

Community Visited: Village of Waterford

12/22/09

Date of Visit: Monday September 14th & Saturday September 19th, 2009

Visit Completed by: Village of Kewaskum

First Impressions:

A Program for Community Assessment & Improvement



This program was first developed by Andrew Lewis and James Schneider in 1991. It was revised in 2002 by Andrew Lewis with further revisions in 2007. This guide booklet format was developed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Rural Development Division, Ontario, Canada, in 2004. Questions about the program should be directed to:

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**First Impressions:
A Program for Community Assessment & Improvement
Final Report**

Community You Visited: Waterford WI

Visitation Team Profile:

First Team:

Name 1: Matt Heiser
Age: 43 Gender: Male Occupation: Village Administrator

Name 2: Julie Stoltz
Age: 37 Gender: Female Occupation: Plan Commission Member

Name 3: Chad cook
Age: 35 Gender: Male Occupation: Building Inspector/Zoning Adm.

*Date of visit and time spent: Monday September 14, 2009- 4 hours
Weather on date of visit: Sunny and Warm*

Second Team:

Name 4: Cheryl Peterson
Age: 38 Gender: Female Occupation: Business owner

Name 5: Andrew Kuehl
Age: 29 Gender: Male Occupation: Periodicals Publisher

Name 6: Jeff Rohrer
Age: 61 Gender: Male Occupation: Designer

Name 7: Kathy Ray
Age: N/A Gender: Female Occupation: President, Kewaskum Elementary PTO

*Date of visit and time spent: Saturday September 19, 2009- 4 hours
Weather on date of visit: Sunny and Warm*

Prior To Your Visit

What is your impression of the community before your upcoming visit? What are you expecting to see? Please comment on what you know about this community.

- My impression is that this is a community very similar to Kewaskum. I'm expecting to see a familiar downtown, river winding through the village and mix of old and new neighborhoods.
- I have no impression thus far. I have been to Waterford once before, but was only on the out-skirts of town.
- Suburb of Milwaukee. Young, growing community. I know nothing about Waterford.
- I scoped out Waterford so I have an idea of its surroundings. I like their school campus.
- My first impression of Waterford was positive. I'm expecting a friendly, clean, quaint community. I'm not sure if I would spend my vacation in Waterford; but I could see myself spending 1-2 days biking and canoeing.
- First visit to Waterford. I have heard of Waterford and expect a fairly pleasant community.

For Visiting Team Coordinators

This and all of the ratings that follow are on a scale of 1-10, where 1 indicates "poor" and 10 indicates "excellent." Numbers in parenthesis represent the frequency of similar comments.

How easy was it to get information by mail and telephone about the community you are visiting? Are you satisfied with the quality of information received? Did the information arrive in a timely fashion?

- Very helpful and cooperative.
- I received all my information from the Internet. The site was well done and easy to navigate.

Quality of online materials:

Average Team Score: 7.0

Range of Scores: 7 to 7 (3 responses)

Observations:

- Both the village and chamber websites were very complimentary to the community. I learned a lot about Waterford from both. However, no maps of the village on either. I went down to the village without a map of it.
- Very nice Chamber website. Village website isn't linked, as well as the Chamber site (on search engines) and doesn't provide an "experience" (quite dry and functional). Not favorable restaurant reviews on tripadvisor.com
- Mainly reviewed their village site which seemed informative and gave a general overview and generated some expectations of their community.

The Five Minute Impression

After taking a five-minute drive through the community without stopping, what was your first impression?

- Waterford gives a very pleasant initial impression. If I would criticize anything it would be the condition of some of the residences as you enter the village from the east. I was not sure if the little business park with McDonald's was in the village or not.
- The welcome sign was very nicely done. The schools on the main street through town looked very inviting and well kept. The overall drive through gave me the impression that it was a very nice and inviting, rural community to live in.
- Was there more to it? Difficult to know when we were leaving the village.
- I felt signs were missing; there was nothing talking about the river. Also thought the facades on the downtown buildings were in need of paint and various improvements. Thought the school campus was VERY impressive.
- I felt that the website portrayed a different image of the village; the shops were not as visually inviting as on the website. Shops needed painting. The entrance to the village had nice signage. The Main Street was dirty. The village could use better signage for directions.
- Much like Kewaskum in many ways. A relatively small village that has a good sense of community and people who are contributing members of Waterford.



Example of a façade in need of painting

Notes:

- Quaint town; limited signage within town; (Welcome to, you are now leaving . . .).
- Liked initial sign, but disappointed after that. Impressed with layout of schools. Disappointed in lack of walkways and public parks.
- The bathroom that we used at the gas station was dirty and needed repair. The attendant was helpful and nice.
- Nice School System
- Nice community buildings – library was very nice; inconsistent or minimal “downtown”



Beautiful library that is highly visible in the downtown

Community Entrances

Approach the community from the major entrances. Rate and comment on each entrance.

ENTRANCE #1 (East – Hwy 164/83):

Average Team Score: 8.2

Range of Scores: 7 to 9 (5 responses)

Observations:

- Loved the brick sign
- Nice brick “Waterford” but looks like a subdivision sign. No “Welcome” – nice brick structure – placement was strange – not welcoming – statement
- Hard to see from Hwy 164, but nice sign
- Very impressive, made of stone and accented with plants
- Very nice – legible entrance sign (masonry). Older residential surroundings.

ENTRANCE #2 (West – Hwy 20):

Average Team Score: 4.8

Range of Scores: 3 to 7 (4 responses)

Observations:

- Older signs looked aged
- Needs updating. Where was it?
- Sign was very 1980’s – needs update
- Typical with older signage. Near school



Example of an older community entrance sign & overgrown shrubs

ENTRANCE #3 (South – Hwy 20/83):

Average Team Score: 6.3

Range of Scores: 6 to 7 (3 responses)

Observations:

- There’s an old green house that dominates the southern border could use maintenance.
- Nicely done. Nice bike trail that are blacktopped, some trails are gravel.
- Rather seamless transition from Rochester green.

ENTRANCE #4 (Southwest – Business Park):

Average Team Score: 7.0

Range of Scores: 7 (1 response)

Observations:

- Business/manufacturing activity; new residential



View from the boat launch

OTHER ENTRANCES:

- Marina on the river
- Trail seemed extensive and similar to Eisenbahn Trail in Town of Kewaskum.

Observations:

- The launch gave a great view of the river. However, there wasn’t much of the river that an observer could see from a distance.
- Bike trails nice idea (we didn’t have the opportunity to check it out). Boat launch was nice.

Housing and Residential Areas

How would you rate the overall quality, affordability, and availability of housing in the community?

Average Team Score: 7.2
Range of Scores: 4 to 8 (6 responses)

Quality

Rate using a 1-10 scale (10 is best/highest)

Average ratings for each:

6.3	Existing/Older Homes (6 Responses)	8.4	New Homes (6 Responses)
7.7	Housing for Seniors (3 Responses)	6.2	Apartments/Rental Housing (5 Resp.)
8.2	Vacant lots for new homes (6 Responses)		

Observations:

- Didn't note much rental housing.
- Only saw one established building for seniors and that looked VERY nice.
- Thought homes needed repairs.
- There was a nice mix of old, new, apartments, housing

Affordability

Is there an adequate mix of housing to suit a variety of income levels?

- Yes! (2)
- Not sure of the price for housing; looks like all levels of income.

Observations:

- A wide variety of housing was available. Older stuff in the center of Waterford, very new on the borders.
- There appeared to be an adequate mix.
- Yes
- Thought there were more mid-level income homes.
- Very diversified housing stock with many options for new residents.

Availability

Rate using a 1-10 scale (10 is best/highest)

Average ratings for each:

6.2	Existing/Older Homes (6 Responses)	6.3	New Homes (6 Responses)
8.0	Housing for Seniors (3 Responses)	6.2	Apartments/Rental Housing (5 Resp.)
8.2	Vacant lots for new homes (6 Responses)		

Observations:

- Did not note many homes for sale.
- Did not notice many homes for sale.
- We noted one senior housing available in Waterford.
- Seemed like plenty of availability without too much vacancy.

What are the most appealing and least appealing features of the housing in this community? Why?

- The newer housing all looked large and luxurious. Some of the older stuff along Hwy 83 was under-maintained.
- Most appealing was that a lot of homeowners kept their yards up. Could have used more sidewalks.
- Took awhile to find the newer housing. Older homes are well maintained.
- It seemed the larger more attractive homes were in township.
- The lack of sidewalks and bike lanes on the streets throughout the community could be a safety problem. The village was sprawling, which may inhibit walking to shops and restaurants.
- The ability to choose from many options to suit different lifestyles.

Please comment on the quality and availability of residential infrastructure (e.g., roads, sidewalks, lighting, public transportation, bike trails/lanes, and green space, street trees, yards):

- I was a little surprised at the variability of sidewalks. Many subdivisions did not have them. We would be driving along and then suddenly they would stop. And in the places they existed, sometimes they were right next to the road.
- Definitely more sidewalks could be put in. Parks looked okay – but not really conducive for kids. They could use more play structures.
- Houses well maintained. Some areas missing sidewalks (not sure if it was town or village).
- The county bike trail is great.
- Sidewalks - generally rather inconsistent.
- Bike trail seemed nice.

Appeal Rating Category

How would you rate the overall appeal of housing to the following populations (1=Not Appealing, 10 =Very Appealing):

Average ratings for each:

<u>6.7</u> Single young adults (6 Responses)	<u>6.7</u> Senior citizen (6 Responses)
<u>7.5</u> Young families (6 Responses)	<u>7.2</u> Upscale/professional (6 Responses)
<u>7.0</u> Middle income (6 Responses)	

Please comment on your observations:

- The nicer homes seem to be in township.
- It was hard to determine if we were in Village or Town.
- The only group that may have a difficult time with finding housing and convenient location would be the senior citizen.
- Diversified with many older homes and newer stock as well.

Education, Health, Social and Emergency Services

Education

Comment on the availability and appearance of schools.

Pre-school/Kindergarten/Head Start

- Did not note any buildings for that.

Primary/Elementary/Middle School

- Saw campuses for 3 elementary schools and 1 middle school. It looked like the elementary schools were all the same, which is a cool concept.
- These schools looked very nice and inviting.

High School

- The high school was on the same central campus as the middle school and 1 elementary school. The whole central campus was very impressive. It was easily located, just on the west end of the central business district and well identified. I did not see the overflow of student parking that we struggle with.
- Right on the main drag – easy to find and also looked well-maintained.



Impressive school facilities included an athletic field.

College/University

- Absent
- None

General Comments

- Beautiful!! Very impressive.
- All the schools looked great! By far your best asset.
- I was very impressed with the school system. I like the location of the schools and their location to each other. The people that I talked with in the community about the school gave them high scores for academics and summer programs with the library.
- All schools seemed well maintained.

What do residents (young and old) think about the quality and availability of their local schools?

- Pleased.
- Seemed to be very happy.
- The people that I talked with in the community about the school gave them high scores for academics and summer programs with the library.
- There was a great deal of pride in their schools and facilities.

Overall, how would you rate the adequacy of schools for a community of this size?

Average Team Score: 9.0
Range of Scores: 8 to 10 (6 responses)

Observations:

- The facilities are large, appear new and are in good shape.

Health Care Services

Comment on the availability and apparent quality of healthcare facilities

Hospitals:

- I did not note any.
- I believe the closest hospital is Burlington.
- Clinic
- None
- Waterford uses Aurora Health Center
- Sufficient

Physician, dentist, optometrist, and other medical offices and clinics:

- I only saw the huge optometrist office on the east side of town. Did not note any other healthcare facilities.
- The Aurora Clinic looked nice and was visible. Saw one dentist office.
- Nice variety.
- Saw a nice mix for community.
- Available.
- Adequate

Long-term care, assisted living, and nursing home facilities:

- Did see one Chiropractor.
- Adequate for size of community.
- Saw a sign, but that is all
- Did not see long-term health care

Other health services (e.g., Chiropractor, psychotherapy, naturopath, massage, etc.):

- Nice variety.
- Nice mix.
- Saw chiropractic and optical services.
- Chiropractic downtown office was very nice.

