

Community Assistantship Program

Quality of Place in Rural Minnesota

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Prepared in partnership with
Northwest Minnesota Foundation

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Center for Urban and Regional Affairs:
Community Assistantship Program
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Abstract

Quality of place is an important tool for designing economic and community development policies and strategies. Qualities of place include all natural and structural amenities in a specific location that positively affect personal experience and improve one's quality of life. This concept is tied to other concepts of place attachment, place identity, self-identity, community attachment, and quality of life. The purpose of the study was two fold; first, to test elements of recent urban-based quality of place studies by Richard Florida (Carnegie Mellon University), second, to determine ways to retain and attract knowledge-based workers in rural Minnesota. High-tech workers and employers in rural Minnesota were targeted for a survey of open- and closed-ended questions. Results found qualities of place have three elements: natural amenities, structural amenities, and stress reducers. Rural-small town atmosphere, social networks, career opportunities, recreational opportunities, and environmental integrity are qualities of place that significantly attract high-technology workers in rural Minnesota. Conclusions largely support recent quality of place studies by Richard Florida. Recommendations suggest investing in structural amenities, natural amenities, and low stress areas; specifically through smart growth strategies, landscape architecture, and ecological design.

Keywords: quality of place, amenities, place attachment, place identity, self-identity, quality of life, rural, Minnesota, economic development, community development, high-tech workers, high-tech employers

Executive Summary

Quality of place is a new and important concept for regional planners, economic and community developers, and community members alike. It describes the positive personal experiences available in a specific location; including family and social relationships, environmental qualities, career and job opportunities, entertainment venues, cultural and historical heritage, and recreational opportunities. The goal of achieving quality of place in a region, town, or city is to improve the general population's quality of life, while retaining and attracting talented individuals.

Quality of place is related to heavily studied terms like place attachment, self-identity, place identity, and quality of life. *Place attachment* results from positive or negative personal experiences related to a specific location. Attachment to an individual's childhood home or school is a common example. Similarly, *self-identity* is created from unique personal experiences and personal values. Each individual has different personal values and experiences, so self-identities will be different for everyone. Likewise, *place identity* is borne from place attachment and self-identity, but is not limited to one particular area. For instance, Chinese-Americans in San Francisco can identify with the culture in China Town, although it is thousands of miles from Mainland China. *Quality of life*, then, is essentially a personal term describing all the economic and non-economic factors that positively affect one's life. Often, quality of life is used to explain a person's health, financial well-being, social status, or stress level.

Based on recent urban-based quality of place findings by Richard Florida (Carnegie Mellon University – CMU; Pittsburgh, PA), a survey was designed for high-tech workers in rural Minnesota. The purpose of the study was to test the applicability of urban-based quality of place findings to rural areas of Minnesota. A list of 23 businesses was compiled by the Headwaters Regional Development Commission and the Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development. Survey packets were distributed by hand and postal delivery to 20 businesses, representing 13 communities in northwestern Minnesota and three outside the region. *Northwestern Minnesota* is defined as the twelve counties contained in Minnesota's Economic Development *Region One* (managed by the Northwest Regional Development Commission) and *Region Two* (managed by the Headwaters Regional Development Commission).

Results conclude that structural amenities, natural amenities, and stress reducer qualities improve the quality of place for respondents. Further, results largely support recent quality of place findings by Richard Florida. Examples of *structural amenities* include stores, restaurants, movie theaters, community centers, and recreational facilities. *Natural amenities* include nature trails, wildlife viewing, lakes and forest recreation, and clean air and water. The third element of

quality of place is somewhat ambiguous but very important. *Stress reducer qualities* include supportive social and family networks, the safety of a community, and the lack of congestion (traffic). Included in the report are suggestions for developing and improving qualities of place in rural Minnesota.

Introduction

Quality of place is a central concept to community and regional planning, yet not widely understood. Highly connected to concepts of quality of life, place attachment, sense of place, and place identity; quality of place incorporates a geographical dimension with social, ecological, economic, and cultural elements. Literature on quality of place is very minimal, likely due to the recent development of the concept itself. First, I will discuss how quality of place has emerged from the concepts listed above, as well as distinguish between each. Secondly, the methods of the survey design, distribution, and collection are addressed. Third, the results of the open-ended and close-ended questions are explained. And lastly, conclusions and recommendations are made based upon research findings. The purpose of this paper is to synthesize all quality of place-related terms into one concept, for the use of regional planners in rural areas, specifically in northwest Minnesota (as defined by the borders of Minnesota Economic Development Regions 1 and 2).

Background

“Quality of place” has emerged from sociological, geographical, economic, and ecological studies of *sense of place*. Larkin (1998) cites Russell and Ward (1982), who define sense of place as “the psychological or perceived unity of the geographical environment” (p. 28). Further, Tuan (1974) describes sense of place as “a center of meaning constructed by experience” (Larkin 1998: 28). Cantrill (1998: 303) finds sense of place to be defined by numerous authors as; a place where “personal and collective meanings ... intersect at a particular physical site” (Duncan 1994), “the product of [attaching] meaning to a location” (Williams 1995), “a geographical setting combined with the personal experience of the perceiver” (Steele 1981), and “the affective bonds between individuals and particular places that vary in intensity” (Tuan 1974). In sum, Cantrill finds scholars tend to agree that sense of place “is the perception of what is most [apparent] in a specific location, which may be reflected in value preferences or how that specific place figures in [daily life] (1998: 303).” Qualities of place, then, are all those amenities in a specific location that positively affect personal experience and improve one’s quality of life.

Place identity is a similar concept, defined by a number of authors as an individual’s connection to a geographical dimension with strong emotional ties resulting from a historical process of unique experiences and values (Larkin 1998; Proshansky 1978; Williams et. al 1992; Hull and Lam and Vigo 1994; Peterson 1998; Twigger-Ross and Uzzell; Korpela 1989; Cuba and Hummon 1993). Cuba and Hummon (1993) identify places, people, and experiences as sources of place identity. They found respondents tend to identify the size of place depending upon the

questions posed. For instance, demographic and migration variables are related closely to dwellings as the loci of place, while social participation variables are related closely to community (Cuba and Hummon 1993: 123).

Place identity is constantly changing and fluid over time (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell 1996). Twigger-Ross and Uzzell describe place identity as a personal and emotional process, specifically related to self-esteem and self-efficacy (or capableness). Hull et al. (1994) and Williams et al. (1989) also found place identity is transferable across time and space, meaning the experiences captured in one place are often sought elsewhere. Place identity occurs as individuals move from dwelling to dwelling, community to community, and region to region. For instance, Davey (1999) explain how styles of architecture contribute to place and social identity; like the French Quarter of New Orleans, or China Town in San Francisco. The transferability of place identity tends to lean largely on the concept of *self-identity*, where individuals prefer specific lifestyle settings or social roles. For self-identity and place identity concepts to connect, Proshansky (1978) explains that the “human-physical environment relationship must be conceptually related to the individual’s personality structure with its enduring dispositions and, more critically, to some unifying process with it” (Korpela 1989: 241).

A related concept, *place attachment*, is widely studied by authors like Tuan (1974, 1977), Williams, et al. (1992), Mesch and Manor (1998), Vorkinn (1998), Leopold (1949), Larkin (1998), Johnson (1998), and Russell and Ward (1982). These authors agree place attachment is derived from personal experiences, and historical, cultural, social, geographical, and environmental elements. Giuliani and Fledman (1993) found three primary differences exist between authors’ definitions of place attachment, listed as follows: the *content* of the personal bond to a given place (affective, cognitive, and/or symbolic), the *polarity* of the bond, and the *specificity* of the bond.

Place attachment, community attachment, and place identity are very similar concepts. Place attachment, however, is site-specific or region-specific, while place identity is more of a transferable feeling (as discussed above). Giuliani and Feldman (1993) cite the work of Janowitz and Kasarda (1974), who identify three measures of community attachment. The attachment measures are: feelings of belonging, personal interest in the home area, personal sentiment about leaving (or willingness to accept the loss of) an area. Since the social elements of a place are extremely important to place identity and place attachment, measurements of “community attachment” can transfer easily to “place attachment” and “quality of place” measures.

Bricker and Kerstetter (2000) focused on emotional bonds, personal involvement, and past experiences within the concept of place attachment. They developed a place attachment

scale with 239 items, primarily for the use of whitewater rafting and recreational (leisure) places. Bricker and Kerstetter found three key elements of their place attachment scale, which are place-attachment/place-dependence, place identity, and lifestyle. Place dependence refers to the place's ability to facilitate the users' behavior. Place identity relates to the individuals' emotional or affective attachment to the place. And lastly, the lifestyle factor relates place attachment to lifestyle behaviors, which (interestingly) ranked relatively low in importance for respondents (Bricker and Kerstetter 2000).

Since place attachment does exist, it can be affected by regulations and policy. Vorkinn (1998) conducted a study of Norwegian outdoor campers' behaviors under changing camping and campsite regulations. As the regulations took effect, the number of campers in the study site decreased, and dissatisfaction with the area grew significantly. This is called a displacement effect; in other words, a negative effect on quality of place.

Lastly, Mesch and Manor (1998) address two models central to community attachment, the community of limited liability and the liberated community. The *community of limited liability* emphasizes that residents' involvement in their local neighborhood is voluntary, and limited to the extent such services will meet the community's needs. Critical elements in this model are social capital and capital investments. Contrastingly, the *liberated community* model suggests that social change has "liberated" individuals from one designated place, while increasing their geographic mobility (Mesch and Manor 1998: 505). This model favors the idea that only a small portion of our social ties are local, while a larger portion of our ties are non-local, resulting in a lack of attachment to the "home" place. Clearly, as information sharing and the use of technology expand, the liberated community model may dominate. Yet, the community of limited liability model is a persuasive tool for increasing social capital investments and social responsibility. These two models provide a context for understanding the mobility of high-tech workers within the quality of place concept.

Quality of life is similar to place-based meanings, only with respect to life satisfaction and personal well-being. The term itself is often used in the medical field to describe a change in a patient's state of well-being after an operation or treatment (Lazar and Amir 1998). Sociologists and psychologists often refer to quality of life in terms of life satisfaction at home, at work, and in leisure activities (Weston 1999). Much like the concepts of place identity and self-identity, quality of life is transferable from one location to the other. Also, it varies greatly from person to person, since it is largely value-based.

Howe, McMahon, and Propst (1997) define quality of life as a "catchall term used to describe the non-economic amenities a community has to offer, including clean air and water,

safe streets, open space, cultural events, recreational opportunities, non-congested roads, good schools, and scenic views (p. 9).” They found businesses in the highest growth industries (healthcare, computer software, electronics manufacturing, and professional services) are “especially attracted to communities with a high quality of life (p. 11).” In support of this definition, Weston (1999) finds no strong direct link between money and personal happiness. Instead, the importance of social and environmental ties are greater than monetary factors. Likewise, Clarke, Bell, and Paterson (1999) combined two social value scales of “goods” and amenities, and found clean air and wildlife were most socially valuable.

Recent “Quality of Place” Findings

Quality of place refers to the extent a region, city, community, or neighborhood can satisfy an individual’s preferences and values. Although this concept appears relative, a number of place qualities are common among knowledge-based workers and all community members. The availability of amenities is at the center of the quality of place issue.

Richard Florida (of Carnegie Mellon University) is currently the only researcher studying quality of place for high-tech workers, and focuses exclusively on urban settings. He finds that “natural, recreational, and lifestyle *amenities* – [are] absolutely vital in attracting knowledge workers and in supporting leading-edge high technology firms and industries (Florida, 2000; p. 5)”. He further adds, since knowledge-based workers can choose which cities and regions to live and work, the natural and communal environment is very important. Career opportunities and job availability are necessary, yet insufficient, conditions for attracting young knowledge workers (p. 5).

What specific amenities are attractive to these information and high-tech savvy workers? Florida (2001) suggests five important factors. First, he states talent is attracted by *cultural amenities*, rather than recreation or climate. This echoes the importance of social and emotional bonds of place identity and place attachment. Interestingly, he finds the weather in a given area does not overly affect knowledge-based workers’ decisions to locate. Rather, socio-cultural ties to community and community events tend to provide just compensation for knowledge-based workers. This study of rural Minnesotans, however, found no proof for Florida’s urban-based findings related to cultural amenities or climate.

Second, Florida states highly educated and talented people are attracted to energetic and creative places. Increasingly, knowledge-based workers are seeking new adventures, activities, and entertainment. Districts with music, art culture, history, businesses, restaurants, and public spaces provide access to a wide array of lifestyle choices. Specifically, Florida suggests

developing a comprehensive strategy for university districts, including transportation amenities like bike lanes. He also suggests investing in outdoor recreation like trails, waterfront improvement, access to water sports, climbing walls, and sponsoring competitions or races. Sponsored events act as marketing agents to visitors and residents, promoting the amenities available in a given place.

Third, the need to capture the ideas and knowledge of citizens about neighborhood, local, and regional needs is important. Developing ways to increase youth participation in local amenity and economic development agendas is important. These activities will promote ownership of policy decisions, and will help assess the long-term infrastructure needs of the region. The input of local residents is crucial to shaping the future of the region, and the everyday experiences of residents. Similarly, investing in K-12 schools contributes positively to quality of place (Black 1999).

