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Quality of Place: Two Harbors, MN

Learning to be a city



An exploratory research study

Britta Andress, Jordan Boy Gallegos, Jordan Marth and Jaz Vallin

Research Assistants Department of Sociology Augsburg University

Faculty Advisor and Report Author

Diane L. Pike, PhD

Professor of Sociology Augsburg University

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Acknowledgments

The researchers wish to thank the respondents who shared their time and insights and conveyed their affection for and commitment to the community of Two Harbors. Special appreciation to Dan Walker, City Administrator for his coordination on-site and leadership in supporting the project. The staff at the Two Harbors Public Library were generous and gracious in allowing us to use space to conduct many of the interviews. We also acknowledge the efforts of the Two Harbors Area Fund and the Chamber of Commerce in providing insights and welcoming the project.

There are two primary goals of this project: 1) to provide a quality learning experience for university students in a community setting and 2) to collect qualitative data that complements existing quantitative studies of Two Harbors. We are pleased to report a very positive outcome for the students and hope that the findings provide a distinctive resource for leaders and citizens. Thank you for the opportunity.

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Part One

Adding Voices: Why a qualitative study of Two Harbors

Over the past decade, multiple studies have looked at the numerical data available at the state and regional level in order to provide a profile of the economic, and to a lesser extent, social-cultural profile of this distinctive north shore community.¹ The purpose of this 2018 descriptive research project is to complement the extant quantitative analyses of Two Harbors by conducting face-to-face intensive interviews with a sample of community members.² This study listens in-depth to residents and workers in order to understand more fully the meaning and thinking around current strengths and challenges. Such narrative data can help to frame future discussions and may inform how community members and leaders approach various issues.

On April 13&14, 2018, 25 interviews were conducted on-site by 4 undergraduate research assistants from Augsburg University. The 30-40 minute semi-structured, recorded interviews focused on participants' brief histories in Two Harbors, their perceptions of the quality of the city today, and their visions for the future.³ In addition, 25 short field interviews were conducted using a convenience sample. Questions were asked about Two Harbor's current assets and challenges, as well as what message the respondent would like to send to city leaders.⁴

Findings of Previous Studies

Two Harbors decision makers have had the opportunity over the past decade to benefit from a series of quantitative analyses. That existing work is a critical context for understanding the place of this interview study.

¹ The main studies are referenced in the bibliography and include work done by the University of Minnesota Duluth, as well as several studies commissioned from consulting firms and through the Planning Commission. They span from 2004-2017.

² This Augsburg/Two Harbors project was supported by the Office of the City Administrator and the Two Harbors Area Fund. It was funded by (former resident) Mark Johnson through the Augsburg University Department of Sociology.

³ This sample was identified from a sampling frame of about 50 names provided by city leaders.

⁴ A detailed description of the methodology, instrument design, sample, reliability and validity, and limitations is included in Appendix A. No Institutional Review Board (IRB) permission was required for this project; however, all protocols for voluntary participation, transparency of research goals, and confidentiality were followed. All steps of the research design and execution were advised by Professor Diane Pike, PhD. Department of Sociology at Augsburg University. She is responsible for the written report and all charts and tables. The four research assistants were directly involved in background reading, instrument design and pre-testing, and participant recruitment; they conducted the interviews, did an initial qualitative analysis, and helped edit the final document.

All of the previous studies referenced for this project share the following characteristics: 1) they focus on recognized, measurable variables from official government and agency databases, 2) they are primarily descriptive studies with no, or a very limited number of, recommendations, and, 3) the studies generally do not offer assessments for how to fund and pay for the needs identified. As a composite, the quantitative studies provide a robust empirical picture of Two Harbors' challenges and opportunities.⁵ They include: demographic changes with an aging population; the need for more housing; protection and development of downtown and the waterfront; visible infrastructure deficiency in roads, sidewalks and sewers; and the future of the economic anchors of the "4 T's" specific to Two Harbors—transportation, tourism, timber and taconite (*Two Harbors Comprehensive Plan*, 2015.)⁶

None of the reports provides a place for the direct voices of community members. There is some indirect opportunity in both closed and open ended survey items measuring perceptions in rural Minnesota overall (Dorr 2002), but little or no narrative data in the other studies.⁷