Overall, how would you rate the adequacy of health care services for a community of this size?

Average Team Score: 6.7
Range of Scores: 2 to 8 (6 responses)

Please comment:

- Typical

Social Services

What social services (e.g., day care, senior center, counseling, etc.) are available in the community?

- There is a large, well-signed Senior Living Center.
- Day care and counseling.
- Saw senior center; did not see child care.
- Day care observed and looked active.

Overall, how would you rate the level of social services for a community of this size?

Average Team Score: 6.8
Range of Scores: 6 to 8 (4 responses)

Civic

Are there a variety of not-for-profit organizations and clubs within the community?

- Yes – as shown by their presence on the entrance signs.
- Not Sure (2)
- Yes (2)

Overall, how would you rate the level of nonprofit/civic services for a community of this size?

Average Team Score: 7.5
Range of Scores: 7 to 8 (4 responses)

Please comment: n/a

Emergency Services

Overall, how would you rate the police, fire, ambulance, and emergency medical service facilities? How do local residents feel about these services?

Average Team Score: 7.4
Range of Scores: 5 to 8 (5 responses)

Please Comment:

- Community does not have local police – that did not seem normal to me.
- There was an adequate presence of police and fire.
- There is a large and impressive public safety building downtown (police and fire).
- The emergency services looked very adequate for Waterford.
- Buildings well maintained
- Appears to be sufficient; Waterford has one full-time Chief and uses the county sheriff's department.
- Residents generally were very positive about their emergency services.

Local Economy

What is your impression of the health of the local economy?

- It was my impression that the industrial parks were buzzing. But the downtown stores were almost all closed. We were there on a Monday.
- Just getting by.
- Struggling
- Looked to be strained by amount of shopping available.
- The business/manufacturing area seemed very active. Downtown was rather stagnant (it was Monday!)



Even though hours of operation said it should be open, this store was closed

Downtown

Could you locate the downtown easily? If not, why did you have difficulty finding it?

- Yes. The downtown business district is located along the Hwy 20, which runs through the center of the village from east to west.
- Yes – just as we came in, we flowed right into it.
- Limited signage.
- Very easy to find downtown.
- We had no difficulty finding the downtown.
- Yes, Main Street

Rate and comment on the overall appearance of the downtown (buildings, displays, signage, streetscape).

Average Team Score: 5.5
 Range of Scores: 4 to 8 (6 responses)



Downtown retail district

- Could use a little updating.
- Under-utilized river – beautiful on website but not accessible and under-marketed to public.
- I like the architecture of the buildings and the new library. The streets were dirty and had litter on and off the streets. Some of the shops needed painting and improved signage. The village street could use signage for directions and better continuity of street lights.
- Average small town Wisconsin flavor.

Rate and comment on the variety of shopping in the downtown.

Average Team Score: 4.8
Range of Scores: 3 to 6 (6 responses)

- Most of the shops downtown were resale stores. So I would not say there was a huge variety.
- Appeared to be heavy on the resale end. Although they were very well maintained once inside.
- First stop Citgo bathroom – horrible, dirty bathroom; broken benches, ridiculous Frisbee key, garbage all over.
- Lots of resale shops – bookstore and the clerk was great.
- The village could have better variety of shops.
- Many consignment and second-hand retailers. The book store was great!



Uninviting restroom

Rate and comment on the customer service you received in the downtown.

Average Team Score: 8.2
Range of Scores: 7 to 9 (6 responses)

- The service was good. However, the gas station at the east end of town did not have any maps.
- Some shops were closed. So I only got in a few. But the ones I did, I was met with warm welcomes – especially one of the resale shops.
- Ok. Citgo gave names of restaurants but no recommendations and didn't volunteer anything else. Bookstore – Great! Knowledgeable and friendly.
- Signs need improvements. Placement is also unappealing.
- Excellent.
- Monday was fairly dead with many stores and establishments closed.



Poorly maintained patio



Very inviting patio adjacent to river



Appealing bookstore with knowledgeable staff

Rate and comment on the signage in the downtown.

Average Team Score: 5.5
 Range of Scores: 4 to 7 (6 Responses)

- Signage was interesting. There was a large sign if you enter from the south, suspended between 2 buildings. If you noticed it, it was informative. But the colors don't really make it stand out. And, if you're traveling east-west you can't see it.
- It was fine. Nothing really stood out.
- Limited and aging.
- Some of the shops needed painting and improved signage. The village street could use signage for directions and better continuity of street lights. Needs improvement on content and direction.
- Direction sign.



Directional signage suspended between buildings



Rate and comment on the window displays in the downtown.

Average Team Score: 6.3
 Range of Scores: 4 to 8 (6 responses)

- Could use some updating.
- Some great: "Wears It At Thrift store" (Love Inc); The Book Center. Some really bad: Phuket, Dots Café, Closet Cataway.
- Average window displays.
- Rather nice and conveyed the message of the interior business activity.



Attractive awning, but dirty siding and confusing signage- café or dog grooming?



Attractive window display

Rate and comment on the variety and quality of merchandise in the downtown.

Average Team Score: 4.6
Range of Scores: 3 to 6 (5 responses)

- Again, most stores were resale.
- Could be better variety – maybe a Dollar Store or gift shop.
- Abundance of thrift and consignment stores.
- The variety and quality of the merchandise was below what I was expecting.
- Mostly resale shops. Bookstore was the exception.



Downtown parking available behind buildings and connected to Main Street with attractive walkway and landscaping

Comment on the mix of facilities and services in the downtown (housing, professional services, retail, recreation, accommodation and food, industry, parks, etc.).