Fourth, encouraging smart growth and sustainable development strategies in economic development is greatly important to regional long-term viability. As Howe and others (1997) found, “A community is more likely to enjoy a robust local economy if it adopts policies or initiatives that preserve its scenic, ecological, or historical assets...[and by] nearly every economic indicator, states with strong environmental policies consistently outperformed those with weak policies (p.12).” These findings are supported by research conducted by MIT, the Bank of America, and the Institute for Southern Studies. Additionally, Florida (2000) suggests working with developers to provide more examples of successful residential and commercial areas with featured amenities (p. 6). Establishing sustainable use, preservation, and revitalization guidelines for natural areas is crucial to amenity uses in the long run.

Lastly, and most importantly, Florida finds *diversity* is highly correlated to talent in a given place. The importance of diversity is crucial to establishing and accessing a knowledge worker base, more so than establishing higher wage rates or high-tech firms. During his study of quality of place in urban settings, Florida (2000) found one-fourth of new business owners in the high-tech industry are foreign born. Intuitively, if diversity is free flowing and open, then a place or region has access to a diverse population of specialized, high-tech workers. These specialized workers can provide training to the local workforce by collaborating with local universities or community colleges. This type of collaborative effort is efficient for developing specific programs and skills needed in the high-tech/knowledge-based industry. Although diversity is highly correlated to high-tech industry workers in urban-based findings, this study of rural Minnesota found little evidence of support for diversity.

Final suggestions by Florida (2000) embrace the idea of integrating amenities and natural assets in all aspects of regional economic development, talent attraction efforts, and marketing efforts (p. 6). He believes quality of place must be a central feature to regional economic development strategies. The current study offers support for these recommendations.

The purpose of the study on high-tech workers and quality of place in rural Minnesota was two fold. First, the study tested recent quality of place findings by Richard Florida's urban-based studies, and compared the findings with rural communities in Minnesota. Secondly, the findings were used to develop applicable economic and community development strategies and policies to retain and attract knowledge-based workers in rural Minnesota. The following section explains methods and results of the rural, northern Minnesota high-tech employee/employer "quality of place" study.

Methods

Location and Sample

Data were collected from a list of high-tech firms in rural Minnesota, as compiled by the Headwaters Regional Development Commission and the Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development. The sample area consisted of thirteen communities within the borders of Minnesota's Economic Development Region 1 (Northwest) and Region 2 (Headwaters), which will be referred to as *northwestern Minnesota* throughout the current study. Only five of eighteen rural communities were represented from outside the northwestern Minnesota region. A point-sampling technique was suggested by Chell (1994) to access specific populations. As a result, twenty high-tech firms were chosen on the basis of rural location, products or services vended, and the likelihood of employing knowledge-based workers. The sample was limited to manufacturing and technical employment in high-technology industries. Responses were solicited through a survey of open- and closed-ended questions. The use of open-ended, qualitative methods is necessary to access deep personal feelings of home and place (Chell 1994). Richard Florida suggested many of the open-ended questions used in the design of survey.

Census 2000 data show the majority of residents in rural northwestern Minnesota communities are White (95.8% in Region 1, and 83.1% in Region 2). Northwestern Minnesota's largest minority group is Native American, with 1.1% in Region 1 and 14.1% in Region 2. Census 2000 data on household income and income per capita will not be available until the summer of 2002. However, the average household income in northwestern Minnesota (\$25,360) was roughly \$5,000 less than the National Average Household Income of \$30,056 and Minnesota's Average Household Income of \$30,909 using 1990 U.S. Census numbers.

Additionally, northwestern Minnesota fell roughly \$4,760 below the National Income per Capita (\$14,420) and Minnesota's Income per Capita (\$14,389), with a 1990 average income of \$9,644 per capita.

Procedures

Survey packets were distributed to targeted high-tech firms in rural Minnesota through in-person or postal deliveries. Prior to survey packet delivery, telephone contacts were made with firm owners and/or human resources representatives. Distribution instructions accompanied the packets; directing human resource representatives and business owners to randomly distribute half of the 30 employee surveys to upper-level management and engineers, and half to entry-level workers. Also, a separate employer survey was designed and distributed to the owner or regional manager of each firm, totaling 20 surveys. A raffle for one hundred dollars (for which employers were not eligible) was employed as an incentive program to increase response rate. This required respondents to fill out a separate raffle card, which was separated from the completed survey upon receipt. Due to the method of distribution (through human resource and business owners), accurate response rates were not available. Open-ended responses were analyzed for content, and synthesized to produce meaningful and generalizable responses. Complete lists of open-ended responses appear in Appendix B.

Results

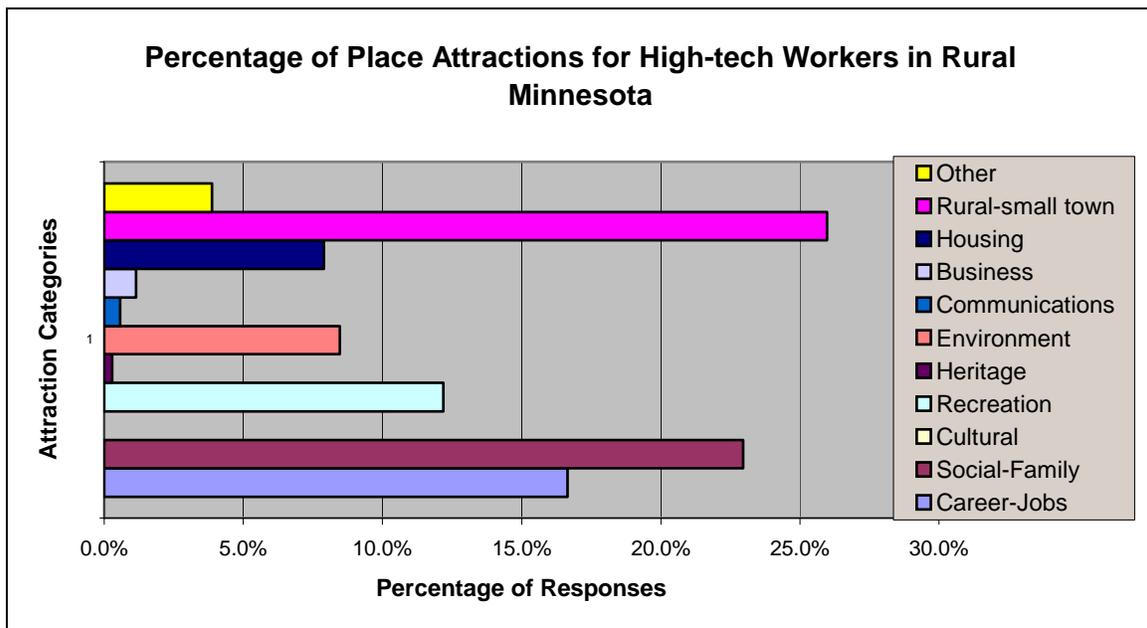
Close-ended Survey Results

Results of the high-tech employee surveys were very similar to employer surveys, allowing for employer results to be included in employee result discussions. Response rates for employee surveys were between 44 – 55%, while 12 of 20 employer surveys (60%) were completed and returned. The employee sample size ($n = 257$) was large enough to allow for confident findings, and to generalize broadly across all high-tech workers in Minnesota. Further, these quality of place results are applicable for designing economic and community development policies and strategies for use in rural Minnesota. Complete employee and employer surveys are included in Appendix C.

Respondents were given a list of categories to choose from when asked the question, "What has most attracted you to living in this area?" Close-ended responses included career/jobs, social/family relationships, cultural amenities, recreational opportunities, historical heritage, environmental quality, high-speed and/or wireless communication access, small business/entrepreneurial opportunities, affordable housing, rural/small town atmosphere, and the

“other” category. Of the 257 completed employee surveys, 70.4% of respondents felt rural/small town atmosphere was important, 62.3% of respondents felt social and family connections were important, and 33.1% of respondents felt recreation was important. In contrast to Florida’s urban findings, cultural amenities did not attract high-tech workers to rural Minnesota. Overall, a weighted calculation of responses suggests rural/small town atmosphere (26.0%), social and family relationships (23.0%), career/job opportunities (16.6%), recreational opportunities (12.2%), environmental quality (8.5%), and affordable housing (7.9%) are important location factors for high-tech workers in rural Minnesota (see Figure 1). These attractions for high-tech employees/employers are important qualities of place that will likely draw highly mobile knowledge-based workers.

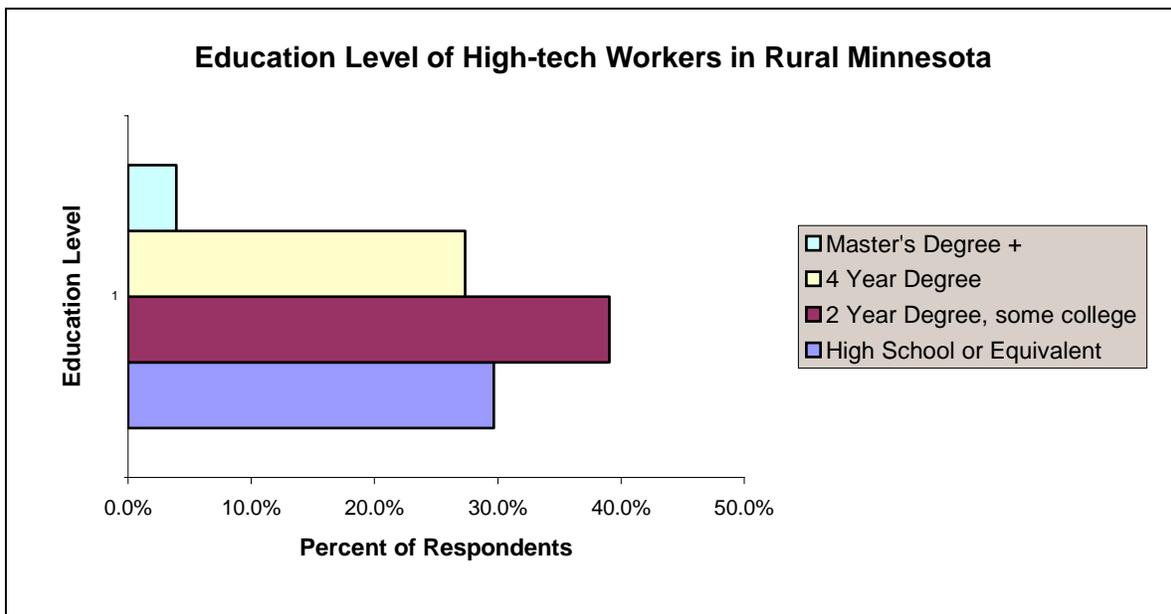
Figure 1. *Percentage of Quality of Place Attractions for High-tech Workers in Rural Minnesota*



Assessing the educational attainment of high-tech employees is necessary to determine how mobile (or knowledge-based) workers in rural Minnesota actually are. The majority of employees (69%) had two years of college or less, while only 10 of 256 respondents (4%) had a master’s degree or above (see Figure 2). Findings of this study suggest affordable housing and rural/small town atmosphere are slightly more important for advanced degree holders than other place attractions. Also, findings suggest social and family relationships, career/job opportunities, rural/small town atmosphere, and recreational opportunities were more important for those with

two years of college or less. Interestingly, cultural amenities and historical heritage were least attractive to all educational groups, which does not support Florida’s urban-based quality of place findings. In general, educational attainment for employers was as expected, with 10 of 12 respondents holding a four-year college degree or higher. Due to relatively low numbers of advanced degree holders in the employee sample, the rural Minnesota economy is not significantly knowledge-based.

Figure 2. Educational Attainment of High-tech Workers in Rural Minnesota

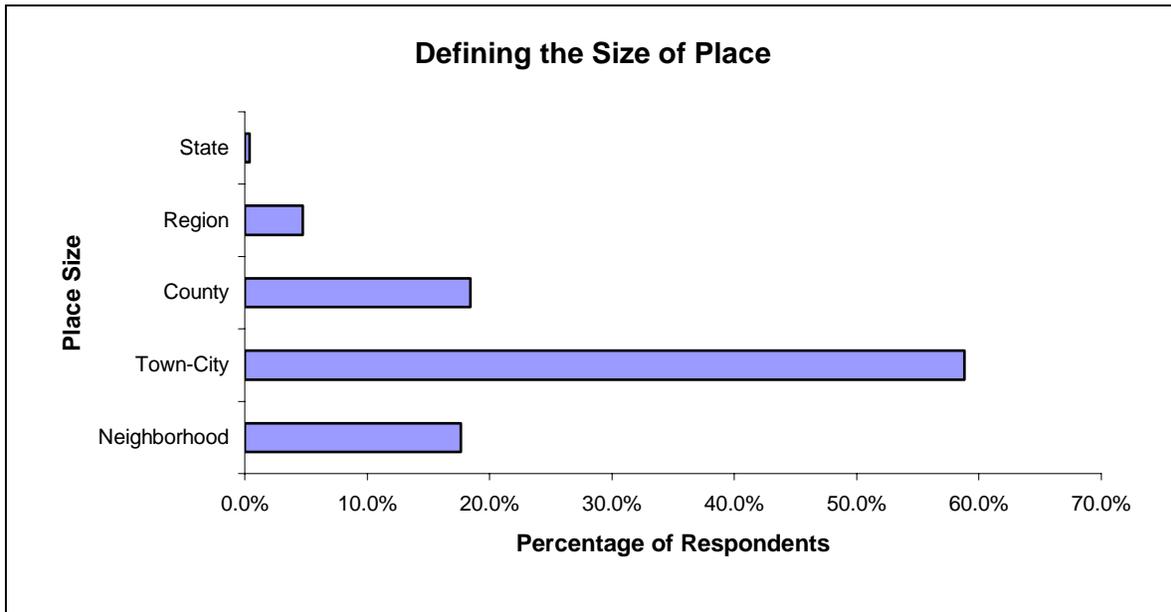


Educational attainment and length of residence were compared to test the mobility of high-tech industry workers rural Minnesota. Although the number of advanced degree holders (Masters degree or higher) was low, 60% percent of all advanced degree holders had a length of residence of four years or less. Due to the low response rate and small sample size, these findings are not generalizable; but they do suggest support for worker mobility and the liberated community model, as described by Mesch and Manor (1998). Similarly, 61% of workers with a four-year college degree have a length of residence in the sample area of 0-14 years (see Appendix A). Although this suggests mobility of the more educated, knowledge-based employees, definite conclusions cannot be drawn without more in-depth interview type responses.

