

First *impressions*

of

Cuba City, WI

by Evansville, WI

Visit conducted 9/24/91

A program for community improvement

Developed by:

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Visitation of Cuba City

September 24, 1991

A team representing Evansville (pop. 3,194) conducted a First Impression inspection of Cuba City. The team consisted of a City Councilman, a Banker, and the Economic Development Specialist for Rock County. These individuals serve on the Evansville Economic Development Committee.

The team picked Tuesday, September 24th as the visitation date. It was a cloudy, cool day with light rain and temperatures in the mid 50s. The inspection lasted from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm. The inspection followed the format provided by James Schneider, Grant County Economic Development Corporation. Results of the inspection are attached.

The Evansville Economic Development Committee thanks James Schneider and the Cuba City visitation team for their efforts. We feel the information provided by the First Impression Program will be invaluable to the City of Evansville. We look forward with anticipation to receiving the Cuba City team's report.

Larry Dobbs
Chairman

1. What was my perception before visiting the community: What did I expect, etc.

No expectations - I have never been there.

None, first visit.

Typical small town, older areas & newer areas.

2. Approaching the community, what do you notice first? (Evaluate EACH entrance)

Nice signs, all are well marked and neat.

Welcome to Cuba City sign at all entrances (STH 80, CTH H).

Nice signs at each entrance to City.

Positive:

Nice entrance signs.

Welcome signs.

Well maintained & marked streets.

Negatives:

Livestock company on north side of the city.

None, nothing to detract or give negative impression on approach.

North City entrance has large advertising sign that detracts from rest of entrance.

3. As you drive around town your comments on:

A. Appearance

1. Downtown

Authentic street lights on both ends of town outside the business district on 80. I don't like the newer type street lights downtown.

Liked the street lights, patriotic presidential signs.

Clean & neat, well marked parking, Business signs seem to have not continuity.

2. Residential

No side walks, streets in good shape, good curb and gutter, fire hydrants freshly painted. Nice FmHa housing project. Houses look good. There are some nice new homes - all are well kept.

Impressed with the neat appearance of the neighborhoods. Buried electrical in new neighborhoods - no unsightly power poles.

Well maintained. Underground wires in new additions are appealing, uncluttered.

3. Industrial Park

Nice sign, but unsure of park location. We saw one building that we thought was in the park. The nice sign out of place next to cornfield.

Visible sign next to corn field. Confused on park entrance, unsure on size and dimensions of available area. Assume that the park is undeveloped and the entrance will be next to the Nursing Home.

Good start with street planning.

4. Parks

Very nice - we saw two of them - they are well manicured and lots of playground equipment.

Clean and well maintained, impressed with the parks: variety of courts and diamonds, tables and playground equipment.

Well planned - kids in mind, very neat looking.

5. Schools

Schools look to be in good shape with good athletic facilities.

Drove past the grade/H.S., interesting design for grade school. Good planning used when decided to build in same location, room for expansion if necessary.

Good location - grounds well maintained.

6. Infrastructure (sidewalks, streets, lighting etc.)

Streets in good shape, fire hydrants look good, lack of sidewalks in residential area. Street lights look good throughout community.

Excellent! Appears to be a well managed city with necessary and appropriate attention to infrastructure. Streetlights, hydrants and curbs freshly painted. Streets in good shape. No sidewalks in residential neighborhoods, assume cost saving and insufficient pedestrian traffic.

Nice lighting on Main street, like the old standards in the residential areas.

7. Other

FmHA housing is a nice amenity for the City.

B. Signing

1. Community entrance/exit signs

Excellent, all four entrances.

Excellent.

Signs at all entrances with the local churches listed. It makes a person feel welcome.

2. Streets

Street signs are easy to read. They are randomly placed at intersections. City should place them at same location in each intersection (i.e. NE corner). Nice presidential signs on main street.

Very good, easy to read.

Intersections are well marked, signs in good shape.

3. Directions to Hospital/Parks/etc.

No signs for parks, nursing home/clinic.

Should have signs directing people to parks.

None.

4. storefront signs

Typical of small midwest town - lots of lighted tavern signs. I like Weber's signs and Cheese shop signs. Get rid of lighted signs.

No real ugly signs, appears to be a typical Wisconsin business district.

Adequate.

5. Industrial Park

Nice sign, where is the park?

Much better than average industrial park sign, but looks slightly out of place next to a corn field.

Sign on highway, but no directions to park.

6. City Hall, police, etc.

Well marked, library marked too.

Adequate signage, no confusion here.

The sign on main street is easy to see.

7. Billboards/advertising, etc.

Obnoxious billboard on north end of the City.

Nothing out of ordinary.

North end large sign detracts from entrance to City.

4. Visitor/community information

A. City/Village Hall

Had city map, clerk was helpful.

