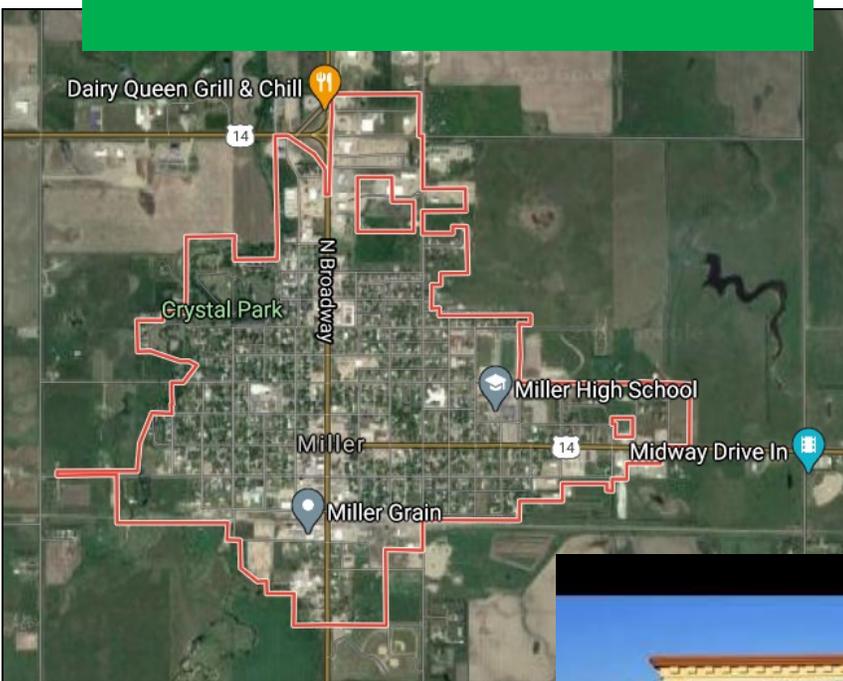
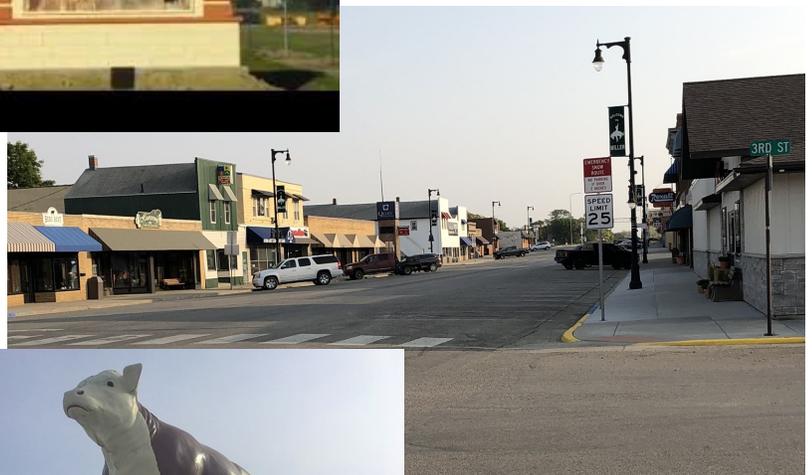


Miller, South Dakota

1st Impressions 2020



- A gem on the prairie.
- My first impression was a vibrant and active community.
- Miller has some very beautiful and inviting parks within its community.
- It is apparent that the community takes pride in its business district, the overall improvements to buildings, murals, awnings and sidewalks make an impressive statement to the visitor passing through or looking to stay.



1st Impressions Miller, SD

9-23-2020



Town Entrance:

Enter the town from each direction available. Record your impressions as if it was the first time coming into town. Use a perspective of a new family considering moving here or a prospective business person considering relocating or expanding here. What is attractive / unattractive? What is unique and stands out?