- There seemed to be a decent mix of restaurants and bars. However, we were there on a Monday so they were all closed.
- Downtown was nice that it contained no mix of residential.
- Very nice in these categories with a good mix of business, bar/restaurant, community facilities and housing.

Rate and comment on the quality and availability of parking in the downtown.

Average Team Score: 8.0
Range of Scores: 7 to 9 (5 responses)

- There's a large public lot just north of the main street.
- Good availability.
- There was adequate parking.
- The fact that most of the available parking was behind the buildings was an attribute.



Weeds growing in landscaping

Rate and comment on the quality (appearance, adequacy, etc.) of lighting in the downtown.

Average Team Score: 7.0
Range of Scores: 6 to 8 (3 responses)

- We were there during mid-day when weather was clear.
- I like the architecture of the buildings and the new library. The streets were dirty and had litter on and off the streets. Some of the shops needed painting and improved signage. The village street could use signage for directions and better continuity of streetlights.
- Daytime – not much observation there.

Does the downtown play a role in tourism? Is there potential for the downtown to play a greater role?

- Yes. It is an inviting walk. Plus there are lots of public facilities (library, village hall) downtown.
- Hard to believe that you have access to water frontage– that could definitely be enhanced upon.
- Little.
- Yes. There could be great opportunity.
- I think the downtown could play a bigger role.
- Chamber office downtown.

Describe the residential housing mix in the downtown (apartment, single detached).

- Waterford has done a good job at reserving downtown for business. Some of the residences you pass as you drive in from the east need work though.
- Did not seem to stand out – so to me that was good.
- Older single family.
- Some apartments.
- 2nd floor rentals with single family on perimeter of downtown.

Would you find the downtown to be a desirable place to live? Please comment.

- Waterford seemed to suffer from the same thing we do – heavy, loud truck traffic through downtown. Makes residency there noisy.
- Doesn't seem to aid itself to that.
- No – not much to offer.
- No – did not look like apartments were kept up.
- Not enough variety to live downtown. River would be attracting.
- Not really.



Highly visible Chamber of Commerce located in the downtown

Were there any government or nonprofit organization activities that are serving as traffic generators for the downtown (city hall, post office, YMCA)?

- Three government facilities are downtown, but I did not note these generating heavy traffic.
- The library was gorgeous
- Chamber.
- City Hall/Library complex was nice. Community could have nice potential to use river, but instead they have their fire department and a parking lot.
- Library.
- Village Hall/ post office, library and chamber office.



Wonderful library located in the downtown

General Information About Overall Retail

Describe the mix of retail shopping available (malls, specialty shops, strip malls, big box stores).

- There is a new business park on east end of town that seems detached from rest of village.
- Strip mall is located outside of town.
- No strip malls or big box stores
- Mostly specialty shops and strip malls.

What retail goods do local residents appear to need to travel to surrounding communities for?

- Anything in a department store
- Any big box item or DIY store
- Groceries
- New clothing
- Auto purchases
- Major product purchases (2)
- Clothing and household stuff.

What stores or services were missing that you would expect to find?

- Actually – I thought Waterford had a lot for a community of 4,800 people.
- Grocery
- Car dealer
- Arts & Crafts
- Furniture store
- Lumber yard
- Candy store
- More hair salons and fast food

What retail stores or services did you find that were unusual or unexpected for a town of this size?

- Everything looked adequate
- Nice variety of restaurants
- Far too many resale, used consignment stores.
- The downtown book store and model shop
- Mostly the consignment and second-hand stores.

What store(s) in this community would you travel a distance of more than 30 miles to patronize?

- Uncle Harry's Frozen Custard (2)
- The book store (3)



Destination frozen custard

Rate and comment on the overall condition of the retail sector

Average Team Score: 6.2
Range of Scores: 5 to 7 (6 responses)

- Need painting and better signage.

Other Retail Shopping Areas (e.g. Malls, Big Box stores, etc.):

If applicable, explore other retail shopping areas outside of the downtown business district and visit as many businesses as possible.

Retail Area #1

Type (Shopping mall etc.):

Location: East side of town

Rate and comment on the overall appearance.

Average Team Score: 8.0

Range of Scores: 1-9 (3 responses)

- It was brand new.

Rate and comment on the variety of shopping.

Average Team Score: 6.0

Range of Scores: 5-7 (3 responses)

- Some of it was office space, exercise and restaurants. So it was not all retail.
- The Pick n' Save and True Value shopping areas looked okay and the shopping that looked real new just as we entered in off Hwy 36, looked very nice.
- More service oriented

Rate and comment on the customer service of businesses you visited.

Average Team Score: 9.5

Range of Scores: 9 to 10 2 responses

- All nice people.
- The lady at the resale shop was very welcoming and informative.

Rate and comment on the variety and quality of merchandise.

Average Team Score: 6.0

Range of Scores: 5 to 7 2 responses

Retail Area #2

Type (Shopping mall etc.): Grocery store, hardware store, furniture store ice cream shop

Location: Around Town

Rate and comment on the overall appearance.

Average Team Score: 7.7

Range of Scores: 7 to 8 (3 response)

- Furniture Store- Clean & friendly. Warehouse feel

Rate and comment on the variety of shopping.

Average Team Score: 7.0
Range of Scores: 4 to 10 (2 Responses)

- Good variety of shops

Rate and comment on the customer service of businesses you visited.

Average Team Score: 9.0
Range of Scores: 7 to 10 (3 responses)

- Went to the ice cream shop in the village and the clerk was pleasant.
- Excellent- Nice and helpful

Rate and comment on the variety and quality of merchandise.

Average Team Score: 6.0
Range of Scores: 6 (1 response)

- Not a whole lot of variety in the shops downtown, but looks as if the travel wouldn't be far for all needs.

Local Industries

What are the major industrial sectors in the community (e.g., manufacturing, construction, transportation)?

- There is a sizeable industrial park near their water tower.
- Very impressed with their industrial park.
- Did not notice any
- Small manufacturing/construction trades

Who do you think are the major employers in the community?

- The largest buildings in the community were the schools. But the industries all had full parking lots.
- Small handful of employers.
- School District
- The school
- One company in business park was fairly active but not a major employer.

What are the major types of manufacturing in the community?

- Could not tell from the outside or not sure. (4)

What are the major types of primary industry in the community (e.g. agriculture, mining, forestry or fishing)?

- Don't know what the industries produced.
- Unknown.
- Agriculture.

Is the community noticeably dependent on any one type of industry? If so please comment:

- No. There did not appear to be any one major employer. (5)
- This appears to be a commuter community.

Is there a well-defined industrial park or improved land where industries could locate or expand?

- There was a lot of vacant land on the southeast side of town, with only a bank on it. We think that might be their TIF.
- Yes (2)– industrial park looked good and land adjacent made room to expand.
- Did see industrial park.

Are the industrial facilities well maintained?

- Yes (4), although there's a daycare center in the industrial park. The park does not have sidewalks, so we saw a group of kids walking on roads.

Would this community be an attractive location for industrial development? Why or why not?

- Yes. There is easy access to state highways.
- I think it would - there seemed to be land open in the area. Maybe location of village is off the beaten path a little.
- Certainly
- Yes – nice location.
- For small local manufacturers Waterford seems suitable.

Commercial Services

What types of commercial businesses serve the local community (high-speed internet provider, print shops, etc.)?

- I did not note these.
- Appeared to have one internet provider and one tee-shirt print/trophy shop.
- Copy/print shop
- Furniture store
- Pick n'Save
- Bank

What commercial services appear to be missing in the community?

- Maybe a specialty gift type store. Maybe something to promote their lakefront property – canoe rental maybe?
- Public transportation.

Professional Services

Are banks and ATMs conveniently located? Do the banks have convenient hours of service?

- I think there was an ATM at the gas station on the east side of town (by McDonald's). Otherwise did not note them.
- Appeared to be satisfactory.
- Only saw one bank outside of village
- Yes (2)

How would you rate the adequacy of financial services for a community of this size?

Average Team Score: 6.4
Range of Scores: 4 to 9 (5 responses)

Please Comment:

- There was a bank downtown that was closed.
- Seemed to be plenty to handle community that size.
- I would have thought more banks.

What other professional services are available (accounting, insurance, legal, etc.)? Are there any apparent gaps?

- We saw offices for local lawyer just like ours.
- Seemed to be fine.
- Seemed adequate.
- These services seemed to serve the local community.

Tourism

Does the community have a strong tourism sector? Please comment:

- It did not appear that it did.
- Not really – could play up lake more.
- No.
- Has GREAT chamber location, but was closed on a Saturday
- The river is the strongest tourist attraction.
- Moderate to not much tourism – vacationers in the water? Maybe.

Does the community have a slogan/brand?

- Based on the big sign between the buildings – I believe it does.
- Not really.
- No (3)
- “A great place to come home to”

Is the community well known for an attraction or event?

- No.
- Not that we heard or saw.
- No.
- Fox River
- Well known for water activities.
- Summer and fall activities more on the park.



Beautiful, but small public space along river

What have you seen that could be developed into a tourist attraction (natural or man-made)?

- The river appears to be under-utilized. There is very little public view of it. It is almost entirely blocked by private residences.
- More public access to the lake.
- Fox River under-utilized. Would like to see an adjacent park expanded.

- Boat landing
- Better public access to the river and information.
- More emphasis on the link with the river and lake.

Rate and comment on the quality and appearance of existing tourist attractions.

Average Team Score: 4.0
 Range of Scores: 3 to 7 (5 responses)

- Did not really note many.

Do you consider any of the attractions to be underdeveloped? Please comment.

- If you don't have lakefront property – you might miss the lake.
- Boat Landing
- Public restaurant and hotels on the river.
- The trail and the lake and river area.

Are there any community events that could be expanded/developed to be a tourist attraction?
 Please specify:

- I was not aware of any.
- Move parking lot and use land along river.

Comment on the availability and selection of overnight accommodations in the community (hotels, motels, campgrounds, B&Bs).

- There is a big hotel in the business park on the east side of town. Actually, very big and nice for a small community.
- One nice commercial hotel as we entered and saw a sign for a B&B.
- Nice newer hotel.
- One hotel – very nice.
- Hotels and B&B are lacking in the downtown area.
- Hotel at Waterford entrance was new and seemed to service the area appropriately.

Are there facilities to accommodate a conference and/or a large number of visitors?

- Yes. There's a large facility in the west end of town (Cotton Exchange) and a smaller facility downtown.
- I think so. The new library seems to be making nice rooms, as well.
- No (2)
- Yes – Cotton Mill Exchange or golf course.

Is there a Visitor's Center, Chamber of Commerce office, or other facility serving the needs of tourists? Please comment on staff, facilities, signage, marketing material, maps, etc.

- There's a Chamber office that was closed on Monday.
- The Chamber of Commerce office was easy to find.
- Yes, but closed on Saturday! (2)
- Yes, but needs to be open on weekends (easier said than done).
- Yes, not open Monday.

Rate and comment on the customer service of Chamber/Visitor Center staff:

Average Team Score: 5.0
Range of Scores: 3 to 7 (4 responses)

Restaurants

Comment and rate the quality of restaurants:

Quality

Average Team Score: 7.5
Range of Scores: 7 to 8 (4 responses)

Comments:

- They were all closed downtown. So we tried the Cotton Exchange out of town and they don't serve lunch. So we ended up at the Bunker. We did not drive through the business park on the east side of town until afternoon, so we didn't know of the restaurants there.
- The barn restaurant appeared to be a cool place to go, but was closed.
- Marty's was better than expected.
- The Bunker was an interesting place. Cotton Exchange – no lunch hours during week?

Variety/Mix of Restaurants

Average Team Score: 7.0
Range of Scores: 6 to 9 (4 responses)

Comments:

- Could use more casual- not fast food.
- Great variety- most didn't open until 4 pm though.

What do local residents recommend on where to stay, eat, and visit? One way to do this is to ask questions: "I have only one hour (half a day, etc.) in this community, what would you recommend?" or "where would you recommend we stay/eat?"

- We didn't really ask people that.
- Marty's Thai, Cotton-wood
- The local gas station and shops were helpful in giving information and directions.
- The Bunker came recommended.

What local restaurant, specialty shop or attraction would bring you back to this community in the near future?

- The Cotton Exchange looked intriguing.
- I would like to go in the Barn building and the ice cream shop was very good.
- Bookstore (2)
- Cotton Exchange
- Dining at Cotton Exchange or the Bunker again.

Government/Public Services

Local Government Information

Are municipal offices conveniently located?

Please comment:

- They are right downtown. Very easily located and identified.
- Yes – looked VERY nice!
- Yes (2)
- Yes, great complex, great location.
- Yes – Very nice for a small community.

How would you rate the availability and quality of the following information provided by the municipal government?



Attractive village hall and library

Community brochure/guide:

Average Team Score: 9.0

Range of Scores: 8 to 10 (5 responses)

- Except for it not being online. I should be able to get it off their website.
- Great marketing materials.
- Awesome book.
- Good website and guidebook.

Business Directory:

Average Team Score: 7.5

Range of Scores: 4 to 9 (4 responses)

- We printed off the list of restaurants from the chamber site. It didn't really have the stuff on the east side business park. It had downtown restaurants which were all closed.

Community Profile (including business and industrial sites):

Average Team Score: No Responses

Range of Scores: No Responses

How would you rate the helpfulness of government employees?

Average Team Score: 9.0

Range of Scores: 8 to 10 (4 responses)

- Library staff was great. (2)
- Everyone at library was helpful.
- Nice and helpful in giving information about the community.



Inviting library

Public Infrastructure

Comment on and rate each of the following for quality accessibility, or availability where relevant.

Public Transportation:

Average Team Score: 2.0
 Range of Scores: 1 to 3 (3 responses)

Comment:

- Did not note any. Didn't really think they need it.
- None (2)
- Not much noticeable public transportation

Sidewalks:

Average Team Score: 3.8
 Range of Scores: 2 to 6 (5 responses)

Comment:

- Very hit-or-miss. New neighborhoods lacked them.
- Hardly any, and low curbs
- Lack of them in residential areas
- Only downtown.
- Not consistently installed through Waterford.

Streets:

Average Team Score: 6.4
 Range of Scores: 5 to 8 (5 responses)

Comment:

- They struggle with weeds in the curbs just like we do.
- Seemed ok.
- Need street cleaners; really need landscaping maintenance.
- The streets were dirty – no sidewalks or bike paths in the subdivisions.
- Street design was not consistent in terms of curb and gutter.

Landscaping, Street Trees:

Average Team Score: 5.2
 Range of Scores: 2 to 8 (6 responses)

Comment:

- Did not really note any that were public.
- Nice view of the lake. Did see some crazy wild flower patches that looked way over-grown



No curb between sidewalk and street



Beautiful landscaping



Overgrown landscaping

- weeds by library.
- Poor maintenance.
- Great start. No upkeep done.
- Nicely done at the library and schools.

Public Restrooms:

Average Team Score: 5.0
 Range of Scores: 2 to 10 (6 responses)

Comment:

- Visited the library to find some.
- Went in the library – just beautiful.
- Citgo bathrooms were terrible – felt like I needed a shower after.
- Gas station needed work.
- Library

Street Signage:

Average Team Score: 5.8
 Range of Scores: 2 to 8 (6 responses)

Comment:

- New neighborhoods had decorative signs. There were very nice.
- Okay, but did like the one between buildings downtown.
- Almost hit head on street sign while walking; limited signs.
- Needs improvement and lack of information.
- Adequate

Pay phones, drinking fountains, benches, public Internet access points, other misc:

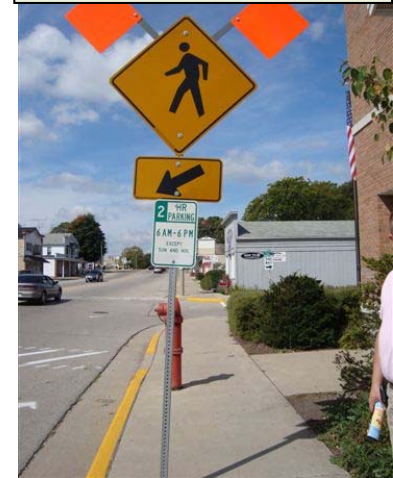
Average Team Score: 4.8
 Range of Scores: 2 to 8 (5 responses)

Comment:

- Didn't note any of these. Pay phones not needed any more.
- Nice garbage can in parks
- None noticed
- Lacking.



Debris in streets



Dangerous low hanging street signage



Beautiful rain garden along river outside library and village hall



Endangered prairie flower area could use additional signage- looks like overgrown weeds

Planning

Do you see conflicting land uses in the community (e.g., a residential subdivision next to a pulp mill)? Please comment:

- Community seemed better planned than ours. Industry and business districts separated from residences. The only disappointment was public access to river.
- No – not noticeably.
- Great school planning; residential seems oddly laid out.
- Seemed like community was sectioned. There was no flow.

Are all land uses appropriate (commercial, residential, green space etc.)? Specify where land uses are not appropriate:

- Can't think of any inappropriate land uses.
- Seemed to flow fine.
- Limited green space outside of schools.
- The village is spread out and appears to need more connecting green space.

Did you experience traffic congestion anywhere?

Comment:

- Did not experience congestion but noted the loud, heavy trucks on Main Street.
- No (4)
- Traffic was not a big factor.



Uneven pavement in crosswalk due to cracks and asphalt repairs

Are community facilities and infrastructure generally accessible for people with disabilities?

Please comment.

- Yes. Everything was open.
- They seemed to be fine.
- Yes.
- Needs improvement.
- Yes, the new buildings seemed accessible for handicapped.

Does the community appear to be pedestrian/bike friendly?

