

## II. Planning Process

This section provides an overview of the planning process used to develop the 2015 Silver Bay Comprehensive Plan, a description of the Steering Committee, and a summary of public involvement during the Plan update.

### The Update Process

The City of Silver Bay adopted its most recent Comprehensive Plan in 2007. This was the first long-range plan the City had completed since 1993. Shortly after the completion of the plan, the country fell into a deep economic recession with impact nationwide. Upon recovering from the economic downturn, the City has found itself at a critical point where reevaluation of its future conditions became necessary.

A Steering Committee of residents and businesses was appointed to guide the Plan Update and to make recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council. The Steering Committee worked with a team of consultants to: update background materials; review and revise the City's vision; choose a future land use map; prepare goals, objectives, and implementation actions. Additional public input was sought through a community-wide survey and public meetings.

### 2007 Silver Bay Comprehensive Plan

The 2007 Silver Bay Comprehensive Plan developed new background information and recommendations for the City. Background information included demographics; transportation and public works; housing; recreation; descriptions of existing land use and zoning; and community and economic development. The Plan made a number of recommendations for guiding development and investment, but did not include a future land use map, a vision statement or desired future narrative.



### Steering Committee

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was vital to development of the 2015 Silver Bay Comprehensive Plan. Steering Committee members represented a broad range of stakeholder groups. The Steering Committee worked closely with the project consultant team and City staff in the development of the Comprehensive Plan in order to ensure that the Plan's vision, goals, objectives, and strategies reflected the diversity of interests and needs in Silver Bay. The Committee was the decision-making entity throughout the process and advances a recommended plan to the Planning Commission and City Council for final review and adoption.

In addition to attending many meetings, reading background materials, and commenting on content, Steering Committee members were also a primary point of communication to and from other community members. The Committee included a wide breadth of citizen, business, and government representation, including:

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- Industry representatives
- Homeowners/Residents
- School District
- Downtown businesses
- Home business owners
- County officials
- Planning Commission members
- Elected officials
- Rural residents
- City staff

A list of participating members is provided in the Acknowledgements page.

### Public Involvement

As part of the Comprehensive Plan process, the City of Silver Bay completed a community survey to assess the priorities and opinions on a number of issues being addressed in the Plan Update.

A community survey is a tool that allows the City to solicit input from a broad cross-section of residents on a variety of topics. Surveys have limitations in regard to the depth of questions and the difficulty in clarifying answers. When used with other public outreach or involvement tools, however, surveys can validate or challenge other results. The survey was conducted in late Fall of 2014.

The survey was mailed to every household in the City of Silver Bay. Respondents could choose to mail their responses or complete the survey online. Over 1,000 surveys were distributed, and 312 were returned, for a return rate of nearly 30 percent.

The survey was intended to gather input from residents for housing, economic development, government operations, and ideas for the future of Silver Bay.



The Steering Committee reviewed the survey results and used the results to shape the vision, goals, mapping, and implementation strategy selection throughout the planning process. A summary of the community survey results is included below and a detailed discussion of the results are provided in Appendix 1 of the Plan.

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## Community Survey Results

### Process

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update process, the Steering Committee prepared and conducted a survey to gain insight into Silver Bay residents' vision for the community. A community survey is a tool that allows the City to solicit input from a broad cross-section of residents on a number of topics. The survey was developed through a collaborative process guided by the Steering Committee and administered by the City and consultants. The survey asked questions regarding housing, economic development, government services, and visions for the future.

The survey was mailed to every household within the city limits. Upon completion of the survey, respondents had the option to mail the survey in, hand deliver it, or complete it online through the survey collection site, Survey Monkey. The survey was available from November through the end of 2014. 312 surveys were received and all were entered into Survey Monkey to be tabulated. The final results of the survey were presented to the community in an open meeting January 21, 2015. The Steering Committee reviewed the survey and used the results to inform their decision-making for the Comprehensive Plan vision, goals and policies.

The following is a summary of the survey, complete results can be found in the Appendix.

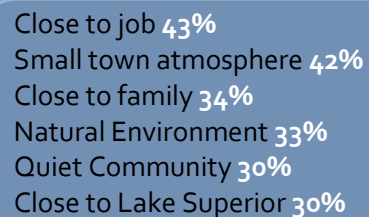
### Summary of Results

The survey was divided into five sections:

1. About You
2. Housing
3. Economic Development
4. Government
5. Vision for the future

The first 13 questions (About You) of the survey were intended to understand who was responding to the survey. By gathering this information, the City can have a better knowledge about how different residents view the city and what their expectations are for the future. These questions revealed that 86% of respondents are homestead property owners, and that more than half have lived in Silver Bay for longer than 20 years; 40% have lived in Silver Bay for more than 40 years.

Respondents were asked to select the main reasons they live in Silver Bay. The top response received was to be close to their job. Other motivations included small town atmosphere, close to family, and the proximity of the natural environment. As the community looks to its future, it should continue to recognize the aspects currently enjoyed by its residents.



- Close to job 43%
- Small town atmosphere 42%
- Close to family 34%
- Natural Environment 33%
- Quiet Community 30%
- Close to Lake Superior 30%

This section also looked into how residents felt about the government services received. Overall, residents are generally satisfied with government services, with more than 93% of respondents expressing that they were at least "Somewhat Satisfied". There were, however, some aspects of city operations that were unpopular with

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residents. A quarter of respondents indicated that they found certain operations inadequate including: street maintenance, sidewalk disrepair, police, and garbage service.

Housing considerations included a question regarding the types of housing respondents would like to see in Silver Bay. More than half (52%) expressed the need for existing houses to be rehabilitated versus any new development. Senior housing also seemed to be important to residents, with 43% indicating a need for more. A little less than 30% would like to see construction of additional single-family homes. Other housing types (multi-family, townhomes, vacation housing, etc.) were viewed less favorably.

When asked what residents saw for the future of Silver Bay, many (42%) responded that they would like to see it be a stand-alone small town. One third (33%) would like to see it be a regional economic center. These responses are not necessarily mutually exclusive; Silver Bay can plan to maintain its small town atmosphere, while providing a node of lively economic center for locals and seasonal tourists along the north shore.

The results were analyzed to see if there were major differences in responses based on the amount of time a respondent has lived in Silver Bay. The respondents were divided into those who have lived in the community for more than 20 years and those who lived in Silver Bay for fewer than 20 years. The results are below:

### Q7. What is the main reason you live in Silver Bay?

More than 20 years	Fewer than 20 years
1. Close to job	1. Natural environment
2. Small town atmosphere	2. Close to Lake Superior
3. Close to family	3. Small town atmosphere

### Q17. In the future how do you view Silver Bay?

More than 20 years	Fewer than 20 years
45% Stand alone small town	39% Stand alone small town
37% Regional economic center	30% Regional economic center

### Q21. Identify the types of business that are needed for Silver Bay

More than 20 years	Fewer than 20 years
1. Campground	1. Technology oriented business
2. Transportation services	2. Manufacturing oriented business
3. Manufacturing oriented businesses	3. Campground
4. Technology oriented business	4. Recreational oriented business
5. Recreational oriented business	5. Transportation
6. Small retail	6. Restaurant/coffee shop

The difference in tenure does not appear to create significant differences in future community priorities. There are few distinctions in the preferences of those who have lived in Silver Bay for more than 20 years and those who have lived in the community for less time.

Complete results of the community survey can be found in Appendix 1.