Sparse materials, it appears not many visitors ask for information, paucity of community information, nothing provided by the chamber of commerce. (City clerk was helpful and friendly even though it was election day!)

1. Is there a street map?

Yes (photo copy).

2. Community brochure/directory

No, nothing produced by community.

3. Community profile (include business and industrial opportunities).

yes - provided by WP&L.

4. Recommendations on place to stay/eat/visit...etc.

Yes.

Citizens willing to make recommendations.

Nice looking motel. All places to eat were given equal recommendations.

5. Contact people & addresses listed if I want more info.

Yes, president of the Chamber.

Yes, City sent me to the president of chamber, but when I went to his business, he told his secretary to send me to City Hall.

6. Complimentary Items (Postcards, bookmarks, coupons, etc)

None

B. Chamber office/visitor info center

1. Easy to locate (and did people refer you to it?)

N/A

2. Comments on info available (street map/ brochures/ community profiles/etc.)

Map was adequate.

Surprised at lack of information, businesses did not carry any local promotional materials.

City Hall was helpful.

3. Recommendations on places to stay/eat/visit etc.

City Clerk and bank teller.

Antique dealer helpful.

4. How prepared/helpful were they.

Fair.

People were very friendly, offered directions and suggestions.

Not really prepared.

5. Convenient hours?

N/A (Note: visitation team in community from 9:30 - 1:30).

**C. Info from general community (service station/motel/bars
/restaurants/shop/employees/etc).**

1. How knowledgeable about the community were they?

Very Knowledgeable.

Helpful, friendly, willing to talk about their business and community in a favorable manner.

Knowledgeable and helpful.

2. Did they refer you to someone else who could help?

Yes, one person referred me to Giles Insurance (Chamber President).

Yes, willing to make referrals.

3. Attitude, appearance, etc.

Positive - at bank, antique store, cheese shop, liquor store.

Good - friendly service at two eating establishments (breakfast and lunch).

Good.

4. Other Comments

Everyone I met was friendly and helpful.

5. General

A. Do residents know their community history, events, directions, etc.

yes.

B. Services...variety of retail...lodging facilities...

Nice motel, good restaurants.

Appears to be a full service community.

C. Are there public restrooms?

Yes, in park building off the main street.

D. Payphones...are they working, phone books intact.

Did not see any payphones.

I think there was a pay phone at the convenience store next to the library.

E. Industrial Park...does it look active & attractive.

No - need a better marked entrance. If the park has been laid out, suggest a sign showing lots and planned streets.

Looks like Cuba City is just getting started.

F. What does the community TASTE like? (specialty restaurants, bakeries, etc.)

Cheese and specialty meats (sausage).

Definitely cheese (I bought some).

Nice cheese shop.

G. What does the community SMELL like?

Clean.

Fresh air.

H. What SOUNDS did you hear?

Quiet.

Rain, wind and cars on wet streets.

some traffic.

I. What did the community FEEL like (emotional response, i.e. cold/warm, crowded/deserted, inviting, etc.)

Inviting.

Warm and friendly.

Friendly, fairly talkative.

DESCRIBE THE PEOPLE YOU MET (Friendly, helpful etc.)

Everyone was friendly and helpful.

Enjoyed talking to people in Cuba City.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS

It appears that Cuba City takes pride in itself, its schools, and athletic teams. The community presents a neat and orderly image. My impression is that it is a "bedroom community", in that most people that live here work elsewhere. Thus, it is clean, well run city with nice parks and pleasant neighborhoods. City government and employees appear to be doing a fine job. I don't think there is much emphasis or marketing directed at the out of town visitor or tourist.

WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY SIX MONTHS FROM NOW

Cheese shop & antique mall.

The grade school - its round.

Its clean and neat appearance.

6. Doing it Right!

A. List the 5 MOST positive things you observed about the community .

1. (a) Clean, well maintained streets
(b) Welcome signs
(c) Well maintained streets
2. (a) Neat houses
(b) Nice parks and recreational opportunities
(c) Signs at all entrances to City
3. (a) Nice, well defined business district
(b) FmHa housing project
(c) FmHA housing project
4. (a) Antique mall, cheese shop
(b) takes good care of its infrastructure
(c) Cleanliness of the city
5. (a) Nursing home/state bank/golf course
(b) friendly citizens
(c) Progressive thinking in new residential areas
(i.e. underground power)

B. Describe ONE idea that you will steal for use in your OWN business or community, **and** describe the steps you **will** take to implement it within the NEXT 72 HOURS!

I really think Cuba City has done an exceptional job with its welcome signs. Our public works department and civic organizations should do the same in Evansville.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Enjoyed our first impression of Cuba City. I think the two areas that need work are the industrial park and more community information.