

The Manitowoc County Quality of Life 2011 Study was completed as a cooperative effort of the Economic Development Corporation of Manitowoc County and Leede Research, the Manitowoc-based marketing information company. The study was donated as part of Leede’s Community Grant Program as a service to the community and its growth and development.

The study was custom designed in partnership with the leadership of the EDC and was designed to put metrics in place to help the organization understand community perceptions of the local business environment and the EDC. These metrics will serve as a measuring stick along with other indicators to gauge the success of the organization in the community.

### Study Methodology

The primary component of the study was a telephone survey of Manitowoc County completed from Leede’s offices and call center. The study of 500 completed telephone interviews used a proportionate random sample balanced by zip code population. This gave all geographic areas of the county their appropriate voice to the population as a whole. Population information was taken from Claritas demographic information, which is updated from the most recent Census.

Telephone interviewing was done using Leede’s CATI (Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing) system. This allows for greater control of the survey and related sample. All interviewing was live and supervised by Leede personnel. Interviews were conducted in the last quarter of 2011.

Along with the Community Study, a Business Study was conducted to provide supplemental and comparative information. This was completed using an online format with the same structure and questions as the Community Study. This was done to give a direct comparison between the general population and business respondents. Respondents were invited to complete the survey through email communications by the EDC, Chamber and business contacts in the community. The survey link was also posted on the EDC website for linkage to the study.

There were 105 completions in the Business Study. It should be noted that this is a select sample and would not be considered random. Because of this, the sample may not accurately reflect the opinions of all businesses in Manitowoc County. It is basically a reflection of those businesses that chose to participate in the survey. This should be considered in review of the information and related comparisons.

### Top of Mind Issues for Living in Manitowoc County

Two questions early in the study sought to identify how respondents thought about living in Manitowoc County. These asked about the best feature of living here and what they might change if they had the ability to do so. Leede commonly uses this format to identify key issues that are top of mind for consumers.

On the positive side we see that; The Lakeshore and Small Community are top responses. There are also a variety of positive comments about Safety and the Friendliness of People here. Other positive comments include the Beauty of the Area, Schools and Family Values. These all appear to be foundational strengths for the quality of life in the area.

The top items for respondents to change would be; More Jobs/Businesses, Lower Taxes and Better Shopping and Entertainment venues. There were also responses seen for issues related to Better Weather and Better Government. The negative items are consistent with some prior work completed by Leede and are likely influenced by recent economic conditions locally and nationally.

### Employment Environment

A section of the study asked respondents to rate the opportunities available in the area for different types of employment. Respondents rated each item from 1 to 7, with 1 being Very Poor, to 7 being Very Strong in that area:

	Consumer Mean Scores	Consumer Top 2 Box Scores	Business Mean Scores	Business Top 2 Box Scores
Service Employment	4.36	17.5%	4.60	24.1%
Retail Employment	4.29	17.0%	4.36	17.3%
Public Sector Employment	3.85	12.0%	3.42	3.9%
Management or Specialized Employment	3.69	8.9%	3.59	10.6%
Opportunity for Job or Position Advancement	3.69	11.5%	3.75	9.6%
General Business Growth	3.63	15.0%	3.58	6.7%
Manufacturing Employment	3.61	16.1%	4.21	22.1%
Opportunity for Wage Growth	3.45	11.4%	3.36	4.8%
Growth in the Overall Number of Jobs Available	3.16	9.8%	3.39	8.7%
<b>Overall Employment Environment in Manitowoc County</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>7.7%</b>

\* Yellow highlighted areas represent statistical significance against the opposing sample.

We see that generally the ratings are below average and show some variation by respondent groups. The strongest areas are in the Service and Retail segments. The business respondents show stronger perceptions of Manufacturing Employment while community respondents felt stronger about the Public Sector and Management Employment. These were identified through significance testing.

Top-two box scores are another way of looking at mean scores and determining whether they are based on polar or divided results. We see the scores in this setting are generally under 20% for the community respondents and only two items exceed that in the business sample. This means that the scores are based on generally weak responses across the board in both groups. This indicates a lack of confidence in the economy locally that is likely impacted, at least in part, by national media and related information. The EDC may want to consider the role it plays in communicating sound information on employment conditions in the county.