Determining the perceived size of place is also important when discussing the qualities of a place. The majority of respondents (58.8%) defined the size of place in relation to a town or city. Others identified the neighborhood and county as important in determining place size

(17.6% and 18.4% respectively). Very few related to the size of the region or the state when identifying qualities of place (see Figure 3). In general, the perceived size of place relates to the area where respondents conduct the majority of their daily business and activities.

Figure 3. Identifying the Perceived Size of Place for High-tech Workers in Rural Minnesota



Spending one’s childhood or teenage years in the sample area had no effect on how they viewed the size of place they lived, or the importance of place attractions. Of those employees who did not grow up in the sample area, 58% moved from other places in Minnesota, and only 31% actually vacationed in the sample area before moving. No significant gender effects were found in the sample population, with 55.7% of the sample identified as male. The average age of the sample population was 36.6 years old, with the oldest at 63 (two respondents) and the youngest at 17 years old.

Open-ended Results

Respondents suggested a variety of places when asked, “If given any place in the world, where would you most want to live?” Roughly 30 % would stay where they are (in rural and northern Minnesota), while others would choose some place with a warmer climate, mountains, or near an ocean (see Appendix B for all open-ended responses). The main differences cited by respondents between rural Minnesota and highly desired places outside of the region relates directly to climate, scenery, and geography. The most cited, highly desirable places to live were

the states of Colorado, Alaska, Hawaii, Florida, and Arizona. These findings *do not* support Florida's quality of place findings that suggest climate is an insignificant factor in the location decisions for high-tech workers. Natural amenities valued by rural Minnesotans are as follows: close access to wildlife and open spaces, outdoor recreation (all seasons), lakes and forested areas, good hunting and fishing, trail systems, and clean air and water. These findings *do* suggest rural high-tech workers value natural amenities much the same as urban high-tech workers.

Quality of place is also related to structural amenities. Specifically, rural high-tech workers in rural Minnesota highly value having close access to larger city amenities, but without the congestion. In general, most respondents desire close proximity to shopping, restaurants, entertainment, recreational activities, schools, and jobs opportunities. From open-ended responses, the majority of rural respondents favored a 10-mile commute to frequently visited structural amenities (work, school, gas stations, and grocery stores), and a 30-mile commute to non-essential structural amenities (shopping centers, restaurants, entertainment venues, and recreational facilities). Although, the proximity of natural and structural amenities is important for incorporating quality of place in development and planning strategies, many qualities of place are emotional and personal.

The qualities of place most cited by respondents are related to both individual and communal senses of well-being. Specifically, these qualities focus on the safety of the community, the lack of congestion/low stress areas, supportive social and family relationships, the ability to meet and know others, and the peacefulness of surroundings. Affordable housing and the low cost of living in rural Minnesota is also cited by respondents as relieving financial stresses, and thus reducing emotional stresses. These emotional and personal (stress reducer) qualities of place contribute directly to the strengths within a community, and to the quality of place in rural Minnesota.

Respondents were also asked the question "What improvements would make your community a better place to live?" A variety of responses were suggested, which were separated into three categories: retail and business improvements, entertainment and recreation improvements, and government and public service improvements (see Appendix B). The most common responses focus on retail and business activity, like more (or closer) shopping and restaurants, more businesses with competitive prices, more technical jobs, and more high paying jobs. Other responses focus on entertainment and recreation; such as more activities for youth and adults, more family entertainment (movie theaters, video rentals, bowling allies, arcades, live theatres and music), a community center, more recreational opportunities, exercise facilities, and more access to public lands and lakes. Lastly, some responses focus on government and public

services, like improving schools, a convention center, more law enforcement, better road maintenance, better control of growth, better resource management, lower taxes, better (or closer) medical facilities, more parks and trails, and less crime. A handful of responses favor social improvements, like being more welcoming of outsiders and reducing discrimination. This finding offers support for Florida's claims that cultural amenities are important for attracting knowledge-based, high-tech workers. In general, respondents in this study would like more opportunities for careers, shopping, entertainment, and recreation, much the same as urban-based high-tech workers in Florida's studies.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

Two important factors exist when measuring quality of place. First, value measurements are important in determining what qualities of place are important. Second, uncertainty will always exist when measuring social values. The crux of the issue, then, is choosing the most ethical response to scientific uncertainty (Harman et al. 1998). Harman and others suggest viewing the "practical implications of environmental uncertainty and risk in a broader, more humanistic light rather than in consequentialist and mostly economic terms (p. 309)." Accordingly, social structures and environmental settings will offer better information for determining qualities of place.

Quality of place combines all the positive qualities of life into one specific place. Previously studied place-based concepts like place attachment and place identity are limited to personal experiences, which are unique to each community. Quality of place is broader, and demands the use of social relationships, natural amenities, economic potential, and community involvement to create a stable and prosperous environment. Richard Florida's quality of place findings and recommendations do apply to rural settings, and should be considered for improving rural economies. However, this study does not support Florida's findings that suggest high-tech worker location decisions are unaffected by climate; which means emphasizing the qualities of place in rural Minnesota is even more critical for development strategies.

Attracting and retaining a mobile, knowledge-based workforce is increasingly important for rural regions to remain competitive. As a result, entrepreneurs and regional developers must seek to integrate natural and structural amenities, without compromising the emotional and personal qualities of place. This study of high-tech workers in rural Minnesota concludes that economic and community development planners must embrace the idea of quality of place, particularly as the new economy demands larger inputs of high-tech savvy knowledge-based workers.

Quality of place is a spatial concept, and is largely confined to the area where people work and conduct most of their daily activities (ie. neighborhood, town, city, or county). Within the borders of a place, structural amenities, natural amenities, and stress reducing qualities must exist. These three primary elements of quality of place are highly valued by rural and urban communities alike. Investing in these three elements of quality of place is important for sustainable economic and community development. *Structural amenities* like restaurants, stores, careers, entertainment venues, exercise facilities, community centers, and quality schools are important qualities of place. These structural amenities provide a meeting place for social events, as well as employment in rural areas. Clearly, large amounts of capital are required to build or remodel existing structures for this type of amenity. Recommendations favor partnerships and cooperatives to create public structures, and business incentive programs/packages to attract restaurants and retail stores.

High-tech workers and employers in rural Minnesotans also highly value natural amenities. These amenities include wildlife viewing, hunting and fishing, outdoor recreation, clean air and water, recreational trail systems (both motorized and non-motorized), community gardens, sponsored outdoor events/contests, access to public lands and lakes, picnic areas and parks, and natural forested and green spaces. The majority of natural amenities are inherent in rural areas, yet some require capital investment. Capital investments for natural amenities include trail construction, restroom and waste facilities, public accesses to lakes, and constructing wildlife-viewing decking or structures.

Recommendations for enhancing natural amenities include exploring and utilizing all public/private funding sources and land protection options, implementing landscape level planning strategies in regional development, and maintaining inventories of natural amenities (see Appendix D). Further, incorporating ecological design and landscape architecture techniques can preserve the quality of natural amenities when designing structural amenities. These building designs reduce the amount of energy used, while increasing the natural aesthetic qualities of a structure. Landscape architecture improves the flow of local traffic by using all available modes of transportation.

Qualities of place are not limited to amenities however. Stress factors in a given area can positively or negatively affect one's quality of place. Close proximity to family and friends, the helpfulness of neighbors, and a lack of congestion all are stress reducer qualities in a given place. These stress reducer qualities of place are inherent in supportive social and family relationships, and in rural settings with low population densities. Recommendations include creating spaces that foster relationship building, social capital development, and place attachment. Designing

family and socially oriented community centers will foster relationship building in the community. Also, diversity programs and cultural acceptance training can be incorporated into community activities and programs to embrace all cultures. The strategy to achieve quality of place, then, is balancing structural and natural amenities, without reducing the quality of personal experiences that attach people to the specific place.

Regional economic and community developers must seek to market rural Minnesota as a great place to live, rather than solely focusing on capital development. Retaining the current talent pool of high-tech workers will help rural Minnesota stay afloat in the new economy. However, appealing to highly experienced high-tech executives and middle-aged, high-tech professionals from regions across the globe will greatly increase the region's competitiveness. The business experiences of high-tech executives, or middle-aged professionals, can be utilized when designing local university and community college curriculum. The cycle of education and experience will sustain itself within the industry and within a given place, assuming training programs remain competitive and current.

Quality of place captures all economic and non-economic amenities in a specific place that contribute positively to one's quality of life. Rural Minnesotans should envision themselves as stewards of creating and maintaining positive personal experiences through quality of place processes. As a result, economic and community development policies in rural Minnesota should embrace its highly-valued rural setting and small town atmosphere, while fostering personal and cooperative relationship building.

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APPENDIX A

Education and Length of Residence					
Length of Residence	Education				Totals
	High School	2 Years College	4 Year Degree	Master's +	
0 - 4 Years	15 5.9%	17 6.7%	19 7.5%	6 2.4%	57 22.4%
5 - 9 Years	13 5.1%	22 8.7%	14 5.5%	1 0.4%	50 19.7%
10 - 14 Years	7 2.8%	10 3.9%	10 3.9%	1 0.4%	28 11.0%
15 - 19 Years	7 2.8%	10 3.9%	5 2.0%	0 0.0%	22 8.7%
20 - 24 Years	10 3.9%	11 4.3%	7 2.8%	0 0.0%	28 11.0%
25 - 29 Years	6 2.4%	9 3.5%	6 2.4%	0 0.0%	21 8.3%
30 - 35 Years	4 1.6%	6 2.4%	3 1.2%	0 0.0%	13 5.1%
35 + Years	14 5.5%	13 5.1%	6 2.4%	2 0.8%	35 13.8%
Totals	76 29.9%	98 38.6%	70 27.6%	10 3.9%	254 100.0%

APPENDIX B: Open-ended Responses to Employee Surveys

Survey Question #6: If given any place in the world, where would you most want to live?

1. Maine
2. Warm climate
3. Here
4. Here
5. Arizona
6. Here
7. Alaska
8. Colorado
9. Colorado
10. (NOTHING)
11. Arizona
12. Here
13. Small town, Thief River Falls
14. Small town, New England
15. Central Minnesota
16. Here
17. Brainerd
18. Here
19. Nevada
20. Colorado
21. Colorado
22. Here
23. Montana
24. On a lake
25. Australia
26. Any place warm year-round
27. Duluth
28. Florida
29. Central Minnesota
30. Suburbs of Minneapolis/ St. Paul
31. Similar to Brainerd
32. Anywhere NW Minnesota
33. Somewhere warmer
34. Foothills of the Rocky Mountains
35. Twin Cities
36. Somewhere with less winter
37. Colorado
38. Washington state
39. Hibbing
40. Private tropical island
41. Duluth
42. Some place warm
43. Colorado
44. Hawaii
45. Michigan or Wisconsin
46. Colorado
47. Warmer place with more shops
48. Fort Collins, Colorado

Survey Question #6: If given any place in the world, where would you most want to live? (Cont.)

49. (NOTHING)
50. Grand Forks, North Dakota
51. Duluth or Bemidji
52. Brainerd
53. (NOTHING)
54. Somewhere safe for children
55. Williston, North Dakota
56. Australia
57. Georgia or Southern California
58. Minnesota lakes area
59. (NOTHING)
60. Somewhere warmer
61. Houston, Texas
62. Laporte, Minnesota
63. Here
64. Somewhere with a lake and four seasons and low crime
65. Minnesota
66. Near ocean and warm year-round place
67. Here
68. Alaska
69. Alaska
70. Hawaii
71. Brainerd
72. Here, Crookston
73. Alaska
74. South Carolina
75. Big city feel without the big city
76. Central Wisconsin
77. Here
78. Northern Minnesota with mountains
79. Private island
80. Little bigger place
81. Somewhere with less drastic weather
82. Here, Fosston
83. Warmer climate
84. Anywhere warm
85. Bahamas Islands
86. Northern Minnesota
87. Here
88. Fairbanks, Alaska
89. Here, Bemidji
90. Northern California
91. Idaho
92. Alaska
93. No specific location
94. Grand Forks, North Dakota
95. Roseau
96. Somewhere warm with no snow
97. Montana

Survey Question #6: If given any place in the world, where would you most want to live? (Cont.)