- Coming in from the north – very nice homes, large acreages, golf course, Ag business, Dairy Queen and Bus Business gives me the impression of a very progressive and inviting community. A gem on the prairie. As I continue, another picture appears of a community that has struggled through the past years with abandoned buildings or equipment scattered throughout unkept properties. My heart aches for this community. As I continue south, a ray of sunshine, Main Street is very vibrant and full of activity and life. Wow!
- Coming in from the west, I was introduced to wind towers, many ag related businesses, grain terminal, motel/hotels and a unique housing development. I did not see signage of most of the businesses or that I was entering Miller and then understood that the city limits are passed the progressive industries that line highway 14 and did not include the beautiful housing development that appeared to be in the city limits. Moving the invisible city boundary lines could be advantageous to the city. I was also surprised by some of the businesses having various equipment scattered throughout the lots and weed removal being dismissed.
- Entering from the east, is a unique transition from St. Lawrence with the dual purpose for the beautiful sign. As I entered into the community, there were so many wonderful areas that this appears to be a resident minded community, the bike trail, airport, school, storage units as well as many businesses. The border of highway 14 was very nice, however, I had a glimpse of areas behind the frontage that appeared to be unkept. The housing along the highway had a mix of nice homes and those that needed maintenance or removal.
- Entering from the south is unique with providing two different ways to enter. I love the sign! I am encouraged by seeing all the different opportunities for community activities that could draw many people for outdoor social interactions, equestrian/rodeo area, race track and 4-H Center. This is a place my family could live for a lifetime.
- All of the town entrances from all directions were very nice. I particularly like coming in from the east. All of them could be enhanced with better home properties, but the professional signs are excellent as you come into Miller.
- Miller is a nice, attractive community from all aspects and all directions.
- Driving into Miller from the east on Hwy 14 is nice. The airport is a nice setting with the bike trail along the road. With St. Lawrence so close, it helps set the stage and is nice to have the speed limit lowered in anticipation of great things to come! (There is one terribly maintained house and yard on the south side of the Hwy that really spoils the entire area.)
- Arriving from the west on Hwy 14 is also nice. There are nice homes well-kept and with AgTegra, it all looks progressive.
- Driving in from the north with the Country Club, gold course and nice homes is attractive.
- Driving in from the south is not as attractive. There are messy yards. The amenities with the ball fields and race track are nice but the 4_H buildings and the rodeo grounds buildings need paint and maintenance.
- Need welcome to Miller signs on west and north.

- Great Welcome sign on Hwy 14 to the east; needs something welcoming to the west. I understand that funding for this is being pursued. The housing complex to the west needs to be annexed into the City Limits. Buildings to the south of town really need repair and maintenance, including the Legion Building, TriState Insulation and housing surrounding that, Bird Seed Plant needs clean-up and building by railroad needs paint.
- Love the sign on the south end of town. I would like to see more signage coming in from the north and west. The American Legion building, a place that should reflect pride in service and duty, needs some serious TLC. Show pride in your veterans, paint it!
- Excellent lighting, cleanliness, appearance of community pride and mural – very cool! Good signage, infrastructure, green space, condition of buildings and overall appearance.
- I thought the town was very clean and tidy. I was impressed with what Miller all has to offer. I felt there was a lot of community pride. I love the fact that they have a drive in movie theatre. I think Miller has a lot to offer. They have housing and land for sale. I think it is great that they have three murals and lots of shopping on Main Street. There were places that need to be cleaned up, but it's not like they stick out that bad unless you are looking for them.
- I thought it was crazy of where the city limits are and would think they would annex them in. they have a dance studio where they have yoga classes. Love that! Love the park area and how they have a tornado shelter there. I think it was neat that so many houses had wrap around decks on them. Main Street awnings are great.
- There was no sign on the north side of town, I think there are areas in town that need cleaned up, but overall the town is clean. I see a lot of community pride.

Main Street:

Your impressions of Main Street and the Retail / Service Businesses What is attractive, unattractive, unique, etc. What does this town have that yours doesn't? What could this town use that it doesn't have? What is becoming successful? What is failing?

