

City Council Agenda Item Memo

From: Kristin Zimmerman, Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director

Council Meeting: October 21, 2025

Subject: Presentation: Update on First Impressions (Secret Shopper) Program Results

Presenter: Emily Kluin, SDSU Extension – Community Vitality Program
Kellie Kolb, SDSU Extension – Community Vitality Program

Summary and Recommended Action:

This presentation serves as a follow-up to the January 2025 briefing introducing Brookings' participation in the First Impressions community assessment program. The Brookings team partnered with the city of Aberdeen as its comparison city through SDSU Extension's Community Vitality Program and will highlight key findings, community strengths, and identified opportunities for improvement.

Item Details:

The First Impressions Program provides communities with objective feedback through the eyes of first-time visitors - offering a unique "secret shopper" approach to community development.

In this follow-up, Emily Kluin and Kellie Kolb will:

- Summarize Brookings' assessment results and comparative feedback from Aberdeen.
- Present visual documentation and key data trends.
- Identify short- and long-term opportunities for action planning.
- Offer SDSU Extension recommendations for community engagement and next steps.

Brookings' participation in the inaugural program demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement, collaboration, and innovative community evaluation.

Legal Consideration:

None.

Strategic Plan Consideration:

- Safe, Inclusive, Connected Community – The City of Brookings will create an environment for inclusive programs, gathering places, and events where the community can safely live, work and come together to participate in opportunities for learning, recreation and enjoyment.

- Service and Innovation Excellence – The City of Brookings will provide an accessible environment committed to ongoing innovation and outstanding service through listening and engagement.
- Economic Growth – The City of Brookings will support effective diversified community investment and equitable opportunities for prosperity.

Financial Consideration:

Participation in SDSU Extension's First Impressions Program was \$4,000, representing an estimated in-kind value of \$10,000.

Supporting Documentation: