highway **40** South (back through City) had **2** buildings across from each other (run down • garbage all around building) at edge of City limits. Industrial Park located there, looked nice. Only 3 businesses presently.

Nice “Welcome” signs on all entrances.

Liked the Bloomer signs. Motel sign needs work.

### IV. (a) Driving .... the downtown

Most signs located on buildings • not hanging from them • good. Downtown was well kept. About **2** or **3** blocks of shops. Had good variety of shops/businesses.

No signs to mar this town. Business buildings were in nice condition. Old filling station should be preserved, maybe on the Historic Register.

Downtown business area was nice and kept well. There was a mixture of old and new buildings throughout downtown. Some of the older signs could be repainted to offer a fresher look.

Signs on Main Street were all flush with buildings • Good! Hotel looked very cluttered with signs • made it junky looking. Reetz & Boise, Schwab Real Estate/Tanning Parlor and especially American Family fronts could be improved. Lamp Lite Inn should paint sign. Corner of Main and Newman Streets behind Reetz & Boise is a real eyesore. Streets very clean.

IV. (b) Driving ...evaluate other business area.

Good location for Industrial Park- on edge of City. Some commercial businesses located on back side for street.

Very little unsightliness, even on the back sides of the buildings.

Industrial park on north end of town looked good. Only a couple of small industries, but a good location.

Good sized Industrial Park, Bloomer North. Neat looking, well kept buildings.

V. Driving...comments on residential:

Good developments going up. Quite a few newer homes built recently. Very well maintained homes and yards • both old and new houses. Looked like nice quiet neighborhoods.

Very nice.

Houses seemed well kept over all with a few exceptions. Old houses that were towards the golf course all looked restored and in excellent condition. The lawns were beautifully groomed for this time of year.

Most homes were very well kept • shows pride in their property.

VI. Driving...comments on:

a. street signs:

Good signs for hospital. No signs for school.

Average.

Acceptable.

b. traffic patterns/street conditions:

Good flow • not too busy when we were there. No problem finding parking.

Average.

Never too busy while we were in town. Street conditions good.

c. welcome signs ( at entrance )

2 signs on each end of City with welcome motto.

An A+ here.

Nice welcome signs with Bloomer motto, A jump ahead of the rest in industry, business, and recreation.

d. direction signs to parks, schools, hospitals/clinics, attractions, services (i.e. police), etc.

Good hospital/clinic signs. School was sort of hidden. Did not see Police Station or signs for them. Also did not see Park signs.

Average.

Signs for school should be more prominent. School was hidden. Hospital and clinic signs excellent. police and park signs were non-existent.

#### VII. Driving...comments on industrial park/area:

Good signs. Industrial park on edge of City looked fairly new. 3 businesses, looked busy. ~~was~~ small industrial park but had potential for growth.

Average.

Sign was nice and new. Industrial park was growing slowly-lots of potential.

#### VIII. Driving...on schools:

School - unsure of how to get to it. Looked like you went into an alley! Schools located in separate locations for elementary and high school.

Nice buildings. A few small older homes that detract from the school itself.

School looking in good condition. High school, middle school and elementary were all separate and seemed to work well that way.

IX. Driving...comments on parks, play grounds, athletic facilities. etc.:

Playground connected to elementary school had lots of children playing. Athletic field needs work • fencing and a paint job! Park we saw looked good.

Average. In the spring on a dark day, nothing really looks that great.

The wire fencing surrounding the athletic facility looked very poor. Buildings could use a coat of paint also.

X. Driving...comments on other:

a. hospital/clinics:

Hospital and clinic buildings looked fairly new and had a lot of activity going on.

Average.

Hospital and clinic both looked busy and were good facilities from the outside.

b. billboards/advertising:

Small amount of advertising • it was nice to not see a lot of tavern signs! Billboard sign for Chamber was in a good location.

Average.

Billboards and advertising was minimal. Didn't notice much alcohol advertising. Refreshing change!