- When I came to the intersection of Highway 14 and 45 I am totally inspired! My first impression was a vibrant and active community. The buildings were in very good shape and displayed in a professional manner. There did not appear to be any visual remnants of abandonment or dilapidated properties or a presence of a challenging economy.
- Absolutely love the horse mural and I also enjoyed the smaller mural on the building next to it on the corner. A great way to incorporate Art to enrich an abandoned space.
- It is apparent that the community takes pride in its business district, the overall improvements to buildings, murals, awnings and sidewalks make an impressive statement to the visitor passing through or looking to stay.
- Main Street has become quite the beautification project with the awnings and effort put forth on the storefronts. Downtown Miller is great and the murals are really adding to the vibrancy of the community. The special 'vintage' looking light posts too add to it. Parking was adequate and the stores are spread out and a variety. I would just recommend if businesses use a back entrance to keep those up as well as the front entrances.
- Awnings, street lights, sidewalks and the people are all great. The mural on Polly's Shoes is wonderful and adds so much! (Although I hope the lot and buildings to the south of it will get cleaned up. This is very distracting!!) there are many great stores to provide a wonderful shopping experience. Few communities of this size have the shopping opportunities that there are in downtown Miller.
- Miller is fortunate to have the mural, nice lighting, attractive Main Street, wide streets, curb and gutter. They also have their drive-in theater, Skateboard Park, nice swimming pool with slide, basketball courts, race track, rodeo grounds and many amenities that my community does not have. Do need more restaurants and motel rooms.

- The businesses all seem to be successful and thriving. There is a nice variety of businesses with opportunity for people to find any products that they are needing/looking for. The community is fortunate to have the large area to draw from for shopping. I really did not see anything failing...other than the need for additional restaurants and motels shows they must have been failing in the past.
- The downtown street lights, awnings and new sidewalk add a great deal to the downtown and make it very inviting! Signage for the businesses is very good. The City and On Hand Development Corporation has done a great job offering incentives and funding to assist with sidewalks and store awnings to bring this attractive Main Street.
- The buildings located on the west side of the street and north at the intersection of Hwy 14 and Main Street leave a first bad impression. The 'What Not Shop & other buildings need to be fixed up. The old Senior Center needs to be fixed up or torn down. The Aflac building needs repair.
- Buildings on Main Street are being utilized and kept up. The facades add so much character to Main Street. Main Street offers a wide variety of businesses. Hometown Pride displayed well.
- Businesses appear to be doing well. Most buildings were used and in decent shape.
- Excellent signage, infrastructure, lighting and appearance of community pride. Good cleanliness, condition of buildings and overall appearance. Green space/beautification and condition of buildings needs improvement.
- Main Street has a lot to offer. I thought it was great having so many shopping places. They have a nice grocery store and wide range of stuff to offer on Main Street. Turtle Creek is attractive, and I really liked how you can sit outside and not on the front part of Main Street. There were a couple open buildings for sale on Main Street. I loved the shop we went into that had a variety of things and a coffee shop. I thought it was crazy for the populations of Miller not to have more eating establishments.
- Miller has things my community does not such as; coffee shop, clothing stores, bike trail, house developments, businesses like we toured, dance studio and community garden.
- Main Street needs more eating establishments. Where do people go for breakfast and for coffee? I think businesses coming in with young people are awesome. I think it is a town that will continue to thrive.

Industrial Park:

Does this town have an industrial park? What companies are in it? What strikes you as unique? Are there cluster opportunities? Do these companies work together or are they autonomous?

Is it well maintained? Roads, upkeep, clean, etc.