98. More metro area with more options
99. Northwest Minnesota
100. In the middle of a 40-acre plot
101. (NOTHING)
102. Florida
103. (NOTHING)
104. Here, Minnesota
105. Bemidji
106. Western North Dakota
107. Here
108. Prescott, Arizona
109. Alaska
110. Here
111. Bemidji (summer), Florida (winter)
112. Northern Minnesota
113. Here
114. (NOTHING)
115. Here
116. Minnesota
117. Aspen, Colorado
118. Northwestern New Mexico
119. Minnesota
120. Phoenix, Arizona
121. Florida
122. Here
123. Here
124. Western Montana
125. Here
126. Here - Baxter, Minnesota
127. St. Cloud, Minnesota
128. Southwestern Minnesota
129. Rocky Mountains
130. Florida
131. Corvallis, Oregon
132. (NOTHING)
133. Somewhere with four seasons
134. Near Rocky Mountains, similar community
135. Fargo or Grand Forks, North Dakota
136. Near Fargo, North Dakota
137. Southern Minnesota
138. Here
139. Here
140. Here, Bemidji
141. Smaller town
142. Paris, France
143. New Zealand
144. Colorado
145. Here
146. Montana

Survey Question #6: If given any place in the world, where would you most want to live? (Cont.)

147. Minnesota lake country
148. Here
149. Southern US
150. Minnesota
151. Nowhere specific
152. Florida
153. Florida/ California
154. (NOTHING)
155. Wyoming
156. Colorado
157. Here
158. Austin, Texas
159. No specific place
160. Hawaii
161. Here, Northern Minnesota
162. California
163. Nowhere specific
164. Crookston, but bigger
165. Twin Cities
166. Wyoming
167. Hawaii
168. Here
169. Somewhere warmer
170. Here
171. Colorado
172. Montana, Colorado, Wyoming
173. Colorado Springs, Colorado
174. Here
175. Here – Bemidji, but more populated
176. Pacific Northwest
177. Duluth/ North Shore
178. Rapid City, South Dakota
179. Alaska
180. No specific place
181. Here
182. Colorado
183. Here
184. Colorado
185. Bismarck, North Dakota
186. Here
187. Hawaii
188. Alaska
189. Mankato, Minnesota
190. Western Montana
191. Alaska
192. Here
193. Alaska
194. Somewhere larger with warmer climate
195. Hawaii

Survey Question #6: If given any place in the world, where would you most want to live? (Cont.)

196. Northeastern Minnesota
197. Here
198. Maine
199. No specific place
200. Thief River Falls or Grand Rapids, Minnesota
201. Minnesota
202. Grand Forks, North Dakota
203. Minnesota
204. Wyoming
205. North Dakota
206. Philippines
207. Ireland
208. No specific place
209. Duluth
210. Here
211. Undecided
212. San Diego, CA – winter, Northern Minnesota – fall
213. Alaska
214. Here
215. Colorado
216. Springfield, IL
217. Maine
218. Midwest
219. No where specific
220. South Dakota, Missouri, Florida
221. No specific place
222. Salzburg, Austria
223. Here
224. Utah, Montana, Wyoming
225. Northern Minnesota
226. Colorado
227. Minnesota
228. Here
229. Arizona
230. Oregon
231. Northern Minnesota
232. Here
233. Barnesville, MN
234. Someplace warmer during the winter
235. Warmer place
236. Montana
237. Here
238. Austin, TX
239. Detroit Lakes, MN
240. Some place warmer
241. Mandan, North Dakota
242. Colorado
243. (NOTHING)
244. Japan

Survey Question #6: If given any place in the world, where would you most want to live? (Cont.)

- 245. Upper Midwest
- 246. Here
- 247. Here, Thief River Falls
- 248. (NOTHING)
- 249. Colorado
- 250. Here
- 251. Flathead Lake in Polson, Montana
- 252. Somewhere warmer
- 253. Bemidji, MN
- 254. Closer to Fargo, North Dakota
- 255. Foothills of the mountains
- 256. Florida
- 257. Bozeman, MT

APPENDIX B (Cont.)

Question #8: What are the main differences between the places would like to live, and the place you currently live?

1. Historical, Cultural opportunities, social events, theatre, music, close to large cities, employment opps.
2. Weather, more work options
3. NA
4. Cold temps here
5. Warmer climate, beautiful landscape, less bugs, more job opps (THERE)
6. NA
7. People, more open spaces (THERE)
8. Mountains, climate, people and attitudes, recreational opps
9. Mountains, weather, people, activities
10. (NOTHING)
11. Climate, historical value, friendly people, urban environment, fun activities
12. NA
13. Mountains, lakes
14. Mountains
15. Close to large metro area, 4 year college, large shopping centers, longer growing season
16. NA
17. Close to lakes, hills, close to Twin Cities
18. Weather
19. Warm, dry climate
20. Cost of housing, population growth, job opps.
21. Scenery, warmer climate
22. Wooded areas
23. Scenery, family in MN
24. A lake
25. Environment
26. Winter
27. Lakes, trees, size of city and opportunities
28. Weather
29. Lakes, hills, forests
30. More stuff to do
31. Access to big city, variety of attractions, shopping, child play centers
32. (NOTHING)
33. Weather
34. Access to mountains
35. Hunting and fishing better
36. Weather
37. Mountains
38. Family, scenery, mountains
39. Family and nice place
40. Weather
41. Cost of living, bigger, close to North Shore (THERE)
42. Weather

Question #8: What are the main differences between the places would like to live, and the place you currently live? (Cont.)

43. Scenic
44. Climate
45. Hills, trees, trails
46. Less insects, warmer climate, higher cost of living (THERE)
47. Weather
48. Sunsets are awesome
49. (NOTHING)
50. Restaurants, movie theatre, shopping
51. Long cold winters
52. Long drive to anything (HERE)
53. (NOTHING)
54. Needs more entertainment (bowling, theatre, McDonald's, Target)
55. NW Minnesota has more secure employment and manufacturing, N. Dakota dependent on ranching and oil
56. Climate
57. Climate, ocean, sunshine
58. Regional shopping area (closer than 50 miles)
59. Entertainment, shopping, choice of employment
60. Too cold here
61. Diverse culture, historical attractions, large city, more activity
62. Would like to live with no snow (Philippines)
63. (NOTHING)
64. Lake
65. Would like a larger community, more activities
66. Cold winters – less people, warm year-round – more people/ crowded
67. (NOTHING)
68. Mountains, access to large game and salt water fishing
69. Clean air, open spaces, mountains, hunting, fishing
70. Ocean, mountains, weather
71. Many lakes close by, close to shopping centers in the Twin Cities
72. Family
73. Ruggedness (THERE), developed areas (HERE)
74. No snow
75. Warmer weather, beaches, good jobs
76. Educational progress in slow, a little too remote here
77. Would like less biting bugs, warmer weather, mountains
78. Very flat, no trees, not a lot of snow (HERE)
79. (NOTHING)
80. Friendly people, better jobs, more activities, warmer climate, more people to get to know (THERE)
81. Temperature
82. (NOTHING)
83. No snow, no ice, no sleet, would like palm trees and beaches and oceans
84. Weather
85. Climate
86. Rural small town atmosphere (HERE)
87. Warmer climate
88. Cost of living, winter temperatures, wildlife, landscape

Question #8: What are the main differences between the places you would like to live, and the place you currently live? (Cont.)

89. Would like to live on a lake
90. Climate, more to offer
91. Mountains, less people, more wilderness (THERE)
92. Higher cost of living, good hunting, secludedness (THERE)
93. Need for more educational and cultural experiences for children
94. Better shopping, more opps, better access to larger cities
95. (NOTHING)
96. Temperature
97. Mountains, more to do there
98. More options for eating and shopping
99. (NOTHING)
100. Would like to be “No where near a reservation, no where near a casino – more trouble than they are worth...How do you help those who hate you? They have no respect for the city of Bemidji”.
101. (NOTHING)
102. Weather
103. (NOTHING)
104. (NOTHING)
105. No lake, less people, no mall (HERE)
106. Milder winters and less flat lands (THERE)
107. NA
108. Warmer climate
109. Hunting and fishing opps are greater, mountains (THERE)
110. NA
111. Warmer winters
112. NA
113. NA
114. (NOTHING)
115. Size, shopping
116. Would like a warmer area
117. More snow, warmer winters, higher elevation
118. Terrain, weather, culture, mountains
119. Would like a slightly larger town
120. Climate, winters
121. Weather
122. Would like closer access to kid activities
123. (NOTHING)
124. Flat here, mountains there
125. NA
126. NA
127. Larger, career/ job opps, more things to do (THERE)
128. Closer to large city, lakes, diversity of people
129. Better hunting and fishing
130. Weather, people, jobs
131. Mountains close by – 1 hour, ocean close by – 1 hour
132. Would like close access to big city/ mountains/ desert/ water, no mosquitoes, world-class education system, unlimited recreation opps, good roads, close access to world-class medical facilities

Question #8: What are the main differences between the places you would like to live, and the place you currently live? (Cont.)

133. Warmer winters
134. Mountains
135. Business opps, shopping, recreational opps, schools, more opps for children
136. More opps for advancement, more choices for occupations
137. Colder, more isolated from cultural and recreational centers (HERE)
138. NA
139. Safer here
140. NA
141. More Internet access needed
142. Culture, entertainment, population
143. Environmental and community attitudes, Northern Minnesotans are survivor-oriented – not proactively building a healthier biosphere, lack of stewardship lifestyles
144. Work, weather, people
145. Would like more shopping opps, more recreational opps
146. Trees, mountains, streams
147. Lakes are not very close
148. (NOTHING)
149. Colder climate (HERE)
150. NA
151. Security
152. Cold winters
153. Weather
154. (NOTHING)
155. Mountains, wildlife
156. Mountains
157. NA
158. Availability of technically related jobs and post-graduate education, warmer climate (THERE)
159. Atmosphere
160. Climate
161. NA
162. Housing costs, environment, entertainment, number of people, ocean, mountains, deserts
163. Would like greater selection of restaurants and cultural events
164. More shopping, better school system
165. Faster moving
166. Mountains, lakes
167. Waterfalls, unique flowers, year-round weather, volcanoes
168. NA
169. Weather
170. NA
171. Climate, mountains, humidity is less (THERE)
172. Terrain, mountains, proximity to friends and family
173. Mountains, comfortable temperature year-round, more populated
174. NA
175. More shopping, more job opps, better housing (THERE)
176. Mountains, ocean, less conservative religiously and politically
177. Better access to lakes and other outdoor recreation

Question #8: What are the main differences between the places would like to live, and the place you currently live? (Cont.)

178. Mountains, land
179. Less people/ neighbors, more opportunities (THERE)
180. Would like warmer weather, different culture, more opps for children
181. NA
182. Mountains, trees, water
183. Would like mountains, fewer mosquitoes
184. Mountains, different hunting, forests
185. More shopping, easier access to larger cities, walking paths (THERE)
186. NA
187. Climate, different sports fishing, geography, foods, culture
188. Variety of big game hunting
189. Closer to the Twin Cities, warmer climate, rolling landscape
190. Mountains, wildlife/ wilderness
191. Mountains
192. NA
193. Mountains, ocean, wilderness
194. More recreation and entertainment, better shopping, better health care, variety
195. Warm, green all the time, friendliness
196. Hills, recreational opps, lake, instead of agricultural land
197. NA
198. No work (HERE)
199. Would like mountains, more recreational opps
200. Mostly the same
201. NA
202. More opps of children to achieve their goals, more stores/ restaurants, lower prices
203. NA
204. More wildlife and open spaces
205. More hills (THERE)
206. (NOTHING)
207. Pace of life, cultural activities, history (THERE)
208. Too many people, too much crime (HERE)
209. Social activities
210. NA
211. NA
212. Would like something totally different
213. Quiet and peaceful
214. NA
215. Mountains, moderate weather, more ski resorts
216. Far from shopping and cultural events (HERE), family (THERE)
217. Population, things to do, weather
218. Climate, more variety in stores/ shopping/ restaurants, access to a universities with advanced degrees
219. Would like more people, warmer winters, more job opps, more lakes, forests, scenery, more recreation available
220. Children there
221. NA
222. Woods
223. Lack of nearby lake and river recreational area

Question #8: What are the main differences between the places would like to live, and the place you currently live? (Cont.)

- 224. Climate
- 225. Don't like the tourists (HERE), like the secluded atmosphere (THERE)
- 226. Would like improved highway system, no traffic
- 227. Mountains, scenery, recreation
- 228. NA
- 229. Would like less poverty, more high-tech jobs
- 230. Weather conditions/ extremes
- 231. Winters
- 232. NA
- 233. NA
- 234. Close to Fargo and Detroit Lakes
- 235. Too cold here
- 236. Climate
- 237. NA
- 238. More job opps, colleges, stores, recreational opps, weather (THERE)
- 239. Landscape, closer recreation activities, more relaxed
- 240. Weather
- 241. Family/ hometown (THERE)
- 242. Scenery, mountains, recreation, wages, opportunities
- 243. (NOTHING)
- 244. Culture, security, honesty
- 245. Would like more recreational areas, park, lakes
- 246. NA
- 247. NA
- 248. (NOTHING)
- 249. Weather
- 250. NA
- 251. No contrast
- 252. Warmer weather
- 253. Educational opps, family, friends, more jobs (THERE)
- 254. Closer to a larger city with rolling hills
- 255. Mountains
- 256. Climate
- 257. Mountains, skiing, hunting/ fishing, camping

APPENDIX B (Cont.)

Survey Question # 9: What is special about the place you currently live and work, compared to other places in general?

1. Quiet, safe, close to family
2. Less crime, less traffic, the people, summer weather
3. Small town, good schools, good work, country home
4. Friendly people, less crime, lots of work opps, shopping is good, slower moving traffic
5. Family close by, smaller community and work place, no traffic jams
6. Grew up here, lots of family/friends, close to job & shopping
7. (NOTHING)
8. Salary, co-workers, atmosphere, distance from family members
9. Small town with lots of old money, distance from family and friends
10. (NOTHING)
11. Family ties, farming communities, clean atmosphere, low crime
12. Secure, low crime, cost of living, strong family ties, outdoor recreation
13. Digi-Key Corp., rural area, good place to raise kids, short commute to work from country
14. Nicer friendly people, safety, simple living, wide open spaces
15. Quiet/ slow pace, good working conditions, affordable housing
16. Small town, good traffic flow, friendly people, quiet
17. Small town, good school, close to work
18. Slower paced
19. Education system, low crime rate, friendly people
20. Smaller community, smaller class sizes, lower crime rates, cost of living
21. Small town, country setting, close to lakes, near family
22. Safety for children, freedom to enjoy hobbies, access to country for recreation, peaceful
23. Small friendly community, good salary, affordable housing schools
24. I own it
25. Social family relationships, small town atmosphere, cost of living, availability of work.
26. Good job, family, small town, shopping less than 50 miles away
27. Small town atmosphere, country living
28. Good company/ co-workers, great neighbors
29. Career is here, family nearby
30. Small town atmosphere, family here
31. Professional and personable work, nice people, education emphasis, lack of violence
32. Small more intimate environment, close to outdoors still in city, nice hard working people, 4 seasons
33. Larger city with small town atmosphere, affordable housing, friendly people
34. Not too big or small population-wise
35. No traffic, less populated
36. Close to family, easy working relationship with small new business
37. Quiet neighborhood, friendly people, family, good place to raise a family
38. Nice people, good job
39. People and pay
40. Know people on first-name basis, helpful neighbors
41. Cost of living, schools, scenery, people

Survey Question # 9: What is special about the place you currently live and work, compared to other places in general? (Cont.)

42. Near family
43. Rural atmosphere, outdoor activities, secure, cost of living
44. Low crime rate, slow pace of life, hunting, outdoor activities
45. Good community to raise children, family
46. Husbands hometown, family here, small town community, rural but not isolated
47. Friendly community, good place to raise kids, close to work
48. Close to family and friends, many place to hunt and fish, low crime
49. (NOTHING)
50. Safe, low crime, education for children, great shopping nearby
51. Live next to river, no close neighbors, (work) department non-threatening and breeds learning, Learning environment
52. Wilderness close by, Outdoor recreational activities
53. (NOTHING)
54. Feel safe here, know lots of people in community, many activities for children, secure job
55. Friendly work environment, easy access to local commerce (TRF), small town with close access to Grand Forks, safe for children
56. Remote, access to fishing and hunting, participation in small town activities, low housing costs
57. Clean air, friendly people, safe
58. Less congestion, quality of schools, lakes close by
59. Quality of schools system, athletic programs
60. Land, friends
61. Nice to live in country, job is better compared to other jobs
62. Friends, neighbors with respect and understanding, good work/ pay
63. (NOTHING)
64. Cooler than Texas, nice employers, less crime, four seasons
65. (NOTHING)
66. Fishing and hunting opps, close to work, no traffic jams on weekdays, full-time work and still have time for family
67. (NOTHING)
68. Small community, rural home with acreage, family owned businesses – not major corporations, easy access to many lakes and woods
69. Live on a lake
70. Minor traffic, crime rate is low, social connections, outdoor activities
71. Sense of security, people are proud of their city and employer, many opps to keep fit – volleyball and basketball leagues, etc., friendly people
72. Small community, helpful neighbors, family here, lots of help with kids, vehicles, yard, four seasons
73. Friendliness of people, knowing neighbors, no pushiness, sense of safety
74. (NOTHING)
75. People accepting others, low crime, beautiful snowfalls in winter, beautiful summers, close to stuff
76. Great snowmobiling, good business opps, hunting, target shooting, hiking, safe, low crime
77. Friendly people, low crime rate, few people, cleaner air
78. Excellent school facilities, small town, friendly community
79. Live by a lake, owning our home, quiet, family here

Survey Question # 9: What is special about the place you currently live and work, compared to other places in general? (Cont.)

80. Family here, small area, good job environment, knowing everyone
81. Friends and family, church family, people at work, caring people
82. Small community, friendly people, family
83. Grew up here, excellent schools, family, I love my job
84. People, atmosphere, close to work, churches
85. Friendly people, low crime, good schools, clean environment
86. Slower pace, no traffic, friendly people, clean air
87. Low crime
88. Co-workers, after work activities, friends/ neighbors, small town atmosphere
89. On a farm – quiet and secluded, no worries of crime or threats, close to family
90. Living on a lake, scenery here, Bemidji has more to offer than other Northern towns, school system is good
91. Low crime, friendly people, fresh air, lots of work available
92. Good people, low cost of living, good work ethic, low crime rate
93. Low crime, lake we live on is clean, good relationship with employer
94. Good place for kids, safe, children like to fish and hunt, friendly people
95. Quiet, safe, know most everyone
96. Spring, fall, winter, summer
97. Friendly people, safe, four seasons, school
98. Everyone knows you and cares, no traffic, my husband lives here
99. Small, know everyone, friendly atmosphere, pay
100. No next door neighbor, work: clean, nice atmosphere, modern; home: trees, field, wildlife
101. (NOTHING)
102. Bemidji is where my parents are and where the kids' dad lives (divorced), small town atmosphere, good people
103. (NOTHING)
104. Family, friends, current job, community
105. Small town atmosphere, small school system for children, environmentally friendly, clean
106. Family owned businesses, good people to work for
107. Small town atmosphere, great educational system, great environment to raise children, security
108. Small town life, recreational opps literally out my back door, no light pollution, green
109. Family close, good schools, small community, descent pay
110. On a lake, rural, within 30 minutes of shopping
111. Low cost of living, lake region, good fishing, good hunting
112. Generally people are friendly, more country attitude, people are happier, less traffic
113. Quality of life, easy going, beauty of area, lakes, woods, nice size town with plenty of shopping and entertainment
114. Dislike big cities, wilderness is close, like recreational activities
115. Rural, small town
116. No earthquakes, no volcanoes, seasons, nice people
117. Grew up here, long winters, know everyone, small company
118. Quiet, winter recreation – snow, summer recreation – 10,000 lakes, peaceful commutes
119. Lakes, friendly people, low crime

Survey Question # 9: What is special about the place you currently live and work, compared to other places in general? (Cont.)

120. Excellent recreational activities for summer and winter, beauty of seasons, family near by, small town atmosphere
121. Nice weather, lots of work, nice people
122. State of the art technology available, no traffic
123. Atmosphere
124. Good work atmosphere, people are friendly
125. Small town living, slower pace of life, houses are not 50 feet apart
126. Great outdoor beauty and recreation, conservative and family friendly, close to relatives
127. Close to family, good paying jobs, the closeness of the community, safety
128. Low crime, little pollution, affordable housing, good wages compared to cost of living
129. Quiet, low crime
130. Co-workers, traffic, friendly people
131. Friendly/ helpful people, relaxed lifestyle, safe to raise kids, quiet
132. Low crime, handshake business deals
133. Friendly atmosphere, family and friends, four seasons, country life
134. Location of family, small town atmosphere, quality education for children, recreational opps
135. Less traffic, less crime, friendly people
136. Close community, know almost everyone
137. Good job here, nothing
138. Small town atmosphere, know everyone
139. Peace and serenity, less traffic, less pollution, lakes, trees, wilderness
140. Quick access to hunting/ fishing, small community, four seasons, friendly people
141. Less crowded, easy to commute, wilderness, wildlife, forested backyards
142. More laid back lifestyle, small town atmosphere, sense of community
143. Watersheds, clean air, family values emphasis, friendly hard-working people
144. Summer, fall, rural, people and family
145. Employment opps, lake, snowmobiling opps, knowing a wide array of people
146. Small town with big town atmosphere
147. Small town living close to larger cities – Grand Forks or Fargo
148. Family and friends, location, hunting, no violence
149. Smaller community, career opps, recreation
150. Short commutes, peaceful and quiet
151. Small town, cheap rent, fair hunting, fair paying job
152. Good hunting and fishing, OK pay at work
153. Nice people in general, less people, less traffic, changing climates
154. Fishing, hunting, fresh air
155. Cleaner air, nicer people, family
156. Friendly people, small town, smaller company with really good pay, snow
157. Smaller town, less people, friendly people, friends
158. Quantity/ quality of area lakes, recreational opps, wildlife populations, tourist attraction
159. Family, friends, affordable, lack of crime
160. Family, grew up here
161. Hometown hospitality, safe community, better school system, father worked at same company

Survey Question # 9: What is special about the place you currently live and work, compared to other places in general? (Cont.)

162. Privacy at home in country, wildlife, good benefits, good co-workers
163. Safety, cost of living is very reasonable, relaxed workplace/ high moral
164. Neighborhood, walking/ bike riding distance to things, know each other
165. Small community, know everyone, friendly community, private
166. On a lake, country living, no congestion, slower pace
167. People are polite and kind, know all neighbors and co-workers, all you need within 10 miles, good land for farming
168. Smaller town, friendly people, less people, friends here
169. More conveniences
170. Affordable, low crime, friendly neighbors, outdoor recreational opps
171. Lakes and woods, snow in winter, less population, no smog, less pollution
172. People are good natured/ sense of humor, competitive wages, hometown, friends/ family
173. Friends and family, availability of outdoor recreation, hometown
174. Small town atmosphere, everybody knows everyone
175. Outdoor recreation, beautiful lakes, don't have to drive far to get a rest
176. No traffic, clean air, low cost housing, severe winters
177. Small town atmosphere, industrial area, many jobs
178. Decent pay, flexible with my life style, peaceful, mostly friendly people
179. Good job, nice here
180. Peaceful, good school system, fresh air, close to family
181. Friendly co-workers, short commutes, get to know neighbors
182. Quiet living
183. Low cost of living, employment markets needs people, low crime rate, nicest people
184. Family, hunting/ fishing, snow, business opps
185. On the lake, good salary, easy access to water and winter sports, small company
186. Family, friends
187. Short commutes, outdoor activities
188. Family, change in seasons, not fast paced, promotions within company
189. Life-long home, almost all the family in this area
190. Pine trees, assorted wildlife, loneliness, peace and quiet
191. Close to family, rural setting
192. Peacefulness, beauty, serene, friendly people
193. Farm, wildlife, wilderness, weather
194. Safe place to live, close to area lakes
195. Work ethic, environmental cleanliness, fishing, wildlife
196. Good jobs – Polaris, lots of ATV/ snowmobiling areas, friendly people, low crime
197. No rush hour traffic, close proximity to outdoors/ wildlife areas, close to lakes, property ownership w/o high metro prices
198. Pay is OK, good upper-management, nice bonus in fall helps prepare for winter
199. Very stable employment, personable friends and neighbors, lots of opportunities for extra-curricular activities, no traffic jams
200. Family, friends, small city type feel
201. Lots of jobs, friendly folks, country living, wide open space
202. Small town, know most of the people, wildlife, outdoor recreation
203. Small town, less crime, affordable, know neighbors, helpful neighbors
204. People, size of town, recreation, family
205. Close to work, like country living, peaceful

Survey Question # 9: What is special about the place you currently live and work, compared to other places in general? (Cont.)

206. Nice neighborhood, people
207. Good job, 5 minute commute, slower pace of life
208. Type of work and opps at work
209. Trees, work for a growing company/ great benefits, outdoor activities year-round
210. Wide open spaces, cleaner air, better environment for home schooling, more devoted Christian community
211. Large metropolitan area amenities, seasonal changes, airports with easy non-stop access to the rest of the country and world
212. Grouse hunting, spring, fall, grouse hunting
213. (NOTHING)
214. Quiet, rural with good wages, nice people
215. Close to family – 3 hours away, rural environment – easy going, no traffic, can ride bike to work on a trail, don't have to lack vehicle
216. Close knit community, trusting people/ more helpful, less traffic, less commercialized
217. People, hours of work, my boss, location
218. Safe, quiet neighborhood, extremely affordable housing, friendly, down-to-earth people
219. Very friendly people, clean environment, very safe community, minimal traffic commuting to work and other places
220. Friends
221. Hometown atmosphere, friendly people, lots of outdoor activities, low crime rate
222. Not so many bills, not so busy, more organized/ respectful elsewhere
223. Easy to commute/ no traffic, opportunity for community involvement, variety of industry, rural city with larger cities near by
224. Friendly people, quiet country life, family, low crime rate
225. Small town atmosphere, lakes, recreation, close to major city for medical/ shopping
226. Clean neighborhood, access to larger towns – 2 hour drive, strong/ caring company
227. Close to family/ friends, close to hometown, rural environment, good recreational opps
228. Best rural opportunity for work and life, ever
229. Affordability of lake property, acreage is inexpensive, low traffic, clean air
230. Small town atmosphere, great facilities for children, outdoor activities/ fishing
231. Friendly neighbors, rental businesses are useful, clean machine shop, very good leadership,
232. Better sense of community
233. Small town environment
234. Friends, co-workers are very friendly, family
235. Knowing neighbors, honest/ helpful people, safety, security, friendships
236. Own our home, 5 miles from work, good friends
237. Hunting, fishing, people, can make a good living, ten minutes to work
238. Job pays higher/ overtime availability, education – less students get more attention, crime not very high
239. Not crowded, clean environment, close to work, good schools
240. Safer, small town friendliness, quiet and easy access to everything
241. Close knit work group and community life, lack of social gathering spots, lack of quality in social spots, small town atmosphere
242. Family, good place to work, low crime, good place to raise kids
243. Safe neighborhood, short commutes, low traffic and crowds

Survey Question # 9: What is special about the place you currently live and work, compared to other places in general? (Cont.)