Just over half of the community respondents felt that they were employed to an appropriate level based on their education and experience. This was 84% in the business respondents. The mean response indicates that those that did feel they were under employed were off by a mean of 36% in the community sample and 43% in the business sample. They had been in this position for 6 to 8 years. This indicates there is significant opportunity for employment upgrades if the right needs and skills are matched in the market. This could be a future area of focus for the EDC and other employment related organizations.

### Gap Analysis of Importance & Satisfaction

Leede Research commonly employs the use of Gap Analysis as a tool to review issues related to the importance of key issues and the related satisfaction scores generated. This tool uses a comparable rating series for importance and satisfaction and then conducts significance testing on the differences or gap seen. Negative gaps that have statistical significance are areas that should be reviewed for possible action.

### Community Respondents

We see that all of the Employment related areas show large negative gaps that do test as statistically significant. These indicate that the community respondents place significantly more importance in these items than they perceived they are being delivered here in Manitowoc County. Two-thirds of the items tested have significant negative gaps. This may indicate a negative attitude in the general public regarding current conditions in Manitowoc County and the delivery of related services. There is only one positive gap seen that tests significantly. This indicates that the current Night Life is beyond the expectations in the market. This is based on a low importance score.

Consumer GAP	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap	Significant
Employment Security	6.35	3.51	-2.84	Y
Employment Opportunities	6.32	3.50	-2.83	Y
Employment Growth & Upgrade Opportunities	6.15	3.39	-2.76	Y
Local Government Services	5.43	4.58	-0.84	Y
Shopping & Retail Options	5.24	4.41	-0.83	Y
Safety & Security of Community	6.45	5.71	-0.74	Y
Education System - K to 12	6.26	5.58	-0.67	Y
Police & Fire Protection	6.45	5.97	-0.48	Y
Quality Housing	5.60	5.11	-0.48	Y
Post High School Education Options	5.65	5.34	-0.31	Y
Entertainment Options	4.75	4.51	-0.24	Y
Access to High Speed Internet	5.46	5.32	-0.14	N
Parks, Green Space & Recreational Opportunities	5.57	5.54	-0.03	N
Dining Options	4.87	4.89	0.03	N
Museums, Plays & Cultural Activities	4.79	4.91	0.12	N
Night Life	3.72	4.16	0.44	Y

It should be noted that gaps in this type of structure and environment are basically indications of differences between expectations and perceived delivery on the items tested. Addressing negative gaps requires a review of the situation to determine whether the differences are generated by unrealistic expectations (importance), lack of delivery (satisfaction) or some combination of the two. In most cases it is a combination of the factors that generate the negative gap.

### Business Respondents

The business sample is better but also shows some strong negative gaps. The smaller sample size would generally have some impact on significance testing. Even with the business group the negative gaps around Employment issues are over 2.0. This is a large gap and both groups' gaps are larger than Leede generally sees in its work. This is a clear directive that working on employment issues is a key action for the future. Both groups felt that More Jobs, Bring Business to the Area and Better Shopping were areas that would improve the quality of life here.

Business GAP	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap	Significant
Employment Opportunities	6.45	3.88	-2.57	Y
Employment Growth & Upgrade Opportunities	6.28	3.72	-2.56	Y
Employment Security	6.18	3.86	-2.32	Y
Shopping & Retail Options	5.22	4.02	-1.20	Y
Access to High Speed Internet	5.85	5.10	-0.75	Y
Safety & Security of Community	6.28	5.56	-0.72	Y
Dining Options	5.06	4.34	-0.72	Y
Education System - K to 12	6.01	5.38	-0.63	Y
Local Government Services	5.16	4.81	-0.35	N
Entertainment Options	4.82	4.48	-0.34	N
Quality Housing	5.58	5.35	-0.23	N
Police & Fire Protection	5.93	5.71	-0.22	N
Museums, Plays & Cultural Activities	4.85	4.88	0.03	N
Parks, Green Space & Recreational Opportunities	5.54	5.59	0.05	N
Post High School Education Options	5.33	5.44	0.11	N
Night Life	4.02	4.22	0.20	N

### Net Promoter Scores

Net Promoter Scores have become a popular tool in business today. They are a measure of customer loyalty across business sectors and industries. Some believe this score is a key to the overall success of an entity. The NPS question asks

respondents to rate the likelihood of them recommending

Manitowoc County as a place to live for friends or relatives on a scale from 0 to 10. Those offering a 9 or 10 rating are considered Promoters. Those with ratings of 7 or 8 are considered Passives.