- Nice option to have an industrial park, owned by the Economic Development Corporation. Miller has a wide variety of industries for job opportunities and that would entice people to move to Miller. Great to see the community is reinvesting into its business.
- Miller would be a perfect community to consider incorporating a mentorship and/or internship program with their school to teach the various industries. Perhaps several of the businesses could have a revolving internship with student(s) for 2-3 month period which would give the students a flavor for each industry. (Hospitality, Industrial, Ag, Retail, Tech Support, Livestock, etc.) It could be set up to have a different level of experience per grade...vacuum/clean the tractors/shop (8-9 grade) to...change oil/check tire pressure (10-11 grade)...to set up equipment/run parts (12 grade); then the next 2-3 months provide internship to the student for hospitality industry...retail/grocery/restaurant. Miller is blessed with so many different businesses, this would be a great central location for workforce development for the entire area.
- The area the EC is looking at to expand its industrial development is in desperate need of clean up. It is an eyesore that appears to be part of the progressive industrial park. The time and money needed to obtain this land or tidy up the massive accumulation of material would be a good investment.
- This is truly a city encircled by Agriculture and community pride.
- Infrastructure and appearance of community pride are excellent. Signage needs improvement, could not easily tell where all the different businesses were located from the main highway.

- There was a great deal of properties that Miller looks to be able to develop. The Industrial Park is smaller but looks like it's a focus for the corporation for the future. It has businesses mostly and 1 lot is open to bring in a new business. I'm impressed with the number of lots, acreages that On Hand is developing, such as the Dairy Queen & Car Wash, that's impressive that you have so much potential. Also a birdseed business employing about 30 full-time people is great to have. I hope it keeps up.
- Nice diversity of businesses. There is room for expansion. There is potential for more manufacturing companies. The Development corporation should consider building a spec building in the Industrial Park to be immediately available for prospective companies looking for a location in order to bring more manufacturing companies to Miller and diversify the economy. The lot east of the Industrial Park needs to be purchased and cleaned up.
- The City has done a tremendous job bringing new water and sewer lines all over the community. This makes a tremendous impact for new businesses looking for a location and puts Miller above most of the other communities of their size in the state.
- Busses, empty building, vet clinic, empty lots (opportunity to build). It appears the businesses are autonomous.
- Foreman Bus Service is an asset. I think it is great that they have an industrial park. Around the industrial park there could be some clean up. There is always opportunity if you have an industrial park. I think there is ways for more businesses to work together in this area.

School(s):

- The signage for the high school is wonderful on highway 14. I would have trouble finding the elementary school, did not find any signage on how to locate the building. It is nice to see the community is willing to build new structures for the education of children in the area. It will be really nice to have the new sidewalks for access to the schools.
- High school signage excellent, elementary needs improvement.
- Other than the Miller Rustler's sign on the high school, I did not notice too much of the community spirit otherwise. The schools however are very nice, modern and the playground equipment very nice for this day and age. As for community pride, I think after a town has Homecoming, pride is shown all over, so I wouldn't hold it against a community had they not gone through Homecoming.
- The schools are great and have to be envied by all other communities!
- Excellent school impression.
- I think it is great to have a preschool right by the school. I think that the school needs a little help with their playground. I like how the pictures of the kids were by the football field. They have a nice football field.

Tourism:

- I would assume being a prime agriculture area that hunting is a huge component of their economy, however, I did not see any reference to any aspect of that. Signage for B & B or camping was not prevalent, I missed the marketing for private hunting guide industries.
- I could see with more visual marketing products, Miller can have many opportunities to be the center of various tourism activities such as hunting, fishing and overall great relaxation experience. Spotlight the great experiences previous visitors have had.
- Tourism is probably non-existent for Miller I'm assuming, but as a hub for the surrounding towns, I would promote it as such. I think with the stores and shopping in Miller, what a great project to promote to come through Miller and stop at the variety of stores down town. Not too many stores can say that. The racetrack is a plus as well. I never knew that was even there until this trip. With the little towns around, are they promoting this like they should be?

- Although Miller is lacking with actual tourism sites, they have the new mural on Polly's Shoe Store that is going to be drawing many to town. The Museum should be promoted and featured as a tourism site, as well as Crystal Park. There are many other unique opportunities in Miller with the Drive-In theater, the very popular Race Car Track and the Rodeo Grounds that bring many people to town to eat, stay overnight, stop at the convenience stores and shop. The downtown is fortunate to have the great variety of shopping that also draws people to the area. The tremendous hunting opportunities nearby are also a great draw for the area businesses.
- Signage, green space, cleanliness, condition of buildings/structures, appearance of community pride and overall appearance needs improvement. 99% pertaining to the drive-in. such a neat feature for Miller and no others in your region. Would like to see it dressed up, cleaned up and advertised more.
- There is a state park 10 miles from the golf course. I did not know this. I do not recall a lot of tourist attractions. I think their race track is huge and could really tidy it up a bit around there to make it more attractive. They have a nice baseball field complex and a beautiful golf course. The new mural is an asset for that community!

Housing:

- Miller's new developments are very nice, well cared for and are full. The majority of the remaining community's housing appears to be a challenge. There are several homes nestled throughout the community that are in major disrepair, and gives an overall poor reputation to the neighborhood which then spreads to the next dilapidated home in another neighborhood. My thoughts about housing choices would be I need to make a lot of money to afford the beautiful homes or I would have to live in a fixer upper or I need to live out of town and commute.
- Miller may want to consider incentives to assist owners with development of infill and/or renovate homes, which may spruce up various neighborhoods and encourage other owners to invest in their own properties. Other than financial, there are Pride incentives such as, most improved property, yard of the week with winners from each sector of town, best decorated home of the season, encourage organizations to volunteer for projects or properties that are not willing/able to clean up, perhaps the city council could pay for one quarters water/sewer bill as a financial incentive to the owner/organization that volunteers. This could be done for businesses as well as housing.
- Additional development for new homes would be a welcoming option for any person wanting to move to Miller. I did not see a manufactured home area that would welcome this type of housing as an option in the area. There were quite a few apartment options for potential residents, I had a hard time locating contact information for most of the apartments and perhaps there were no vacancies, so there was no marketing.
- The assisted living and skilled care facilities were beautiful and Miller is very fortunate to have suitable housing for their local historians.
- I was encouraged to hear they were investing in a code enforcement officer, it will be the cities civic duty to enforce those recommendations.
- It was nice to see how many Governor's Homes there are in Miller (8). It seems to have worked out great for the city and the people. Some of them have been added on to and improved upon. They have some nice apartments, assisted living with 25 units, and other housing going on.
- There are many nice new houses in Miller that show great growth and progressiveness. The majority of homes seem to be well maintained, although many need roof repair. (Maybe that is an opportunity for a new business in town that does roof repair. They would have a great deal of business.) there appears to be a need for lots to be ready for new housing development as well as additional multi-family housing development. Lawns seem to be well taken care of for the most part. There were two or three instances that I saw vehicles parked on lawns that should be removed. The sale of the little houses has been a nice option.
- Nice mix of old and new homes and room for development.
- There is housing development and apartment complexes. I was impressed with the story of a man from Minnesota moving to Miller without being there. I did not see much for houses for sale. The assisted living being by the hospital is awesome as well as apartments. I was surprised lots of the houses were older but loved all the wrap around decks.

Hospitals, Clinics, Attorneys, Professional Services:

- It's great to have the hospital facility and a heliport in rural communities is essential. I don't know that I would be able to find the hospital/clinic, signage is limited.
- Miller is very fortunate to have so many professional businesses available in the community. Miller has it all, including various components that make it more than just a Hub on the prairie. They are fortunate to have answers to meet the community's needs of retail, medical, spiritual, pharmacy, industrial, agriculture, purchasing and repairs of vehicles or ag related machinery, a lumber yard, various lodging, restaurants and entertainment options. It appears the community is doing a great job at facilitating any potential needs.
- Condition of building structures, appearance of community pride and overall appearance are excellent.
- The Hospital, Clinics, business and professional buildings all looked great. The hospital and clinic is working along with promoting the senior housing as well. Like every town housing is crucial and Miller seemed to recognize that.
- A very nice addition is the Prayer Circle with the Assisted Living facility. The community is fortunate to have the wide range of medical facilities and services available for the residents.
- Miller is such a beautiful community. I would like to see more green space/flowers throughout the town, not just on Main Street.
- Excellent infrastructure. Good signage, lighting, cleanliness, condition of buildings, appearance of community pride and overall appearance. Green space needs improvement.
- I think it was nice to have all the hospital, eye doctor, assisted living, and a workout center all right there. I would love to have a workout place.

Retail:

- Excellent appearance of community pride. Good infrastructure and overall appearance, signage needs improvement.
- There are some empty lots – Alco, antique store on corner of 45 & 14, etc. However the downtown has quite the retail business and the variety is amazing. I would tie in tourism and retail and have “destination” deals to promote more coming, BUT also stopping as they journey on their way. Also the Drive In Theater is amazing. It's gone through stages I'm sure where it was not that big of a deal for many years, but now with so few like it, it's a topic for full-out promotion – dinner and a movie, etc.
- Excellent signage, infrastructure, lighting, cleanliness, condition of buildings, appearance of community pride and overall appearance. Good green space/beautification.
- Good signage, infrastructure, lighting, cleanliness, condition of buildings, appearance of community pride and overall appearance. Next to the mural would be an excellent spot for a beautiful flower garden area.
- I think it is great to have a variety of retail places and you rocked this area. I think there is room to grow but with time I think you will get more places to come into Miller.

Beautification Features:

- Construction on the thoroughfare is always hard to judge the work that is going on. The murals are such an asset and could be used in the tourism portion on your tour. What a great endeavor to promote more coming to your community. I think the highways that converge at 14 & 45 could use something more when the times come – large planters? Bump outs, well-marked road signs, etc.
- Park landscaping and flowers on Main Street or main roadways.

Parks & Recreation:

- Miller has some very beautiful and inviting parks within its community. Community pride is prevalent with all the various organizations that have helped with the upkeep, personal enhancements and overall appearance of the parks. Signage to find the parks would be helpful to know that these are within the community.
- Your major park looked like quite an addition to the community. You're working on the bathhouses, and beautifying it, so that is great. The pool looks like most pools in rural SD so it's nice you have one. Free Camping is really a nice feature and disc golf. I was a little surprised that there is not a summer recreation program for the children during the summer. Sometimes that gives the high school students jobs, but also gives students who don't get exposure to other parts of life, so new experience. The golf course was great. Signage would be helpful because people tour through SD with their clubs looking for courses to play. I never knew the golf course was north of town – capitalize on that – you never know. If there is a sign, I've never seen it after going through for about 40 years.
- Great bicycle/walking trails coming into town. I love the park and all of the amenities. Excellent camping facilities, picnic areas and playground equipment. The gazebo with the stage, as well as the Disc Golf Course, is fun addition and is a great amenity for the children and all of the residents. The City has shown tremendous interest and care with their maintenance of the facilities and the construction of the new showers and storm shelter.
- A Recreation Director position needs to be created by the City to bring in more recreational programs. The City has wonderful recreational amenities and now need someone to be organizing activities to be utilizing these to the fullest. More bicycle trails could be created inside of the city limits.
- The community is fortunate to have the Community Center for events and activities, as well as the Swim Team and the Element Cheer and Children's Activities Center offering several options for children's recreational activities.
- At the drive-in movie, it needed to be cleaned up around the area and needs more bright signage. The park was cool; however, the pond fountains were not working. I think on the new bathroom at the park you need to put a mural on it like the old one.