Thus, the gap this study fills is to explore the perceptions and opinions community members in our sample have about the city's challenges. As expected, this study does not uncover any hitherto hidden problems or concerns. Two Harbors appears to know, with good supporting empirical data, its challenges and needs. Our purpose is to provide an additional type of data which is qualitatively gathered and analyzed and thus can more directly reflect the meaning members of the community create around these issues. Such data may suggest different strategies in terms of leadership-community dialogues and attention to assumptions made that might warrant revision. In addition, this research process itself is a modest form of civic involvement; the city might consider repeating this study every 2-3 years in order to measure change over time.⁸

Part Two

Listening In-Depth: The face-to-face interviews

Project sponsors provided a list of potential interviewees from across areas of the community. The analysis of the recorded interviews of 25 participants who volunteered

⁵ The impact of these previous studies on decision making is not part of the evaluation in this project.

⁶ The Comprehensive Plan (2015) includes a well-developed model with specific objectives.

⁷ The protocol in the Comprehensive Plan (2015) had multiple opportunities for community input into the planning process in public hearings.

⁸ Repeated longitudinal data collection should involve appropriate updating of the form to ask new questions and more in-depth inquiry into why individuals think and feel as they do about Two Harbors. This inaugural study starts this "conversation" but should, of course, be revised over time.

from that list yields 4 main themes regarding the present and future of Two Harbors.⁹ We remind users of this report that such qualitative analysis typically reveals patterns and themes that probabilistically represent the findings across the sample. That is, they may reliably describe themes of the group, but they do not describe particular individuals. In addition, as patterns, they reflect common thoughts and perceptions but contextualization of the findings and the limitations of the data should always be recognized. The patterns and themes are not universal findings upon which policies should be built. Rather, they can be ways of constructively framing conversations and informing future interactions.

Quality of Place

Scholars have long examined “quality of life” in the community research literature. Similar concepts such as *sense of place*, *place identity*, and *place attachment* have been offered as well (Dorr 2002, p. 9-11). The focus on “quality of place” rather than “quality of life” was introduced by Richard Florida who examined the factors determining quality of place in urban areas (2000). Nathan Dorr’s review of ecological studies of place summarizes qualities of place as “all those amenities in specific locations that positively affect personal experience and improve one’s quality of life” (2002, p. 6). These are: **structural amenities** (stores, restaurants, community centers and recreational facilities), **natural amenities** (*nature trails, wildlife, lakes, clean air and water*), and **stress reducers** (supportive family and social networks, safety, lack of congestion) (2002, p.6-7). Dorr applies this “urban” concept to his study of quality of place in rural Minnesota. Like Dorr, we use quality of place as the lens for this study.

Four Themes

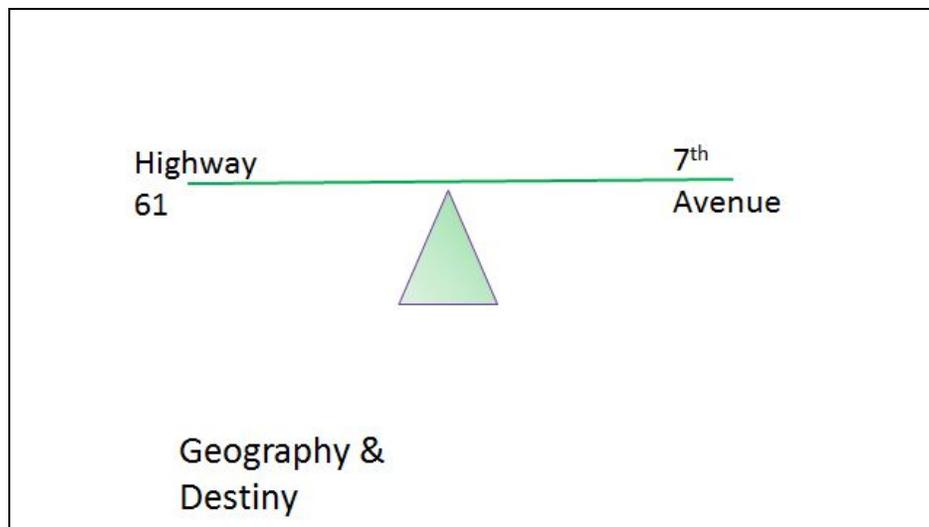
Framing our analysis using the concept of quality of place, four themes emerge:

- “Highway 61 is 7th Avenue”
- “Events, Not Buildings”
- “Friendly, Not Welcoming”
- “Learning to Be a City”