XI. Walking around...comments on businesses (physical part)

Store fronts were modern in some cases and old but well maintained in other cases. Noticed Chamber billboard right away. Displays in windows were “eye catching” • Golden Thimble.

Signing was average, but almost all was placed on the front of buildings. No tavern or beer signs over the sidewalk in this town. A big A+ here.

The store fronts varied from old to new, but all were well kept. Their appearance was O.K. The Golden Thimble had a nice display that caught our attention. The whirlpool sign above one of the hardware stores should be taken down • too faded.

## XII. Walking:around....comments on people:

People were extremely friendly. They knew the answers to questions we asked on food, city maps, Chamber, etc. They would stop to “chat” with total strangers. Very relaxed atmosphere.

Very nice people, and all were very helpful.

Everyone was very friendly. Everybody tried to answer questions, if they couldn't answer they would direct us elsewhere. All were more than willing to help and chit-chat.

Visitors at City Hall were received with a smile and questions answered. People at Bloomer Hardware were friendly and helpful. Store looks complete. True Value • Not greeted by young woman clerk. Mdse. • a little of this and a little of that, not much of anything. Not impressed • would not go back.

Ed's Pharmacy • clutter in some aisles • clerk very friendly and helpful. Bloomer Flower and Gift • in there at least **5** minutes, **2** clerks, 1 other customer, no smile, acknowledgment or greeting, so left. Golden Thimble • No one in the store, could hear either talking or the TV coming from back. Fashion Place • nice shop and extremely pleasant clerk. Renegade • good food, large portions, good service, friendly waitress, would go back. Parking area by Renegade was full of cigarette butts.

## XIII. Community information: comments on.....

### a. community brochure (tourist type)

Did not have Bloomer community brochure. Gave brochures on Chippewa County which included events on Bloomer.

The Chamber office was open, and everything you might need was there.

Unable to offer any color brochure specifically on Bloomer, the town.

b. Businesses/attractions brochures or directory

Salute to Industry brochure was good. Included good info on businesses located in Bloomer.

Excellent booklet "Salute to Industry" that I found very interesting offered at Chamber. It gave the history of most of the local businesses.

c. community profile(demographic, industrial type information for prospective business people, etc.)

Received computer printout (4 pages, both sides) with full info on the community (wages, overall info on community).

Computer print-out pamphlet offered a good format for a community profile. (offered at Chamber).

d. map

Street maps of City given at both Chamber and City Hall.

Yes.

Street map offered at the Chamber Office.

e. other (i.e. bulletin/notice board, kiosks, etc.)

Bulletin Board outside Chamber was great! Nice benches on Main Street to sit and rest. Music was playing on Main Street.

The loudspeakers with music playing was an excellent "small town" idea. There were a few nice benches along Main Street. The notice board outside of Chamber office was an excellent addition.

Loved the music. Seemed so relaxing.

XIV. City Hall...describe your visit:

a. appearance of facility, including signage:

Very new building • very clean inside. Very open • large room.

Very nice old bank that was remodeled for the City.

The front and inside of the City Hall building looked new or recently remodeled.

b. helpfulness of staff:

Both city clerk and secretary were very friendly. They answered all our questions and even added extra information - they told us about the housing development areas and how fast homes are selling. They explained Bloomer is an older community - most of the people work outside of Bloomer. Very knowledgeable on the community as a whole.

Very nice people who were willing to take time and answer all questions.

City clerk and secretary were extremely friendly and offered many comments on the community. Both were very honest saying that houses are sold very quickly and that poses some problems. Showed us large city map on the wall and pointed out new subdivisions and industrial park. Also directed us to Chamber office for more info.

Very nice office - friendly, helpful people

XV. Chamber of Commerce...describe your visit:

a. did people know where it was (or who to refer your to?)

Everyone asked knew where it was and what the hours were.

The Chamber office was easy to find, and the staff was willing to give freely of their time.

Everyone we asked knew where the Chamber office was and gave us directions that were correct and helpful.

Chamber of Commerce office provided any information needed in a pleasant and friendly manner.

b. comment on information available:

Good info on community profile. Did not have a Bloomer brochure but gave us industrial info and city maps.

Excellent.

Office offered a lot of helpful information. Maps of new industrial park. One poster of all the new homes and businesses in the area recently was an interesting idea.

c. comment on **staff**

Very friendly, asked all questions well.

Excellent.

Lady who helped was friendly and helpful.

d. Other (hours, appearance, locations, etc.)

Hours of operation were printed on door in plain sight. Location was good • in middle of downtown. The Chamber office was also the development office, which helped.

Hours were plainly posted, (9-12, 1-3, M-F). Office was centered in downtown in a good location. Appearance was OK. Could have used a paint job.

XVI. Other stuff...

a. public restrooms (available, condition, etc.)

Did not locate any restrooms. Lady from photography studio let us use her restrooms.

Yes. Clean.

Never found any public restrooms.

b. pay phones (working, phone book intact, etc.)

Only saw 1 in the middle of Main Street. No phone book. Did not work the best.

Pay phone on Main Street could be updated. Wouldn't work using a calling card.

c. parking:

No problem getting parking. Although there is not a lot of parking (only about 2½ blocks) so this could be a problem at rush times.

Fair.

Parking on Main Street was never a problem. In busier circumstances, parking could be a major problem.

d. water fountains, benches, etc.

Benches on Main Street were nice touch. I did not see a water fountain.

Benches along Main Street with "In Memory .." inscriptions were a nice idea. Did not notice any water fountains.

### Wrap Up

A. Using your "senses" ...

1. What does the community TASTE like? (Specialty bakery/restaurant, etc.)

Best food I have had in a long time. Ate at Main Street Cafe • Excellent pie! I would go back again!

Nice restaurant--great pies. Also a nice small town bakery. I left the town with a very nice taste.

EXCELLENT! Main Street Cafe and Bakery were fantastic and should be commended.

People at truck stop on Hwy 53 were friendly and prompt with help. Very good restaurant in mall. Best pie in Wisconsin. I had strawberry silk.

2. What does the community SMELL like?

Clean smell • no pollution.

No smell on this dark, cold spring day.

Fresh, near the lake.

3. What SOUNDS did you hear?

Music from speakers on Main Street. It was serene and quiet (peaceful).

No noisy or obnoxious milk trucks and semi-trucks. Music coming from loud speakers was relaxing.

4. What did the community feel like (emotional response, i.e. cold/warm, crowded/deserted, inviting, etc., or physical response, i.e. rough streets, etc.)

Inviting/very warm response from people!

Inviting.

Warm and inviting.

Bloomer is a very appealing community. As a place to live it made an excellent impression on me!

- B. List the **5** most positive things you observed about the community:

1. Friendly people.  
Nice businesses on Main Street.  
Friendliness, willing to chit-chat with strangers.
2. Excellent food.  
Schools.  
Located on a small lake/river.
3. Good variety of stores, Ben Franklin & Golden Thimble.  
Hospital.  
Nice variety of restaurants.
4. Nice residential districts.  
Nice home additions.  
Excellent variety of downtown stores. Ben Franklin.
5. Good school system.  
Large industrial park.  
Veteran teachers in school district.

- C. Describe ONE idea that you will steal for use in your own business/community and describe how you will start to implement it within the next **72** hours.

Try to get a bulletin board for Chamber in good location.

I did not see any one thing that stood out that I could steal.

The friendly attitude exuded from everyone we had contact with.

D. What will you remember most about the community **six** months from now:

The friendly people and the Great food.

Nice clean, friendly town.

Main Street Cafe-Excellent food, service and atmosphere.

E. Other comments ( that just didn't seem to fit anywhere else!)

We stopped at school to talk to the Guidance Counselor. ~~Was~~ a very good representative for the school. Told us they had a good academic program and athletic program, but they did not have a chorus program. They did have a good band program.

We visited the school to get a feel for the youth in the community. We learned they have very strong athletic programs. The guidance counselor was very honest about their academic and extra-curricular programs. Sorry to hear they have no chorus program.