- Not really. Lacking sidewalks in new neighborhoods.
- Did notice a path – so yes, looked to be friendly.
- Difficult to cross the street downtown.
- Very.
- No – especially bikes.
- Lack of sidewalks.



Overgrown trees blocking signage

Recreation, Faith, Culture and Heritage

Recreation

Facilities

Comment on the availability & appearance of each of the following types of recreational facilities. Rate each type of facility.

Parks:

Average Team Score: 4.2
 Range of Scores: 2 to 6 (6 responses)

Comment:

- I'm not sure if our expectations were unrealistic, but park space seemed very limited. Surprised to see gigantic fence/gate to secure athletic field entrance. Did not note signage directing me to athletic park. Spent time driving around looking for park space.
- The entrance was scary to the ball field – nice fields, but where do people park?
- Where is the play equipment?
- Did not see many.
- The park with the baseball diamond seemed small. The entrance gate was not inviting.



Uninviting entrance to baseball fields

Public recreation facilities:

Average Team Score: 5.5
 Range of Scores: 4 to 7 (4 responses)

Comment:

- Diamonds appeared adequate.
- Same as above.
- Boat launch?



Impressive baseball facilities

Private recreation facilities:

Average Team Score: 7.8
 Range of Scores: 6 to 9 (4 responses)

Comment:

- Lots of private riverfront properties with piers.
- Golf course seemed to be very nice.
- None.
- The catholic church was an impressive campus.



Picnic shelter & concession stand

Based on your impression, what do people in this community appear to do for recreation/fun?

- Play baseball and boat.
- Either stay in the lake homes or golf.
- Fish.
- Bike, fish and boating.
- Community events and sporting events.

What recreational facility (private or public) in this community surprised you?

- Golf course
- None.
- The Catholic Church campus was impressive.



Impressive church campus

What recreational activities or facilities seemed to be missing?

- Saw very little public playground equipment.
- Swimming (2)

Rate the overall suitability of the recreational facilities for each of the following populations using a 1-10 scale (10 is best):

Rating Category (4 Responses)

- 5.5 Senior citizens
- 5.0 Families
- 5.5 Singles, young adults
- 3.8 Teens
- 4.3 Children (12 and under)



Lack of playground equipment

Entertainment

What does the community do for entertainment?

- Saw some shirts hanging in chamber window identifying music festival.
- Bowling alley seemed nice (2)
- Go to resale shops
- Biking and walking
- Golf and water activities

What entertainment opportunities do residents feel they lack?

- Theater, sports

Does the community have a vibrant nightlife? Please comment:

- Noted about the same density/frequency of taverns as we have.
- Maybe some at the bowling alley/volley ball courts
- Not that I can see
- A few taverns, but not seemingly vibrant.



Small park with attractive bench & plantings

Faith/Religion

Comment on the number, appearance, and selection of denominations in the community.

- Noted 3 large, impressive churches.
- Prominently Catholic
- Lutheran and Catholic Church were nice.
- All denominations and very nice churches.
- Catholic predominantly.

Are there any outstanding architectural or design features found on the religious buildings you visited?

- The catholic facilities were very impressive.
- Yes, the Catholic Church was well maintained.
- St. Thomas Church was impressive
- The Catholic Church

Please rate the religious buildings and denominations represented in this community.

Average Team Score: 7.4
Range of Scores: 7 to 8 (5 responses)

Comments:

- Saw a few other smaller churches here and there.
- Catholic and Lutheran

Culture and Heritage

Does the community hold any events (festivals)? Which events are held annually?

- Saw advertising for concert series.
- Christmas parade
- Yes.
- Seasonal festivities.

What events are popular with residents?

- The shopkeepers discussed the music events.
- Unknown
- Music in the park (River Rhythms)

Do the residents feel there is a lack of community events?

- Did not get that impression.

Does the community have historical buildings or places? Are they well maintained?

- The storefronts in the downtown appeared historic. Also, the Catholic Church appeared historic.
- Yes.
- The sampling of historic structures seemed to be well kept.

General Observations

Role Playing

Would you consider this community as a suitable location for a young family? Why or why not?

- Yes. Schools looked impressive. Community appeared quiet with small-town atmosphere. Lack of sidewalks and playground equipment a concern.
- The parks were not that attractive, but the elementary schools were.
- Yes – good reviews of schools and library.
- I would – the schools are well regarded. The library is ideal. Housing to my taste might be tricky but school trumps that.
- Yes – great schools, library, bike trails and river.
- Yes – good schools and a nice community setting. Affordable.

Would you consider locating your retail or service business here? Why or why not?

- In the business park on the east side. The downtown stores were all closed.
- Depended if my service was needed, but I think the village was inviting enough.
- No – weak downtown not well-planned out.
- I might consider it because they have had such growth, but I fear they are a bedroom community – all the residents shop where they work.
- Yes – looks like some nice added business opportunities.
- A significant amount of improvement would need to be implemented downtown to locate there.

Would you consider locating a manufacturing business here? Why or why not?

- Yes. Industrial park well organized and easily accessible. Their industrial park area looked inviting. Central location and growing community. Nice location. The manufacturing area seemed active. (5)
- Certainly, they have great opportunities.

Would you consider this a suitable location for a retired person? Why or why not?

- Yes. Senior living center looked good.
- Depended on how mobile the person is and if they had an interest being by water, per se.
- No – limited serviced without a lot of travel.
- Possibly – certainly opportunities for retired people.
- Yes – retiree housing, places to fish and golf.

Would you consider this a suitable location for a young adult? Why or why not?

- Might be a bit quiet for a young adult.
- Maybe not. Not really sure what their needs/wants are these days. I think a college town might be more appealing.
- No. Doesn't look like there is much to do.
- Probably not enough recreation and nightlife to locate in Waterford.

Would you consider visiting this community as a tourist? Why or why not?

- Not really. Did not have a major draw to pull me in.
- Sure. Might bring my dad to the Bunker place and my kids to eat ice cream.