- 244. Very professional, work indoors, prior experience helpful, working with 10-20 others
- 245. Friendly small town neighborhood, stores know you
- 246. Friendly, less crowded, four seasons
- 247. Small town atmosphere, friends and family close
- 248. (NOTHING)
- 249. Minimal traffic, short commutes, know lots of people
- 250. Near family, friends, like co-workers, rural area
- 251. (NOTHING)
- 252. (NOTHING)
- 253. Know most everyone, friends
- 254. People help each other, safety, smaller schools, lower cost of living
- 255. Low population density, freedom, ability to ride dirt bike to work
- 256. Small town, security, small crew at work, affordable housing
- 257. Less traffic, short commutes, low crime

APPENDIX B (Cont.)

Question #10: What are some strengths of the place you live that positively affect your “quality of life”?

1. Daycare, church, family, safety
2. Friends, environment, less crowded, proximity to services
3. Parents live close, low crime, like job
4. Plentiful jobs, good wages, less crime, good medical facilities
5. Family helps out, less crime, clean air, small workplace
6. Wide open spaces, wildlife, strong religious community, safe community
7. Family, friends
8. Small town atmosphere, salary, children/ education, close to work
9. Good job opportunities, save on gas
10. (NOTHING)
11. Low crime, strong Christian community, good job benefits, no polluting factories
12. Small town environment, safe for kids, no traffic, less people, more independence
13. Friendly people, no traffic
14. Clean environment, self sufficient, children/safety, meeting people
15. Privacy, good jobs, clean community, active church
16. Not stressful, quiet, fresh air
17. Good job, basic stores, good food/restaurants, many community groups
18. Short driving distances to work and daycare
19. School system, low commuting miles, low crime rate
20. Good neighbors, friendly people, schools encourage parental involvement, slower development/population growth, open areas
21. Small town, country setting, near family, lakes
22. Small town atmosphere, involvement in school/community events easy,
23. Friendly people, good working environment, clean air, less crime
24. Small town
25. Family, career, environment, safety
26. Job, family, friends
27. Small town atmosphere, neighbors, country living
28. Clean environment, less traffic
29. Small town, recreational opps, farm economy, good schools and health care
30. Close to friends and family, convenience
31. Short commute to work. Lack of stress, family nearby
32. Less people, clean air/water, close to recreation areas, many trees and grass
33. Employment opps, safe and quiet neighborhood, clean environment
34. Open spaces, adequate services, police and fire dept.
35. Nature, land, fresh air
36. Peaceful rural area, close to school and work, etc.
37. Quiet neighborhood, friendly people, family, good place to raise a family
38. Nice people, churches
39. Farming, jobs, tourist attractions
40. Know people on first-name basis, helpful neighbors
41. Great school district, pretty little town, fishing
42. Availability of things, safety
43. Outdoor activities, low crime, education quality, friendly atmosphere
44. Easy commute to work, friendly small town, safety, family close by
45. Little/ low school violence

Question #10: What are some strengths of the place you live that positively affect your “quality of life”? (Cont.)

46. Good pay and benefits, close to town, recreational activities
47. Know people in the community, safe town, close to home
48. Close to family friends and work, wide variety of activities outdoor, low crime
49. (NOTHING)
50. Housing cost, friendly people, great job, close to everything
51. Christian/Canadian/American community, scenic year-round, educational opps, Marvin’s benefit package
52. Friendships, spiritual life
53. (NOTHING)
54. Salaries and working hours are good, lake close by, Children are happy in school
55. Tight-knit community, people work and play together, easy to get around, , good work ethic here
56. Berry and mushroom picking, fishing and snowmobiling on lake, watching sports – hockey, easy access to work
57. Family, career
58. People are close, but not too close
59. Less crime, less drug activity in school system, good fishing and hunting
60. Family
61. Small town quality, easier for people to help each other, know everyone
62. Daily routine, daily work, doing the best work I can
63. (NOTHING)
64. Smaller towns are more personal, less crime, better to raise children, good fishing
65. (NOTHING)
66. Away from city life rush, people friendly here, close to schools and work and shopping, outdoors environment – trees/ woods
67. (NOTHING)
68. Farm living, space for children to grow, less crime, less access to drugs, less gang activity, more access to outdoor activities and school sports
69. Live on a lake
70. Country living, friends, trust others, four seasons
71. Good stable employment, city does its best to keep roads plowed, clean air, good grocery stores/ competitive prices
72. Friendly people, shopping, job opps, safe community
73. Families within 30 mile radius, job opps in manufacturing
74. (NOTHING)
75. Family, people, good paying job, safety for children, good education
76. Safe environment, recreation, good jobs
77. Less crime, slower pace, stronger values
78. No commute or traffic, friendly community
79. Family, small community, school close by, knowing everyone
80. Less crime, less violence, quieter environment, choice of living areas
81. Considerate and compassionate people
82. Church, schools, stores
83. Great education, know most people in the town, lots of friends, love my job
84. (NOTHING)
85. Privacy, wildlife, hunting and fishing
86. Slower pace, no traffic, clean air, friendly people
87. Quiet, peaceful

Question #10: What are some strengths of the place you live that positively affect your “quality of life”? (Cont.)

88. Interacting with others, being active in the community
89. Peaceful and relaxing and low stress, on the farm I can get my snowmobile and go
90. Clean environment, employment is available, hospital and college close by, some culture available
91. Friendly neighborhood, good schools, fresh air, outdoor recreations
92. Good hunting. snowmobiling, low crime rate, good honest people
93. Lake living, super employment, family near by
94. Helpful people, Christian community, healthy pace of life (not fast), safe area
95. Strong school system, stable job
96. Christian community, good people, recreation, good schooling
97. Country living – no close neighbors, safe, less crime, school
98. (NOTHING)
99. Fire department, know almost everybody, close to work, great place to raise a family
100. Hospital, clinic in town, good opps for both rural and city living, very good job, airport
101. (NOTHING)
102. Great friends and family, good job for this area, good school, safe communities
103. (NOTHING)
104. My job, family near by, small town, my freedom
105. Friendly, close-knit community
106. Good place to raise children
107. School system, small town government, employment opps are growing, network of people
108. Small town life, recreational opps outside my back door, no light pollution, green
109. Good hospital and clinic care, no rush hour traffic, friendly people in general, good school for children
110. Schools, health care, people
111. Minimal distance to work and pleasure activities, good schools and activities at the college and community, most people are nice
112. Family, friends, activities (indoor/ outdoor), schools
113. Beauty of area, nice size town with plenty of shopping and entertainment, friendly people
114. Wilderness is close, water
115. Peaceful, quiet, trees, lakes, no traffic
116. Weather is always changing
117. Short distance to work, everyone says “hi” or “good morning”
118. Peaceful, safe, scenery, trees, wildlife, recreation throughout the year
119. Low crime, scenic environment
120. Clean air/ water, excellent recreational activities, excellent outdoor activities, many lakes
121. (NOTHING)
122. School systems, less stress in rural area, family life is important in community
123. Small town, know almost everyone
124. Low crime rate, close community
125. Everyone is not in a rush, people seem happier
126. Low crime, good schools, strong growth and economic development
127. (NOTHING)
128. Strong church background, good people

Question #10: What are some strengths of the place you live that positively affect your “quality of life”? (Cont.)

129. Less traffic, most people know each other
130. Smaller community
131. Easy commute, no traffic jams, safe/ clean environment, controlled growth of communities
132. Acceptance of RV's, small town environment
133. Fresh air, clean atmosphere, safety, friendly people
134. Solid church, family close, quality education, quality health care
135. Less traffic, less crime
136. Family, close to friends, safe feeling
137. Job, low housing costs, good public schools, fairly low crime rate
138. Close to work, country living with access to city for children, great education for kids
139. Lakes, trees, wildlife, cold winter nights by the fire
140. Good neighbor, clean air, clean water, woods
141. Access to necessities, services available, college in town, close to family
142. Quiet, friends, excellent job
143. Natural wonders, four seasons, Mississippi watershed/ fountainhead, average crime profile compared to nation
144. Peaceful commutes, friends in area, family
145. Fishing, hunting, small communities, career opps
146. Family, new friends
147. New high school, music and sports at school, several churches, close to larger cities
148. Community efforts, sports, school, honest people
149. Family, secure job
150. Family, friends, work and home
151. Family, friends, wife, waiting for my child to be born
152. (NOTHING)
153. Less people, strong Christian heritage, relatives, strong/ caring schools
154. (NOTHING)
155. Co-workers, family
156. Slower pace, clean air and water, friendly people
157. Raising kids
158. Friendly people, natural beauty of environment, easy commutes, less crime
159. Snowmobiling, fishing, golfing, forestry
160. Slower lifestyle, know you neighbors
161. Safety, home, great place to raise children, good job
162. In touch with nature, small town, learn to appreciate what God created, safer
163. Short commutes, reasonable cost of living/ more disposable income, low crime = low stress, close proximity to family – greater sense of home
164. Most people are friendly, friendly neighborhood
165. Family, ATV riding trails, friendly co-workers, good working environment
166. Beauty, quiet, simplicity
167. Schools, small class sizes, safety, know everyone
168. Ability to live “on your own”, independency
169. Close daycare, more malls and restaurants, bigger schools, bigger 24-hour grocery stores
170. Few municipal restrictions, helpful neighbors
171. Good area to raise children, clean air and water, good job opps, many friends and family

Question #10: What are some strengths of the place you live that positively affect your “quality of life”? (Cont.)

172. Safety, access to K-12 schools, access to college within 20 miles, proximity to larger towns for shopping, restaurants
173. Family/ friends, employment with good company
174. Recreation, not too many people
175. Small town atmosphere, good churches, secondary education opps (BSU, NWTC)
176. Lake front living, low crime, love my job
177. Close to friends and work
178. Peaceful, little crime, some job opps, friendly neighbors
179. Affordable
180. Hometown atmosphere, relaxed pace of life, knowing most of the families in town
181. Low crime rate, weather, educational quality, low cost of living
182. Small town community
183. Housing is affordable, student/ teacher ratio is low
184. Recreation, low crime, no congestion, family
185. Fresh air, water sports and winter sports, quiet
186. Support of family, friendships
187. No rat-race, low crime rate, quiet area, get to know more people
188. Less air pollution, less traffic – less stress, kids in sports, stable work place
189. Slower pace, friendly, fishing in Canada – close to the border
190. Decent job, educational system, some good people, general environment
191. Close to church and town, less traffic, 10 mile commute
192. Community events, recreational opps, church, career
193. Rural living, clean air, real winters, garden
194. Safety
195. Less pollution, less traffic, privacy of home, wildlife
196. Not very populated, lots of areas to hunt/ snowmobile/ ATV
197. Close to family, good area to raise a family, friendly hometown atmosphere, low crime rate
198. The school in Bemidji stinks, good place for kids, peace, quiet, freedom
199. Community oriented people, lots of volunteers, recreational activities are endless, good education system, safe neighborhood
200. Family and friends
201. (NOTHING)
202. Family is near and helpful, learn to teach children about wildlife, community pulls together in time of need
203. People willing to help each other, neighbors, local bank willing to help out
204. Friends, family, lots of recreational opps, medical facilities
205. (NOTHING)
206. (NOTHING)
207. Everyone knows you and helps out, good employment – even with only one major employer
208. Non-city living, close to city for health care, entertainment, shopping
209. Private schools, small helping community, technology advances – digital TV/ DSL
210. Better environment to raise a family, good hunting/ fishing
211. Parks
212. Less traffic, shorter distance to essentials, close to family
213. (NOTHING)
214. Hunting and fishing, close friends, beautiful scenery

Question #10: What are some strengths of the place you live that positively affect your “quality of life”? (Cont.)