⁹ Briefly, the sample in this study includes 17 males, 7 females and 1 self-identified gender from across professional, blue collar, retail/clerical and government occupations. Time living in Two Harbors ranges from 0 (commuters) to 72 years. The average number of years spent working in the city is 17. Ages range from 18-70 with the majority spread about equally between 35-64 (5 in each decade 35-44; 45-54 and 55-64). The majority have a college degree (10) and 4 have graduate degrees. Asked about “ethnic heritage” 5 said Scandinavian and Swedish, with mentions of German, Irish, Norwegian and Native American. The modal answer to this question (7) given was “white/ Caucasian”. Details of the sampling frame are provided in the appendix.

These themes are one way to organize and examine the data. However, as previous studies have shown and as leaders and citizens already know, all the dimensions of quality of life and of place are interconnected. For example, poor quality roads and sidewalks affects residents and tourists alike; lack of housing and decreasing household size impacts potential for new families in town, the senior population, and the tax base; drug and alcohol problems stress individuals, families and the entire community; and, the importance of the potential development of the waterfront on Lake Superior, the need for a more vibrant downtown, and the current and future job opportunities all shape the economic foundations of the community.¹⁰

- **“Highway 61 is 7th Avenue”**



The challenge of meeting the needs of both residents and visitors manifests itself in several ways.

First, what is known as “Highway 61” to those on their way to Grand Marais stopping at Betty’s Pies is “7th Avenue” to residents trying to cross the thoroughfare in the summer (less traffic congestion is a stress reducer). Development that serves tourists (shops, eateries, and crafts which are structural amenities) does less for residents who would like a choice in grocery stores, good clothing retail, and “local” services in their view of a more vibrant downtown area (structural amenities for residents).

¹⁰ For purposes of clarity, all verbatim quotations in the body of the report are in *italics*. This format alleviates the need to say “Respondents said....” repeatedly. Lengthy quotations have been edited for punctuation and removing utterances.

In particular, the need for improved material infrastructure is widely understood to be significant¹¹ *“The roads here are like a third world country.”* Yet the delay in improvement in roads and sewers is seen by some as coming at the expense of welcoming tourists. *“We have wonderful trails and terrible roads.”* Others note that the small parking lot of the liquor store on this 61/7 road makes it difficult for tourists to stop despite the prime location-- which suggests the importance of serving guests and supporting local businesses.

Nearly everyone views such capital improvements as critical. Yet, there are different ideas about how to pay for infrastructure improvement. Some hope the state can provide more. *“We struggle with finding funds to make those things happen. We’re always going out with legislators and trying to get creative. You can have all the ideas in the world. If you can’t find the planning to do that, doesn’t work.”* Others want to keep taxes low to support new business. And still others suggest that citizens may need to step up more and perhaps stop fighting tax increases. Overall, there is a conundrum of how to fund projects and a lack of agreement and clarity among respondents as to how this can happen.

It should also be noted, however, that in terms of city services there is an impressive, well-resourced Fire Station and Police Department. So some city services appear to be relatively strong and contribute to a sense of a well-cared for community.

Second, the distinctiveness of Two Harbors as a unique community also reflects the interdependency of residents, workers, and tourists. The dynamic of protecting the natural assets and advancing the economy is a clear tension. This is particularly reflected in hopes for the future development of the waterfront. The two bays, Agate and Burlington, are a unique feature of the entire Superior lakeshore. Overwhelmingly, respondents see the lake and the natural beauty of the area and county (natural amenities in the quality of place model) as critical assets that keep residents in town and bring in tourists. *“Natural beauty is the number one thing that brings people here.”*

The lack of development of the waterfront area, however, is thwarting what many see as a critical need.¹² The waterfront is seen as languishing and the lack of development is a frustration that some see as a consequence of being a *“ward of the railroad”*. Citizens express frustration and only two respondents were able to share their understanding of

¹¹ The city once offered a “tour of potholes” to assess the problems. Addressing infrastructure is a major goal in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan.

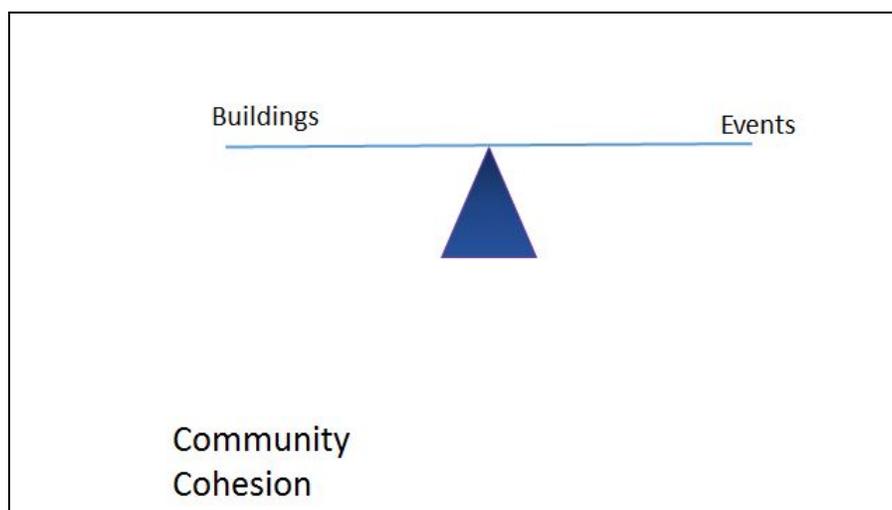
¹² While researchers heard varied explanations for why the waterfront remained under-developed and who owned what property when, we make no claims to understanding the complex history and status of the waterfront area. There are plans for waterfront development in the Comprehensive Plan. That acknowledged, the issue of waterfront development was front and center in our research findings.

a clear plan for waterfront development. A developed waterfront that leads visitors through a more vibrant downtown and offers unique sites such as the lighthouse is one vision. Suggesting that more could be done with the trains or taking the tugboat out of the water “before it rots” were among the ideas suggested for what one person calls this “Norwegian Riviera”. What changes would give more people a reason to turn right at the light in Two Harbors as they head north? Most respondents are clear that they do not want Two Harbors to become a Grand Marais (more tourism dependent) nor a bedroom community of Duluth (no small town character, although lots of services).

A bright spot indicative of moving in this positive direction of turning right at the light going north is clearly the Castle Danger Taproom located at 1st Avenue and 7th Street. It is seen as both an upbeat gathering place for the community, as well as a draw for tourists, especially tapping into the craft beer movement. “There’s lots of families in there and there’s lots of older folks in there and it’s one of the big current community gathering places.” Having built an attractive, welcoming place, the owners are committed to Two Harbors development and intentional about their hopes for the future of their business and the city.

Thus, like many unique places, Two Harbors is working to balance the resident and the visitor. There is awareness of both the benefits and costs of tourism all touching on the quality of place indicators--structural amenities, natural amenities and stress reducers. Perhaps because for much of its history the shipping of ore and importance of the railroad were central, the adaptation to tourism’s 21st century role in Two Harbors is somewhat more recent and therefore still in progress.

- **“Events, Not Buildings”**



One of the features of quality of life in communities is the extent to which a community is cohesive and connected.¹³ Supportive family and social networks are stress reducers in the quality of place model.

Asked to identify gathering places within Two Harbors, respondents most often mention churches, athletic events—especially linked to school activities, the band shell, Heritage Days, and Castle Danger. The library is also identified as a “*really good place for education*”.

The community center building on 1st Ave is looked at with mixed reviews. Some think that the building is used by some groups on a regular basis but most are not sure by whom and how often; and, it is perceived as being expensive to rent. Rather, the majority of respondents who mention it find the building an unattractive place not suitable for many activities—one individual quipped that it looks like “*a shed you’d buy at Menards*”.

According to some residents, Two Harbors has always “*lacked a focal point*” and respondents suggest that the community could use more activities outside of sports. Events are perhaps more important than buildings. Opportunities after school to keep youth “*out of trouble*” and “*away from drugs*” are mentioned as particularly important.

Thus, these data might suggest new or continuing conversations about the types of activities that can bring the community together, both regularly and seasonally. Energy and effort into more events rather than a new facility might be more achievable in the near term. However, some respondents also mention how nice it would be to have a community center more like a YMCA facility in Two Harbors. There is also the hope that existing festivals, like Heritage Days, might be better supported. Citizens seem aware that this work cannot just be done by city leadership alone but rather requires engagement by the citizens to both organize and participate.

Lastly, cohesion is related to opportunity for sustaining the population and this is a particular challenge with respect to housing. When asked what one would say to someone who wanted to move to Two Harbors, one respondent immediately exclaimed “*Good luck with finding a house!*” The issue of the number of Airbnbs now in Two Harbors reflects concern that housing stock is also being affected by homes supplementing income and thus reducing the number for sale to new residents. Household size is decreasing as seniors remain in their homes with children having moved on.

¹³ The images created for this report are designed only to give a visual indication of importance in terms of balance between two ideas. The lower is heavier/given more weight. They do not represent a degree of difference or suggest it is all one or the other.

- **“Friendly, Not Welcoming”**



Two Harbors is not unique in the balance between loyalty to the native born citizens of the town and the challenge of integrating new individuals who are *“not from here”*.¹⁴ While there is frequent acknowledgement of Two Harbors being a good place to raise a family, *if* a family can find housing, there is dominant theme of challenges in welcoming newcomers into the community. Phrasing of this issue ranges from *“if you are born here you are part of a collective with a secret password”* to Two Harbors *“is clannish”* and *“siloed where some don’t reach out because they don’t need to”*. *“We just don’t provide a good way for people to get involved.”* In reflecting on moving to the community, one respondent remembers feeling-- *“I stuck out like a raisin in oatmeal”*.

At the same time, Two Harbors is seen as a place with the potential to improve this aspect of the culture. Residents can encourage newcomers to *“Give it time. Don’t expect them to fall in love with the community area right away”*. Newcomers will learn that Two Harbors is a community that will come together to help an individual who gets cancer and raise money, indicative of *“being part of a close knit community.”*

If you move to Two Harbors and you put yourself out there a little bit, you will be very successful. You will find work. You will make friends, you will. I think we’re a very welcoming community if you are willing to put some effort in.

¹⁴ A recent MPR Ground Level report on Grand Rapids, MN mentions this issue and many others that seem relevant to Two Harbors. If readers have not heard this news story, it is recommended. <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/06/18/changing-rural-narratives-a-ground-level-conversation-in-grand-rapids>

Most respondents are not as confident as the individual quoted above. More can be done to provide a way for people to get involved and to make space for new residents so they can move beyond finding a place that is just friendly. At the same time, there is the expectation that new folks need to make an effort to become engaged. More community activities could be one factor supporting both perspectives.

- **“Learning to Be a City”**

Like many small communities, threads of history and deep local commitment are woven with new demands and needs. The idea of learning to be a city does not reflect a significant growth in population but rather growth economically and culturally. Participants were asked to think about the future--both want what they would like to see in 5-10 years and what they think will be the reality in 5-10 years.

(Two Harbors) almost has to be a different place because we have such a, you know, such a large percentage of our population that is getting older... Either one or two things can happen and I mean that's going to happen to a lot of small towns. They are either just going to cease to exist or they're going to make the changes and make the decisions that they want to continue to flourish and to become a younger and a different place. So I think one of our challenges (is) we're going through that. Now, this is the growing pains of... "what do we want to be in the future?" And there's ...some divided opinions I'm assuming on what people think about that. But, I think in general, people are positive about wanting things to happen.

This point of view is echoed in many of the interviews. Respondents see changes as inevitable and positive, although some remain hesitant that much will change. One vision of the future is succinctly *“No potholes, new retail.”* Yet there seems agreement that many of the challenges and strengths of Two Harbors today are part of the process of *“learning to be a city.”* They are eager for a city that *“has moved past ‘the railroad will take care of that’* “and is no longer content with being a pass-through on the way north. While some envision a place where *“city government is a resource, not a stop sign”*, even more have a sense of current city leadership as being *“new and exciting”* in a better environment where one can make one’s voice heard *“without feeling repercussions.”*

As the city learns, it is clear that citizens want more **communication** about the issues important to them. At the same time, city leaders note that they put out a great deal of information that is not read or paid attention to. One citizen suggestion is a city update in each utility bill and several others note the loss of a free newspaper. Public meetings

are held, yet often poorly attended. Most likely there is validity in both perspectives. The city might consider looking specifically at a communications plan or using an intern or consultant to more deeply look at other community practices and options. The loss of the Facebook page, (“*Mark Zuckerberg must have thought it was a fake, so they shut it down and...we can’t access it.*”) is one example of a channel that is not currently operational; the new radio station offers perhaps new opportunities. Both the sending and receiving are important and as the city matures and becomes even more complex communication remains critical.