Any scores under 7 are considered Detractors. Net Promoter Score is the difference between Promoters and Detractors.

	Study Source			SAMPLE				
	Base	Public	Business	Base	Manitowoc	Two Rivers	Kiel	Rural
	A	B		A	B	C	D	
Base	603	500	103	500	255	96	39	110
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Detractor	178	157	21	157	81	35	9	32
	30%	31%	20%	31%	32%	36%	23%	29%
		B				*	*	
Passive	226	207	19	207	110	32	14	51
	37%	41%	18%	41%	43%	33%	36%	46%
		B				*	*	
Promoter	177	135	42	135	63	29	16	27
	29%	27%	41%	27%	25%	30%	41%	25%
			A			*	A*	
<b>NPS</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>-4%</b>	<b>-7%</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>-4%</b>

NPS of 40 to 70 are considered solid players and include

companies like GE and Southwest Airlines. Those with scores over 80 are considered world class and are represented by companies like Harley Davidson. The table above shows the overall NPS for all respondents at a -1. This means there were more Detractors than Promoters overall. We see the Public or Community Sample is a -4. The Business Sample counters this at a 21. This is a respectable score but still shows room for improvement.

In reviewing the NPS by respondent location we see that negative scores are common. The exception to this is the City of Kiel who shows an 18, notably higher than the other groups. It should be noted that this information is specific to the Community sample. The sample size is too small to segment business respondents by location. One of the future goals of the EDC could be to help drive measurable improvements of NPS as a metric for growth in quality of life in the area.

### Government Issues and Budget Considerations

In designing the survey the EDC and Leede sought to generate tools to help local governments deal with budget and funding issues that are common today.

The goal in a series of questions was to understand perceptions related to these issues and work to identify areas that could be considered for reductions or assistance. The first series sought to identify the level of agreement with different general approaches to address budget concerns.

	Consumer Mean Scores	Consumer Top 2 Box Scores	Business Mean Scores	Business Top 2 Box Scores
Urge State government to stop cutting the share of State sales, income and gas tax-derived funds that gets returned to local communities to fund local services	5.11	44.9%	5.24	65.8%
Reduce the costs of local government through reductions in public employee's wage/benefit packages	4.46	35.3%	5.19	52.8%
Reduce the costs of local government through reduced staffing	4.41	29.4%	4.46	38.9%
Address budget issues through a combination of reductions and tax and fee increases	3.89	18.9%	3.96	26.9%
Reduce the costs of local government through reduced services	3.78	15.3%	3.88	22.2%
Offset some or all of the state funding cuts through additional local taxes and fees	3.18	12.4%	2.82	6.7%

\* Yellow highlighted areas represent statistical significance against the opposing sample.

There is a range of agreement levels seen in the results with a number of them being below average. The Community sample shows the lowest response for Additional Taxes and Fees, Reduced Services and Combination of Reductions and Tax Increases. These are also the three lowest items in the business sample. Both groups feel that Urging the State to Share Revenue and Reductions in Wages and Benefits as the most acceptable solutions. The Business sample is statistically stronger for Reductions in Wages and Benefits.

The next set of questions seeks to identify possible service reductions that might be an acceptable way to at least partially address budgetary shortfalls. The ratings are from 1 to 7, with 1 being a Very Weak Candidate, to 7 being a Very Strong Candidate for reduction.

	Consumer Mean Scores	Consumer Top 2 Box Scores	Business Mean Scores	Business Top 2 Box Scores
Pickup of Yard Wastes & Street Cleaning	4.31	31.8%	5.17	48.5%
General Upkeep such as Grass Cutting, Ditch Cutting, Tree Trimming	4.21	19.7%	4.58	30.1%
Bus & Public Transportation Services	4.00	22.7%	4.54	35.0%
Parks & Recreational Services	3.86	15.6%	4.25	21.3%
Human Services	3.59	14.6%	3.70	12.6%
Road Construction and Maintenance	3.58	12.6%	3.17	6.8%
Senior Services	3.35	12.9%	3.57	6.8%
Health Department Services	3.32	15.4%	3.83	14.6%
Winter Plowing Frequency	3.02	14.0%	3.15	6.8%
Schools and Education	2.88	17.0%	2.41	6.8%
Fire Protection Services	2.81	14.5%	2.67	9.7%
Police Protection Services	2.81	15.0%	2.51	5.8%

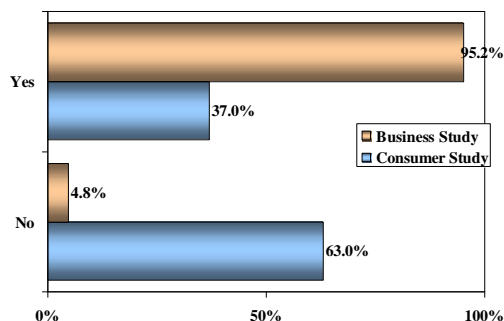
\* Yellow highlighted areas represent statistical significance against the opposing sample.

The responses are generally all at or below average in both sample groups, though the business respondents are a bit more willing to consider some options. There are only two areas of significant difference between the two groups. Community respondents are more willing to trim Schools and Education, while Business respondents are more willing to reduce Yard Wastes and Street Cleaning. The top three to five items may show some potential for at least discussion.

### EDC Awareness

The next section of the study was designed as a baseline measurement of the EDC and to determine the awareness of the specific services offered by the organization. This will be used as a metric for future development by the organization.

Q9. Have you heard of the Economic Development Corporation for the area?



Q9a. If Yes: What do you see as the primary purpose or function of this organization? – Open Responses

The most often mentioned responses from the Consumer study were:

- Bring in Business - 74 responses
- Get More Jobs - 21 responses
- Stimulate Economy - 21 responses

The most often mentioned responses from the Business study were:

- Bring In Business - 25 responses
- Help Business Start Up - 14 responses
- Stimulate Economy - 8 responses

Results indicate there is very strong awareness in the Business sample. This may be due in part to the select sample for the project as opposed to a random sample of businesses. Respondents were solicited through EDC and Chamber resources and this may inflate awareness. The Community sample shows almost 40% awareness and a sound understanding of the basic role of the organization. This is positive and should be built upon.

	Consumer Yes Responses	Business Yes Responses
Business Planning Assistance	63.1%	87.0%
Workforce Training Assistance	59.9%	55.0%
Connecting to State or Federal Business Incentives/Programs	58.8%	64.0%
Entrepreneurial Development Programs	57.2%	89.0%
Financing Tools & Assistance	49.2%	75.0%
One on One Business Counseling	45.5%	79.0%
Business Data & Information	44.9%	55.0%
Community Project Assistance	43.9%	20.0%
Site Location Assistance	40.6%	51.0%
Project Mini Chopper	24.1%	78.0%
SCORE Counseling	19.3%	59.0%

\* Yellow highlighted areas represent statistical significance against the opposing sample.

Awareness of specific tools and services by those who are aware of the EDC appear to be solid. These are statistically stronger in many areas with the Business respondents. This is again expected but demonstrates that there is enhanced attention in the business community. These levels will be built upon and measured again in the future.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the EDC on a scale from 1 to 7, with 7 being Very Important to the future of the area. We see a mean score of 5.27 for the Community respondents and 5.68 for the Business respondents. Interestingly, these scores are not statistically different. This means that for all practical purposes the two groups place comparable value on the EDC. While scores are sound there is still room for improvement with proper marketing, education and community involvement.

The study featured an enhanced demographic series of questions designed to help understand the situation and needs of both spouses and children in the households. A high percentage of respondents have children with about 70% of these living in Manitowoc County. The Business respondents have more children in the working age group than Community respondents. They are also more likely to be currently employed. It is interesting to note that in both groups a quarter of youth who are not currently working are not seeking employment.

There are about 30% of both groups who have children no longer living in the home. Most of these children do live somewhere in Wisconsin, with a strong percentage of the balance in the Midwest. Respondents were asked to rate the likelihood that those children would return to Manitowoc County at some point in their lives on a scale from 1 to 7, with 7 being Very likely. The mean score for Community respondents was 2.48 as compared to 2.76 for Business respondents. Job opportunities are the single largest barrier to return. These scores are well below average and indicate only slight likelihood of return. This is concerning and could be a target area for future development.