Public Buildings:

- Miller has a nice city hall facility and the water tower is a nice backyard marker, however, I did not see any signage from the highways to find the city hall or police station. I could find the court house after looking down the streets, as it is a large, beautiful building on its own block.
- The south entrance I would say looks the oldest and least attended to. The Legion Hall is an eyesore and needs to be fixed or torn down. It drags the town down with it. The Courthouse is beautiful and well maintained on the outside the local school owns 25% of the day care center. I like how the school is involved in that; might be a suggestion for other daycare centers to tie in with their local schools for some support.
- Very nice City Hall. I love the large Court House and the historic value. The Museum needs more prominent signage. I do see the need for more art and cultural emphasis in the community. The mural is a great addition to the community arts scene. The paintings and art in the Community Center are impressive. Can the Community Center promote art shows and possibly have the hallways be an art gallery that could be promoted along with the Center?
- The Friendship center was impressive in the community center, nicely done. The American Legion is on its own as you enter town. Needs to be cleaned up.
- It took me by surprise that the city hall was not on Main Street. The Legion Building needs to have a facelift and a little pride with it. It is a beautiful area by the baseball field and then you see that Legion building. They could have a gold mine there with the baseball field.

Quality of Life & Lifestyle Observations:

- You have a great deal in terms of housing, recreation and available amenities in Miller. With the pandemic, I would think you could really promote newcomers coming if you have something in place that welcomes newbies. If you have broadband, that would be more outstanding. Winter time seems to be lacking for activities other than school activities and hunting. Maybe create something for youth: theater, bowling, escape rooms, etc. But you have a wellness center, grocery, retail, community transportation, healthcare, playgrounds, sports fields, churches, hair salon, walk and bike paths, and more. I would recommend others to move here, but I for sure would more so if I knew the people are friendly and welcoming to newcomers and there are opportunities for employment. But with a hospital, clinic and assisted living it promotes a chain for people to consider as they get older and need a place to stay. Overall, I just think more can be done on the corner of Highway 14 & 45, to get people to stop and shop. Miller has so much going for it, so it was a great tour and leaves a great impression.
- Probably would recommend. I think Miller is a great clean community. it just feels like it is in no mans land. I feel so far away from everything.

Community Assets:

- 1) Retail, 2) Community Center – great for all ages, 3) Golf Course, 4) 2 Motels, 5) Hunting, 6) Drive in Theater
- 1) Location of the community with the large market area, 2) Impressive Downtown and Shopping Area, 3) Tremendous Medical facilities and schools for the residents, 4) Parks, Recreational amenities and Community Center, 5) Kecia Berenek and the On Hand Development Corporation
- 1) School, 2) Grocery Store, 3) HOUSING, 4) Self-sustainable, 5) Main Street.
- 1) Bird Seed Plant, 2) Housing Development, 3) Hospital/Assisted Living/Eye Center/ Fitness Center all in one., 4) Beautiful golf course on one end and baseball complex on other end, 5) Main Street is beautiful

Transportation:

- I was not clear or did not take good enough notes on the transit system. If you have one, great. They are not easy to get going.

Other Observations:

- Miller has many wonderful reasons to want to live there, they are a very supportive and active community and it shows through the love of their businesses, organizations and financial investment into long term improvements. Highlight your successes, give visual acknowledgements of all the organizations that have a part of the successes within the community to inform visitors and community members of the energy that is being generated.
- Miller is such an outstanding community and a great place to live. It has so much going for it that it is hard to find anything that is the least bit negative to even report!! The passion for the community is such a tremendous asset and so apparent wherever you are and whomever you visit with. And I can see why...there is so much to be proud of!!! The City, the forefathers and the On Hand Development Corporation have set a wonderful footprint to create an outstanding infrastructure and atmosphere to encourage new business and development. This is a model community for every other community in the state!!
- I thought it was a beautiful town. I think it shows a lot of community pride. Loved the shops we went into. Drives me a bit crazy with no fence around the cemetery. Lots of businesses in Miller I did not know about. Beautiful greenhouse. I think the rodeo grounds needs a little leaning up but the 4H grounds were really nice.