Two Harbors is learning to be a city that overcomes its past, yet protects its history.

Part Three

“Excuse me, we’re doing a survey....” The Field Interviews

Table 1: Challenges identified from both field and face-to-face interviews

	Individual Well Being	Collective Well Being	Place Well Being
Challenges /Problems	Insufficient Mental & Physical Health Services Lack of Economic Opportunity for some Drug/Alcohol Abuse Bullying in schools	Need for More Civic Engagement Generational Needs (Youth activities, family housing, senior services) Drug/Alcohol Abuse	To Repair Roads, Sidewalks & Sewers To Sustain Downtown Stability and Growth To Advance Waterfront and Bay as Economic and Recreational Opportunities
Opportunities/ Strengths	Optimism about City and People Strong Family Ties Love of Place Positive Perceptions of Current Leadership	Potential for More Activities/Events Perception of Increasing Civic Voice	Waterfront and Bay Surrounding Natural Environment Castle Danger Economic strengths in shipping/tourism

Table 1 is a summary of the challenges and opportunities identified in the field and face to face interviews. They confirm key issues identified by the previous quantitative studies and reveal additional opinions and perspectives.

When asked to identify unprompted the best things about Two Harbors, field interview respondents list the following in order of most frequently mentioned: “the people” (47%) “the location” (44%) “our history” (17%).

70% of respondents also mention other items: *access to nature, ability to walk about town; everyone knows everyone; quiet; 4-day school week; blacktop trails for biking; youth athletic programs; small town atmosphere; churches; tourism, slower pace; the breakfront; community involvement.*

Asked about the most significant changes needed, the responses mirror those in the face-to-face interviews: roads, economic development, schools, and leadership.

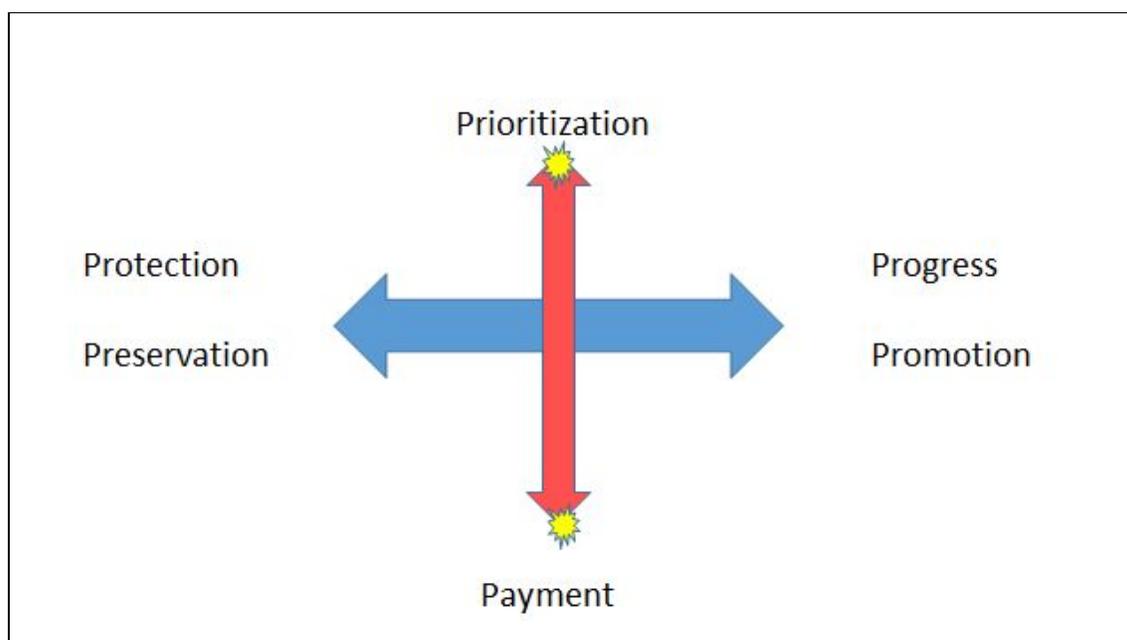
The field interviews also reveal two main threads in the item asking “What message would you like to send to city leaders?”-- a desire to see more action and more business development. Responses range from “*Quit your bitchin’ and get stuff done*” to “*Understand that change isn’t bad*” and “*I think we can do more*”. Two Harbors needs to “*diversify businesses*”, “*lower taxes to benefit businesses*”, “*start a farmer’s market and build up downtown and the waterfront.*”

Other single topics mentioned are: *protect the environment and clean water; fix the roads; have more activities; have more buses to Duluth; make landlords stay up to code; have more diversity; prioritize funding; listen to your elders; have more public transparency;* and, several comments of praise for city leaders—“*Good job!*” Thus, members of the community have different particular interests but almost all are examples of the importance of the structural and natural amenities important for quality of place.

Part Four

Considerations and Conclusion

Two Harbors community members are generally optimistic, realistic, and sophisticated in their views of the city today and in the foreseeable future. People do not have to be convinced about the strengths of the community nor about the critical issues that need attention (east and west blue arrows in diagram below). A benefit of these findings may be the recognition that more needs to be done with respect to resolving the challenges noted in the red arrow.



The commitment to **protect** natural resources as critical assets of the city and the surrounding area is clear, as is the preference to **preserve** the distinct history and culture of Two Harbors. At the same time, leaders and citizens alike recognize the importance of **progress**; they are eager for changes (certainly in the downtown vitality and the development of the waterfront) and in ways to **promote** Two Harbors to new residents and visitors.¹⁵ What could be a useful direction for any replicated research are specific views on who should **pay** for what and how.

There is a sense of **urgency for results**.

¹⁵ There was one comment about an old billboard sign “Watch two great ladies get loaded in Two Harbors”—still remembered by at least a few as perhaps not the best way to promote the city.

People get frustrated because they don't see movement. They get frustrated because they don't see things happening...especially on the waterfront (which) people have been talking about since the 1980s..I think people get a little worn out by that.

This study does not delve into how issues of financial support have been addressed in the past but it seems clear they remain a central factor. That decision making process is inextricably linked to **prioritization** of needs followed by actual implementation. Future conversations may be able to use this model to help organize discussions.

In conclusion, the interviews reveal that respondents have a realistic appraisal of challenges and a sense of optimism about the quality of place that is Two Harbors; there seems significant positive momentum for the near future. Recognizing this sense of *"things are somewhat better"* is valuable and can be built upon. Two Harbors is a stable small city with many citizens eager to sustain and develop the community they love. The foundational components of a city that demonstrates quality of place are clearly evident.

"I think that generation of younger people that are coming to the community gives me a lot of hope."

Selected References

(in chronological order most recent first)

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* There is an additional literature review on this topic of quality of life and place in the 2007 Consultation document which might be a good resource.

APPENDIX

Methodology

In addition to careful reading of the reports listed in the References, research assistants did background research, primarily online, into key areas of the community and the relevant organizations. Their careful assessment of how organizations present themselves and what data can be gleaned provided a useful foundation for development of the interview schedules.

As noted in the footnote 2, all protocols for Institutional Review protections were followed in this research. Subjects were adult volunteers who were invited to participate based on a sampling frame provided by the research sponsors in Two Harbors. The response rate from that sampling frame was approximately 50%. Individuals were identified as being across the 9 different areas of the community using the Blandin Foundation Model.

<https://blandinfoundation.org/learn/vibrant-communities/nine-dimensions-healthy-community/>

Interviews were held in the Two Harbors Public Library and in public buildings (firehouse, city hall etc.). Respondents were asked for permission to record interviews using the software Otter and all agreed. Four face to face interviews were completed taking notes by hand. For this sample, the average number of years living in Two Harbors was 28; the ethnic heritages identified are Scandinavian, Norwegian, and Swedish. Ages ranged from 18 to above 75, The field interviews were completed by walking around downtown, entering shops and businesses and at the grocery store. The “no thank you” rate for these field interviews was higher than expected, although in retrospect, we should have anticipated that. People may not want to be interrupted, not have time, not understand the purpose, or any other number or reasons.

Additional data was collected from individuals working with the Blandin Foundation Program thanks to one of the city leaders efforts. The responses to questions on critical issues, rationale, and utility of data were valuable in establishing the focus of this study. Thank you to those individuals who completed that survey.

The strength of this methodology is in the validity of the interviews in terms of opinions and perceptions in an area of competence. The reliability is reasonable given the nature of the semi-structured interviews. But while the sample is intentionally broad, it is not a random sample and therefore generalizability to the whole population is unwarranted.

Copies of interview schedules follow.