The remaining demographics are used to qualify respondents. The main difference in the two sample groups is that the Business respondents show a higher level of education and income than the Community respondents. This should be noted in reviewing the results and is interesting considering how close many of the responses are. Analysis by key demographics is also a part of the overall package.

The close of the survey asked respondents to identify how long they lived in Manitowoc County. Both samples showed means of over 30 years. The final question in the study asked the likelihood that they would be living in Manitowoc County in 5 years. We see a mean score of 6.29 in the Community sample and 5.88 for Business respondents. It is somewhat concerning to see that businesses are less likely to be here even though their response is strong.

### Information from Detailed Analysis

Leede Research completed a review of the data through the use of selected cross tabs. This tool segments different groups within the study and allows for comparisons. Leede has completed a variety of analysis runs to get a deeper understanding of the data. It should be noted that all of this information is based on the Community sample only. The Business sample is not large enough to conduct detailed analysis.

### Age

The first of these looked at the age of the respondent. Generally speaking the most noted differences occur in those respondents 55+. They show greater importance, but are also more satisfied with items rated in the study. This may be a factor of a stronger experience in the area. The 55+ group shows the strongest NPS at 7. They are also more receptive to reductions in services than the younger respondents.

There are several items of note for the Under 35 population. They show lower levels of satisfaction than the other age groups. They have a NPS of -21, the worst of the age groupings. They are also less likely to live in Manitowoc County five years from now. This is concerning as it indicates that it may be challenging to hold younger residents in the area.

### **Income & Education**

It was interesting to note that there were not as many significant differences by income and education as one might think. We see that those with a High School education place greater importance on the issues tested and also show stronger satisfaction as compared to those with degrees. Those with incomes of between \$50,000 and \$149,000 are more likely to feel that they are employed to an appropriate level than those both below and above that income.

There is a direct correlation seen in the study between education, employment level and income. The data shows that those with lower levels of education are less likely to be currently employed, appropriately employed and show lower incomes of those with higher levels of education. While this is not particularly surprising it is confirmation and should be noted. The results would indicate that raising education levels would likely raise employment opportunities and income in the community.

The results indicate that those with higher income and education levels tend to have lower satisfaction levels and lower Net Promoter Scores. Those with \$150,000+ income show the lowest NPS of -43. Those with a Post Graduate Degree show an NPS of -24. This is concerning as it may indicate challenges in keeping these higher income residents in the area.

Those with incomes of \$75,000 to \$149,000 and those with College Degrees are more likely to be aware of the EDC and its services. This is likely a factor of their work and role in the community, but should be noted.

### **Community**

Leede completed an analysis of the data by the respondent's location. This broke the study results into City of Manitowoc, City of Two Rivers, City of Kiel and Rural. Rural is a summary of all other areas. It should be noted that the Kiel sample is relatively small but is representative of its population in the County.

Manitowoc respondents place greater importance on most of the items tested in the study. This indicates that they have higher expectations than the other respondents.

Kiel respondents are the most positive of the geographic areas reviewed. They show a more positive perception of the employment environment in the County. They are significantly more satisfied with; Employment Opportunities, Employment Security, Employment Growth, Quality and Upkeep of Homes, and Shopping and Entertainment. They are the only positive NPS at 18.

Two Rivers shows some noted differences from the other areas. They are more likely to feel they are under employed and actually show a higher unemployed population than the other areas. On the positive side, they show the strongest awareness and value for the EDC.

One of the goals of running the community cross tab was to identify whether there were specific issues and tools that local governments could use to address their current budgetary challenges. The results indicate that there are very little differences seen in the individual community responses. This indicates that the challenges that exist are common across the county. Residents are not willing to pay additional taxes and fees and are generally not willing to reduce services to cut expenses. This means there may need to be significant education of the public as actions are taken.

### **Next Steps**

EDC leadership would determine the next steps in the process. There is more information that can be generated from this study once Leede understands how the organizations wants to act on the results and implement key strategies in its strategic plan. Any set of questions or responses can be used to generate specific analysis to address key issues.

One of the most important next steps is to review the results and determine specific items that would be used in the metrics of the organization. These items should be used to create a summary worksheet that would be used for reporting and tracking in the future. Leede is available to discuss this and assemble needed materials at any time.

Leede Research is pleased to bring this important information to community leaders. We look forward to continued partnerships and implementing action plans on key items. This is clearly an important time in the history of Manitowoc County.