215. Small communities know each other well, church is small – more involvement, less traffic – less stress, close to lakes, golf courses, forests, no crowding
216. Close knit community, trusting people, less traffic, less commercialized
217. Close to family/ friends, quiet atmosphere
218. Safe, small town atmosphere, cost of living, career opps in my field, competitive wages
219. People have a strong work ethic, willingness and helpfulness of people, small town atmosphere, community safety, quality of the environment
220. Same values as others
221. Close to hunting land, close to lakes, lots of snow for snowmobiling
222. Living in the country, wildlife, ease of meeting people, freedom
223. Opps for community involvement, valued school system, familiar faces
224. Christian friends, low crime rate, not crowded in schools, close to work
225. Low crime compared to bigger cities, little population, caring friendly people
226. Family, church –St. Peter’s, school, medical facilities – Dakota Clinic
227. Quiet rural setting, good roads, convenient local merchants, clean environment
228. Lots of wildlife
229. Affordability of lake property, acreage is inexpensive, low traffic, clean air
230. Relatively slow pace of living, great atmosphere to raise children
231. Small town atmosphere, golf memberships are reasonable, people are friendly, less violence and drugs
232. Less crime, safety
233. Family, social, recreations, small town/ less people
234. Smaller town, safety, friendly people
235. Very low crime rate, freedom, wide open spaces
236. Summer theatre presentations, churches, community center
237. Friends, family, deer in my backyard, fishing the Red River
238. Health/ exercise facilities, more Hispanics in this town, good teaching, availability of houses
239. Good wages for the type of work, good health care, good housing, freedom
240. Good school, churches, wide open spaces, hospital, clinic, dentist
241. Great job, good environment, good community atmosphere
242. Friendly people, family, good place to work, low crime, good place to raise kids
243. Safe neighborhood for family, short commutes, low traffic and crowds
244. Low crime rate, small community, low traffic, quiet
245. People, lack of traffic
246. Fresh air, sense of community
247. Low crime rate, good place to raise children
248. (NOTHING)
249. Access to lakes, close to town
250. No close neighbors, pets, country living, family close by
251. Less crime, less pollution, better traffic, good community involvement in schools
252. (NOTHING)
253. Mother, helpful/ friendly people
254. No traffic, lots of outdoor activities, good schools, good churches
255. Short commute, deer in my backyard, kids can play in the woods, safer
256. Small town, friendly people, job, church
257. Short commutes, less traffic, low crime

APPENDIX B (Cont.)

Question #11: What improvements would make your community a better place to live?

1. Competitive grocery prices, alternative entertainment, recreational facilities, gym, shopping, full-time veterinarian
2. Wages, prices, taxes, road conditions
3. More things for young people to do, competition for grocery store, cheaper retail prices
4. Better road conditions
5. More economic development, more grants for less fortunate, stop drug/alcohol abuse for young people, more elder help
6. School with better financial status, more local jobs
7. Larger businesses, more shopping centers, better law enforcement
8. Better recreation opps, shopping, restraints, social events, education for locals
9. Better housing, community center (YMCA), more job opps, better shopping
10. (NOTHING)
11. More activity centers besides the casino, fix up historical aspects of town, more restaurants, improving education and health care
12. More professionalism in local businesses, community emphasis on educational issues not just sports
13. (NOTHING)
14. Video rentals, indoor play park for kids
15. Conflicts w/ clinics and NW Med Center resolved, better restaurants, casino sponsored events
16. (NOTHING)
17. Airport travel costs less
18. Exercise facilities with better hours, more activities for kids
19. More activities for kids, more educational/cultural places
20. Stronger schools, more activities for kids, better paying jobs
21. Better city government, more opps, activities for kids, four-wheeler trail system
22. Higher paying jobs
23. Better/more shopping centers, more entertainment facilities
24. Friendlier neighbors
25. Better paying jobs, more people
26. Better variety of stores
27. Better restaurants, shopping
28. Better enforcement of property laws that penalize homeowners in city limits w/ garbage in yards (rusty cars)
29. More industry, better restaurants, higher salaries
30. More cops, more restaurants, better education for students
31. More events/activities for kids, more options for cellular/Internet service
32. Improve major highways, crackdown on thefts, focus on middle school youth, more rehab programs
33. More shopping places, more family entertainment
34. Development that saves green spaces
35. Better hang-outs for high school kids
36. More places for kids to hang out
37. Emergency care closer, later evening shopping availability
38. Winter weather
39. More businesses, more jobs, more people

Question #11: What improvements would make your community a better place to live? (Cont.)

40. Higher paying career opps
41. Lower taxes, more youth activities
42. (NOTHING)
43. Improve rural economy, better job opportunities for younger people, less governmental restrictions, accessibility to health care
44. Better shopping, public swimming pool, more restaurants, welcoming attitude to newcomers
45. Outdoor pool with kiddie area, roller rink, mall, more teen dances
46. Lower taxes, more dependable electric co-op, more activity place, more groomed snowmobile trails that allow studs
47. Lower property tax, more industry and shops
48. Larger variety of restaurants, theatres, closer to larger cities, better streets and roads
49. (NOTHING)
50. Medical services, better shopping, movie theatres
51. More family entertainment, broaden educational opps to benefit other occupations, boost tourism facilities (boardwalk, bike & ski trails – organize year-round events), promote small business opps, forms of mass transit
52. Theatre (live), shopping closer, variety of stores and competition, entertainment for kids
53. (NOTHING)
54. More businesses to increase competition, get rid of the casino
55. More recreational facilities/ opps, daily newspaper, affordable housing and rents
56. Tar the road to the NW Angle
57. Better shopping, more family stuff to do, hospital/ doctor in town
58. Communities need to welcome newcomers much faster
59. More entertainment (bowling, movie theatre), more grocery stores, more clothes stores, job opps
60. Taxes cheaper
61. More attractions to promote our communities, finding ways to help those in need, more arts/ entertainment brought to the area
62. City water, paved road, commercial business, coffee shop
63. Stop racism and crime
64. New businesses (PAMIDA)
65. Target of Wal-Mart, a community center
66. Slower traffic on weekends, more law enforcement
67. Lower crime rate, lower cost of housing, more job opps
68. More emphasis on schools and quality of teachers, less dependent on social programs and more effort to attract businesses
69. Less crime
70. More jobs time for activities, money
71. Bring the post office back to TRF, a bridge across the river on the East side to town, more restaurants- Perkins or Applebee's, create something to draw tourists
72. More shopping, more youth activities, place for teens to socialize, community opp for sports and classes and advertise area better
73. More recreational opps, some local government changes, school system funding and quality of education
74. (NOTHING)
75. More summer/ winter activities, restaurants open late, activity center for kids – video games, pool, things to do inside

Question #11: What improvements would make your community a better place to live? (Cont.)

76. Increased educational opps, better restaurants and shopping
77. Not so cold, less mosquitoes
78. Increased activities for young couples
79. Repair streets, allow new businesses to come in
80. Less judgmental people, more work opps with good pay, more community activities – entertainment, more stores
81. Less gossip, less backstabbing
82. More jobs
83. More job opps, college of tech school in community, more services for handicapped, more community events – street dances
84. Community picnic to meet people, talk to kids more about drugs and gangs
85. Lower taxes
86. Better retail shopping, less tourists
87. More recreation
88. More funding for schools/ businesses/ hospitals, money for farmers
89. Single females in Stephen,
90. Need industry for better jobs, reduce crime, need four-lane highway link to Twin Cities
91. (NOTHING)
92. Less taxes
93. More options for school age children
94. More and better shopping
95. Pave county roads
96. Better roads, more shopping centers, restaurants, taxes
97. Youth need something fun to do
98. More places to eat and more options
99. Better snow removal, 18-hole golf course, better fire department equipment, playground equipment
100. Clean it up!, promote ditch cleaning, enforce litter laws, dress up parks and maintain appropriately, encourage downtown to dress up store fronts – more than just new signs, be serious about ridding the town of condemned housing and slum lords that over charge
101. (NOTHING)
102. Youth center/ community center (YMCA), less taxes, more positive outlets for children, more job opportunities for educated women with higher salaries
103. (NOTHING)
104. Less gossip, more communication, more community activities, local place to hang out other than a bar
105. Malls, restaurants, malls, recreational events, workout center
106. (NOTHING)
107. More employment opps for younger people, more activities to draw people in, more housing for people to move here
108. Additional hi-tech job opps, better Internet infrastructure
109. Bring in more business for better diversity, keep prices comparable to Fargo, school system needs to better handle their funds (less taxes), lower housing costs
110. Schools – all levels, employment opps
111. Better jobs, better wages, more choices for retail goods, less Native American influence, less crime

Question #11: What improvements would make your community a better place to live? (Cont.)

112. Better roads, more and different restaurants, cheaper and bigger exercise facilities, more jobs
113. Not growing too big
114. Drugs, crime
115. More shopping
116. More dance clubs or bowling areas, more movie theatres, higher paying jobs, no tax
117. More things for kids to do
118. More cultural activities, more job opps, better airline service, better selection in stores and restaurants
119. More modern facilities, discount stores, more job opps for college educated people
120. More shopping, more public access to land, lower prices on real estate, development of lakeshore for public use/access
121. More people, more recreation
122. More places for teenagers/ kids to go, housing incentives, business incentives to attract more people/ keep young people here
123. (NOTHING)
124. Lower taxes, become more modern
125. More restaurants
126. More parks and trails, community center, organized plan for growth
127. More restaurants/ shopping, more recreation activities, more stores
128. More recreational activities (theatres, restaurants, stores), school offering more diverse classes
129. Better paying jobs
130. (NOTHING)
131. Better control of growth is needed, programs and activities are needed for youth
132. Cost of living reduction, competitive shopping, road maintenance/ improvements, drainage systems, world-class medical system – currently very poor
133. More activities for youth, respect for one another, safety and caution in everyday life, doing business in our area
134. Shopping opps, four-year college
135. More shopping, more restaurants, YMCA – some place for youth and adults
136. Allowing other businesses to open, welcoming new comers, accepting newcomers
137. More recreational opps, more open attitude from locals, warmer climate
138. None
139. Parental involvement with children – instead of going to the bars, more police “presence” in Bemidji area, lower prices on gas and food, higher wages a necessity – cannot live on \$7/ hour
140. Better crime control, more night classes offered at BSU or NWTC, more manufacturing, good civic center, pave dirt roads within the city limits
141. Lower crime, better schooling, quit “clear cutting” when developing, better jobs
142. More entertainment options, more children activities, a new hockey arena
143. Less discrimination of race and religion, consistent zoning regulations/ enforcement, comprehensive resource management, environmental priorities rather than job creation emphasis by gov’t agencies
144. More jobs to keep people around (young people)
145. Access to movie theatres, access to shopping without driving, affordable housing, more things to do
146. More industry work, higher paying jobs

Question #11: What improvements would make your community a better place to live? (Cont.)

147. Clean up/ destroy condemned/ unlivable houses, offer low cost lots for house building, property tax waived for up to 2 years, complete street projects once started
148. Housing, more businesses, entertainment for adults/ kids More shopping, more restaurants
149. None
150. No car theft, not so many careless drivers, lower taxes, cheaper houses
151. Not so many reservations, places to go that don't cost so much – activities
152. Keep and maintain healthcare/ nursing homes/ schools
153. (NOTHING)
154. Clean it up, make the city work harder on cleaning the streets in winter
155. Better communication, lower prices
156. Know everyone, people on welfare need to get a job, less drugs, drinking and driving reduced
157. Street lights, more access to lakes – beaches/ boat landings, state college within 30 miles, increase the number of technical and manufacturing businesses
158. Higher pay scale, better reception for cell phones, closer shopping
159. More jobs with better pay
160. More things for teens to do, a Wal-Mart store in TRF
161. Recreation for kids, better jobs/ higher pay, high-speed Internet access, cheaper heating costs for everybody
162. Better selection of restaurants, more cultural events – movies/ music/ sports/ plays, cure for the “good old boy” mentality
163. More shopping, fix up empty buildings in town, better schools system, more opps for children, fix up run-down homes
164. More recreational things for young kids, more shopping stores, better paying jobs, movie theatre
165. More community involvement
166. None – community is doing good
167. People on welfare should get a job, better doctors, no snow, get rid of all the drugs and alcohol
168. NA
169. More recreation opps – bowling alley, more job opps
170. Less crime, smaller class sizes, more housing and rentals, improved roads
171. New water system, more available housing, more technical jobs – engineering related
172. More high paying jobs for professionals, recreational facility with exercise equipment and swimming pool
173. More family things to do, family entertainment is lacking in Bemidji - only thing to do is bars and movies
174. An outdoor recreation store – Gander Mountain, Scheel's, a restaurant off of Lake Bemidji with docks, etc
175. Better support for schools
176. Better school system
177. Less snow, more higher paying jobs, less snobby people, more caring about others
178. Convenient shopping
179. Movie theatre/ bowling alley – family activities, closer shopping, hospital
180. Help homeowners fix up their homes and fix up main drive through city
181. More entertainment – bowling/ theatre, etc.
182. More structured daycares with varied hours, more activities for children – after school and during summer, more efficient road crews to remove snow

Question #11: What improvements would make your community a better place to live? (Cont.)

183. More stores/ a mall, more community activity, better school system, cabs
184. High speed Internet, easier travel to larger cities – less expensive
185. Less crime
186. Save our resorts from selling out, convention center, beautify the city to help attract tourists, have more events through the summer
187. Tougher drug enforcement, more activities for kids, tax breaks for small business
188. Less state tax
189. Diversify politics, break up monopolies, more competitive wages/ prices, more accepting of outsiders, cultural amenities could use some improvement
190. Straighten the school system out, improve the crime rate
191. Better roads, public services, lower taxes, more jobs
192. No litter on highways, cut less taxes, Goodwill store in Bagley, plant more hardwood trees
193. Shopping mall, nice health club
194. Lower land taxes, less crop dusting, friendliness – welcoming outsiders, vehicle engines not being run while unattended
195. We like the way it is
196. More community activities, more shopping choices
197. Schools educational standards are poor/ low, better maintenance of roads in winter, do away with welfare and make people work, bring cost of living down to where wages are
198. Another supermarket, more diverse offering of stores, new elementary school
199. Better housing, better career opps
200. (NOTHING)
201. More things for children and teenagers – bowling/ rec. center, more shopping, better grocery prices, more adult recreation centers – fitness clubs/ bowling allies/ dance club
202. Four wheel recreation
203. No need for improvements
204. Better pay in community, don't raise the cost of living, help for middle and low income families
205. Church
206. More retail outlets, better commercial food service, diversity of employment opps
207. Clean up low income areas, reduce crime
208. More variety of restaurants, safety, more social events/ concerts/ plays...
209. Get rid of the casino, better family based entertainment – bowling alley, etc.
210. (NOTHING)
211. Better schools, better entertainment – family, community center – YMCA, sport facilities
212. (NOTHING)
213. Better law enforcement – region wide, less cultural diversity, no casinos
214. Better urban planning/ zoning, more support of school district – large number of retired population make it hard for school referendums to pass, better cell phone coverage, high speed Internet connections, business open later than 5PM
215. More and earlier snow plows, more conveniences like gas/ food, more flexible work schedules, businesses open on weekends, trusty service businesses
216. More adult things to do, more major stores
217. Better streets/ sidewalks, more bike paths, more development of lots for new homes, more social clubs for younger working women

Question #11: What improvements would make your community a better place to live? (Cont.)