FIELD INTERVIEWS

Hello. My/our name is BrittaJazJordan from Augsburg University in Minneapolis. We are part of a research project asking folks about the quality of life in Two Harbors. The study is being done for the Two Harbors Area Fund and the City.

There are only 3 questions and answers are confidential. Would you have 3-4 minutes to talk to us?

Thank you (or Have a nice day!)

1. **What would you say are the best things about the city of Two Harbors today?** *(circle any that apply)* DO NOT READ unless they ask "what do you mean"

1. People/Great Community
2. Location
3. History (personal or community)
4. Distinctiveness
5. Employment or work status
6. Family
7. Other _____

2. **In your opinion, what are the most significant changes Two Harbors needs to make in the next 2-5 years?** DO NOT READ unless they ask *prompt for because if appropriate....*

1. Infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, buildings)
2. Services (medical, housing, senior services other: _____)
3. Schools
4. Economic growth
5. Leadership
6. Tourism
7. Community building
8. Other:

3. **Finally, if you could send one message to the city leaders, what would it be?**

After their response, prompt: Can you say a little bit about why? (Write as verbatim as you can)

Thank you so much. Offer a candy.

In-depth Interview Schedule

Instructions

Be standing. Welcome. Shake hands; please have a seat.

[Interviewers introduce themselves; mention that you're going to be going over an introductory script]

- Thank you for agreeing to meet with us. We're conducting this interview as part of a research project funded through the Two Harbors Area Fund. We've been asked to collect data about citizens' perceptions of the quality of life in Two Harbors. We want to hear about your experiences, positive or negative, and your hopes for the future of the community. All questions will be open-ended; you can talk as much or as little as you like.
- This interview is completely voluntary in nature. You can skip any question you like. You can stop the interview at any point. We will be recording the interview so that we can accurately understand the information we collect; if you would prefer not to have the recording, please tell us now.
- All your responses will be completely confidential. Findings will be presented in the aggregate and no identifying quotations will be used.
- Our faculty advisor is Professor Diane Pike at Augsburg University. If you have any questions after the interview, you can contact her. This is her business card. [hand them business card]
- Please, let us know if you have any questions or concerns throughout the interview process.

Our interview has three major sections. We want to hear your thoughts on the past, present, and future of Two Harbors. We're going to start by talking about your past with the city.

1: How long have you been living or working in Two Harbors?

- Prompt: What brought you here?
- Prompt: What keeps you here?
- Prompt: Do you ever consider leaving?

Now, we'd like to talk about Two Harbors today, starting with the community.

2. We'd be interested in knowing in what ways, if any, you think Two Harbors is a distinctive or unique community.

3. What things does Two Harbors have going for itself at this point in its history?

4. If someone were thinking of moving or working here, what would you tell them?

5. Is there a community gathering place ? That is, are there places in town that bring people together ?

Prompt: why do you think that place works this way?

PAUSE/TRANSITION

We would also like to know your views about city leadership...

6. In your experience, how well does the city government communicate with citizens about relevant issues?

- Prompt: In what ways is leadership working in the best interests of the city ?
- Prompt: Ask why they have this opinion? Can you give me an example?

6. What do you see as any significant challenges in Two Harbors today ?

Finally, we are interested in your thoughts about the future of Two Harbors.

7. If you could time travel ahead 5-10 years, what would you hope to see in Two Harbors?

8. Of course, what we might hope to see and what we think is likely to happen can often be different. In 5-10 years, what would you think Two Harbors will actually be like?

Prompt: Can you say a bit about what you think that?

9. Are you optimistic about the future of Two Harbors? (Pause) Can you share why you feel this way.

10. Is there anything else you would like to share with us today for this study?

Turn off recording. That finishes our interview. Chocolate

Thank you again. Remind of next steps. "We analyze the feedback and we come back to make a presentation (they will be invited). Then based on feedback on presentation, we produce a final report."

Stand up. Shake hands. See them out.

Background Sheet Completed by each in-depth interview respondent.

The following background information helps us know that the interviews represent a cross-section of the Two Harbors Community. Please fill in the appropriate response or circle the correct category. No names are needed.

1. Years living in Two Harbors: _____

2. Years working in Two Harbors: _____

Occupation: _____

3. Age: (circle the appropriate category)

18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 64-75 above 75

5. Ethnic Heritage:

6. Education level

High school Some college College degree Graduate degree Other
education:

Thank you!