218. Increase the number of businesses, more job opps, more housing availability, more population
219. More emphasis in school system, music and musicals
220. (NOTHING)
221. Bring in more business, get a different mayor, be segregated/ not all together, learn how to run good businesses
222. Create river recreational area
223. More activities for kids – activity center, more AA meetings, more affordable housing for elderly, entertainment – theatre
224. More businesses, limit tourist activity, increased wages, lower priced products
225. Lower taxes, reduce cost because of tourists to area, increase job opps – technical/ industrial
226. More industry with quality high paying jobs
227. Better roads to handle tourists in summer, less government, 20 hour restaurant
228. Less poverty, more high-tech jobs, less property crime
229. Access to shopping, more competition for daily purchases, additional recreational activities- theatre/ bowling
230. No changes
231. More activities for children
232. More and better paying jobs, more homes
233. Better school system, Wal-Mart, bike paths, community center for the kids
234. More entertainment – arts/ culture, closer shopping, better prices, higher paying jobs
235. Bowling alley, need to be more welcoming, another grocery store
236. More things to do, recreation, clean up dumpy looking neighborhoods, more shopping, too many empty buildings
237. More school grants, more assistance with daycare, Hispanic radio station (3 times a week), more department stores – Wal-Mart or K-Mart
238. More jobs, better wages, clean rundown areas of community, faster response to flood control
239. Less tight city government, no incinerator
240. More entertainment businesses, more diverse restaurants – Mexican, lower taxes
241. Lower taxes, better paying jobs, more quality jobs
242. More variety of events sponsored by local Park Board – not focusing on only basketball, softball, youth hockey
243. More companies for job opps, more restaurants, recreation center for kids, indoor ice rink
244. More technical companies, jobs, man-made lake or reservoir to recreation
245. Eye sores – junk in yards, better service for telephone and contractors
246. Higher pay, less drugs, employers recognizing women as potential leaders
247. (NOTHING)
248. Not crowded, too many town big shots, more well paying jobs closer to home, better housing
249. More activities for younger people, less monopoly on shopping, more cultural events
250. More things for families to do
251. More entertainment or opps for kids, more job opps
252. (NOTHING)
253. More jobs for teenagers wanting to work, better paying jobs, affordable housing, more carpooling
254. Less selfish people, less government intervention

Question #11: What improvements would make your community a better place to live? (Cont.)

- 255. More business in the city, vacant homes torn down, city maintenance improved, town policemen
- 256. Lower taxes, better wages, more diversity in restaurants and shopping

APPENDIX C: Employer and Employees Surveys

Employer Survey

Quality of Place Survey

Prepared by Nathan Dorr for
Center for Urban and Regional Affairs
Community Assistantship Program

This survey is conducted in partnership with the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, the Headwaters Regional Development Commission, the Northwest Regional Development Commission, Northern Great Plains Inc., the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota, and the Humphrey Institute. This survey is to determine what you value most in the place you chose to live. Also, why your firm chose to locate or stay in rural Minnesota. Most importantly, we want to know about the quality of place you chose to live and work. “Quality of place” relates to those characteristics in a specific location that most improve your quality of life. “Quality of life” means all those things that make your life good (like family, career, environment, safety, and so on).

Your response is extremely important in shaping the future of our area. Please take thoughtful consideration while answering the questions, and be specific. All completed forms should be returned in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by December 5, 2001. Your response will be kept completely confidential.

*** Carefully read each question and respond to the best of your ability.**

1. As an employer, what has attracted you most to locating your business in this area? (Please choose the best 3).
 - AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED LABOR FORCE
 - COLLABORATIVE/ COMPETITIVE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITES
 - ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES AS RAW MATERIALS
 - EASE OF TRANSPORT TO/FROM LARGER METROPOLITAN AREAS
 - RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND TOURISM
 - CLOSE ACCESS TO WHOLESALE MARKETS
 - TAX STRUCTURE
 - EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS
 - SOCIAL/ FAMILY TIES
 - CLIMATE
 - HIGH-SPEED INTERNET ACCESS
 - QUALITY OF LIFE

2. If you chose "Quality of Life" as a factor in locating and/or staying here, which of the following characteristics is most important? Again, please choose the best three. (If you did not, please skip to question #3).
 - CAREER/ JOBS
 - SOCIAL/ FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
 - CULTURAL AMENITIES
 - HISTORICAL HERITAGE
 - RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
 - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
 - HIGH-SPEED AND/OR WIRELESS COMMUNICATION ACCESS
 - SMALL BUSINESS/ ENTREPENERIAL OPPORTUNITIES
 - HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES
 - RURAL/ SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE
 - OTHER _____

3. How far do you live from your place of work?
 - ONE MILE OR LESS
 - 2 – 4 MILES
 - 5 – 9 MILES
 - 10 – 19 MILES
 - 20 – 29 MILES
 - 30 – 39 MILES
 - 40 + MILES

4. Did you spend your childhood or teenage years in this area? (IF "NO", PLEASE LIST CITY and STATE and COUNTRY)
 - YES
 - NO, _____

5. If you are from outside the area, did you vacation prior to locating here? (If you are from the area, and answered question #4, please skip to question #6).
 - YES
 - NO

6. How do you *define* the area or size of the “place” you live?
- NEIGHBORHOOD
 - TOWN or CITY
 - COUNTY
 - REGION
 - STATE
7. If given any place in the world, where would you most want locate your firm? And why?
8. How does this place compare to the place you currently live?
- SIMILAR IN EVERY WAY
 - SIMILAR IN MOST WAYS
 - SLIGHTLY SIMILAR
 - SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT
 - DIFFERENT IN MOST WAYS
 - DIFFERENT IN EVERY WAY
9. What are the main differences between the place you would *like* to locate, and the place you ultimately chose to locate?
10. What is special about the place you located, compared to other places in general?
- A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
11. What are some strengths of the place you live that positively affect your “quality of life”? (Please consider all aspects of your daily life, and briefly list up to four).
- A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____

12. What improvements would make the place you chose to locate more desirable within Minnesota? Nationally? (Please be specific).

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

13. Please, circle all the following responses that best describe the reasons you chose to locate or stay in this area. (Please choose up to 10).

Family Diversity of Political Beliefs Forest Areas

Demand for Goods/Services Cultural Activities Air and Water Quality

Career/ Jobs Opportunities Outdoor Recreation Lakes Recreation

Wildlife viewing K – 12 School quality College/ University Opportunity

Access to High-Speed Communications Tax Rates and Incentives

Live Music Entertainment Friends Live Theatrical Entertainment

Access to Movies and Television Entertainment Competitive Wages

Active Business and “Downtown” Districts Restaurants and Shopping

Diversity of Racial Groups Good Government Business Partnerships

Motorized Recreation Community Access to Trail Systems

Greenways and Scenic Highways Open Spaces and Fields Parks

History and Heritage Diversity of Religious Beliefs Affordable Housing

Access to Cell Phone and Pager Service Small Town Atmosphere

Community Involvement Opportunities Charter School Options

Access to Medical Facilities Non-motorized Recreation Safety of Community

Auto Maintenance Services Social Clubs Availability of Qualified Labor

Access to Whole Sale Markets Community Center Attractive Tourist Destination

Training and Educational Institutions Access Transport and Freight Lines

Gender:

- MALE
- FEMALE

Education level:

- High school, or equivalent
- 2 year degree, or some college
- 4 year degree
- Master's degree and above

Length of Residence:

- 0 – 4 YEARS
- 5 – 9 YEARS
- 10 – 14 YEARS
- 15 – 19 YEARS
- 20 – 24 YEARS
- 25 – 29 YEARS
- 30 – 34 YEARS
- 35 + YEARS

Length of Established Business:

- 0 – 4 YEARS
- 5 – 9 YEARS
- 10 – 14 YEARS
- 15 – 19 YEARS
- 20 – 24 YEARS
- 25 – 29 YEARS
- 30 – 34 YEARS
- 35 + YEARS

Zip code: _____

Age: _____

APPENDIX B (Cont.)

Employee Survey

Quality of Place Survey

Prepared by Nathan Dorr for
Center for Urban and Regional Affairs
Community Assistantship Program

This survey is conducted in partnership with the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, the Headwaters Regional Development Commission, the Northwest Regional Development Commission, Northern Great Plains Inc., the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota, and the Humphrey Institute. This survey is to determine what you value most in the place you chose to live. Most importantly, we want to know about the quality of place you chose to live and work. “Quality of place” relates to those characteristics in a specific location that most improve your quality of life. “Quality of life” means all those things that make your life good (like family, career, environment, safety, and so on).

Your response is extremely important in shaping the future of our area. Please take thoughtful consideration while answering the questions, and be specific. All completed forms should be returned in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by December 5, 2001. Your response is extremely important and will be kept completely confidential.

* Carefully read each question and respond to the best of your ability.

1. What has attracted you most to living in this area? (Please choose the best 3).
 - CAREER/JOBS
 - SOCIAL/FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
 - CULTURAL AMENITIES
 - RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
 - HISTORICAL HERITAGE
 - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
 - HIGH-SPEED AND/OR WIRELESS COMMUNICATION ACCESS
 - SMALL BUSINESS/ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES
 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING
 - RURAL/ SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE
 - OTHER _____

2. How far do you live from your place of work?
 - 1 MILE OR LESS
 - 2 – 4 MILES
 - 5 – 9 MILES
 - 10 – 19 MILES
 - 20 – 29 MILES
 - 30 – 39 MILES
 - 40 + MILES

3. Did you spend your childhood or teenage years in this area? (IF “NO”, PLEASE LIST CITY and STATE and COUNTRY)
 - YES
 - NO, _____

4. If you are from outside the area, did you vacation prior to moving here? (If you are from the area, and answered question #3, please skip to question #5).
 - YES
 - NO, _____

5. How do you *define* the area or size of the “place” you live?
 - NEIGHBORHOOD
 - TOWN or CITY
 - COUNTY
 - REGION
 - STATE

6. If given any place in the world, where would you most want to live? And why?

7. How does this place compare to the place you currently live?
- SIMILAR IN EVERY WAY
 - SIMILAR IN MOST WAYS
 - SLIGHTLY SIMILAR
 - SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT
 - DIFFERENT IN MOST WAYS
 - DIFFERENT IN EVERY WAY
8. What are the main differences between the place you would *like* to live, and the place you *currently* live?
9. What is special about the place you currently live and work, compared to other places in general? (Please list up to 4).
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
10. What are some strengths of the place you live that positively affect your “quality of life”? (Please consider all aspects of your daily life, and briefly list up to 4).
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
11. What improvements would make your community a better place to live?
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

12. Please, circle all the following responses that best describe the reasons you chose to locate or stay in this area. (Please choose up to 10).

- Family
- Diversity of Political Beliefs
- Forest Areas
- Demand for Goods/Services
- Cultural Activities
- Air and Water Quality
- Career/ Jobs Opportunities
- Outdoor Recreation
- Lakes Recreation
- Wildlife viewing
- K – 12 School quality
- College/ University Opportunity
- Access to High-Speed Internet
- Tax Rates
- Attractive Tourist Destination
- Live Music Entertainment
- Friends
- Live Theatrical Entertainment
- Access to Movies and Television Entertainment
- Competitive Wages
- Active Business and “Downtown” Districts
- Restaurants and Shopping
- Diversity of Racial Groups
- Good Government
- Business Partnerships
- Motorized recreation
- Community
- Access to Trail Systems
- Greenways and Scenic Highways
- Open Spaces and Fields
- Parks
- Access to Sports Facilities
- Diversity of Religious Beliefs
- Affordable Housing
- Access to Cell Phone and Pager Service
- Small Town Atmosphere
- Community Involvement Opportunities
- Charter School Options
- Access to Medical Facilities
- Non-motorized Recreation
- Safety of Community
- Auto Maintenance Services
- Social Clubs
- Availability of Qualified Labor
- Community Center
- Hunting & Fishing
- History and Heritage

Gender:

- MALE
- FEMALE

Education level:

- High school, or equivalent
- 2 year degree, or some college
- 4 year degree
- Master’s degree and above

Length of Residence:

- 0 – 4 YEARS
- 5 – 9 YEARS
- 10 – 14 YEARS
- 15 – 19 YEARS
- 20 – 24 YEARS
- 25 – 29 YEARS
- 30 – 34 YEARS
- 35 + YEARS

Zip code: _____

Age: _____