- No. Limited things to do unless there is a specific festival.
- If I had a boat – maybe. Otherwise I don't see much here.
- Not much tourism.



Information from Community Residents

Comment on the quality of information and assistance provided by residents and employees of local businesses.

Were community residents knowledgeable about their community?

- Hit and miss. People working at east side business park did not really seem to know much.
- One lady told me about music in park in summer and a couple other things that were just going on.
- Yes (2)

Did they refer you to someone else who would help?

- They referred me to the chamber which was closed.
- Said more information could be found at the Chamber.
- No.
- No, they answered all my questions.

In general, did residents you spoke with have a positive or negative attitude toward their community? Why? Did you sense community pride?

- Positive. Residents we spoke to were retired and fishing on river, so wouldn't call it "passionate."
- Positive for sure. Didn't get enough information to accurately assess community pride.
- Positive – seemed happy with government and schools.
- Positive – about the school and village government.

Did residents identify a particular issue (e.g. safety) to be of major concern?

- No (2)
- No, but I did, when referring us to things – they referred us out of town.

Overall, how would you rate the quality of information from community residents and business employees?

Average Team Score: 7.7
Range of Scores: 5 to 9 (3 responses)

Please comment:

- The few businesses open downtown were very helpful.

Using Your Senses

What did the community taste like? Was there any specialty food item, bakery, restaurant, or candy store that you will remember?

- There's a nice ice-cream store we enjoyed.
- Henry's Ice Cream was a neat place.
- Ice cream (Harry's); Tortilla chips (Marty's)
- The custard stand. Yummy, but could use some updating to building.
- Had a nice lunch at a downtown restaurant.

What did the community smell like? Was there any offensive industrial, agricultural, or sewage smells? What about pleasant odors (flowers, food, etc.)?

- Did not note any.
- Everything smelled fine.
- No unpleasant odor (2)

What sounds did you hear? Please comment on the level of noise in the community (traffic, industrial, birds singing, water falls, music on the streets, trains, noon whistle, etc.).

- Loud trucks downtown.
- Very nice.
- None (2)
- Seemed fine.

How would describe the overall environmental health of the community (air quality, litter, noise pollution etc.)?

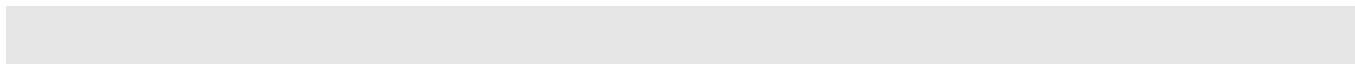
- Pretty good. The river appeared clean.
- Very nice.
- Good.
- Nothing stood out.
- Very good.

Did you experience anything that had a strongly negative or positive impact on the way the community felt to you (hateful or angry responses, crowded or deserted streets, safety issues, smiling faces, etc.)?

- None.
- No – no strong feelings either way.
- Weeds.
- I felt a lack of pride in appearance – building facades.
- One street sign was a walking hazard.

Do you think your impression would be different if your visit occurred during evening hours?

- The businesses might be open downtown. Riverside bars might be active as well.
- Maybe – depending if we went to the right establishment.
- More food options.
- Possible.
- Yes.



Wrap-Up

Was your perception prior to the visit accurate? In what ways was the community different from what you expected?

- Lack of park space unexpected.
- Actually a lot more similar to my village than expected.
- No.
- I thought higher of Waterford before I took out the microscope.
- I received all my information from the Internet. The site was well done and easy to navigate.
- Yes – not quite as affluent as I may have expected.

Did the information you collected prior to the visit accurately reflect what you observed/experienced?

- Info prior to visit was good, attractive, except for lack of online map.
- My expectations were higher due to beautiful marketing materials.
- No – things looked better online and in “Welcome to our Home” book.
- No.
- In general – yes.

What is the most outstanding feature of this community?

- Public facilities dominate. Schools, Village Hall, public safety and a great library all dominate downtown.
- The library.
- Schools and library (2)
- River
- The Catholic Church facilities, school system, water features and public library.

List five positive things you observed about this community.

- 1 Library is fantastic (4)
- 2 Schools look good (4)
- 3 Industrial park is full and busy; brick sign
- 4 New subdivisions look affluent; municipal building
- 5 public launch is attractive; outlying houses
- 6 River/Lake (2)
- 7 Book store
- 8 Custard stand
- 9 Trails

What are three potential opportunities available to the community?

- Capitalizing on river more (3)
- Developing more park space (2)
- Chamber must be open on weekends
- Signs
- B&B
- Shops
- Downtown revitalization

What are the five biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community?

- Filling the vacant land in TIF (Southeast corner). Just like us; park system
- Getting residences on major roads to be maintained; sidewalks
- Economic activity downtown – just like us
- Bedroom community
- Pride in outside appearance
- Land use – fire station, apartments on river
- Lack of shopping
- Parks
- Waterway for the public
- Hotel and walkway on river

What will you remember most about this community six months from now (positive or negative)?

- I'll remember the library, the great entrance sign on the east, the Bunker and the closed businesses
- Its beautiful library
- The school campus
- The people I talked with
- The nice library

What have you learned here that has changed your impression of your own community?

- I was amazed at the many parallels between the two communities. I did learn to appreciate our park space more.
- I love our park more.
- The people
- For all the improvements the Village of Kewaskum could improve on, we have a nice typical small town community that functions pretty well.

Has this experience given you any new ideas about what is needed in your own community?

- Well, the ideas are not new, but now reinforced. We lack the industrial park, we lack some investment in public facilities (library).
- Not so many more ideas – just dreams.
- We face many of Waterford's challenges. I see how important first impressions are to visitors.
- Yes (2)

Describe one idea that you will borrow for use in your own business/community and describe how you will start to implement it within the next 72 hours!

- I realized we may not have maps available online either. Need to make sure that gets attention.
- I want to steal ideas from "Welcome Home" booklet

Other comments:

- In general, the people of Waterford should be proud. It is a lovely community. Many of the issues I noted for them apply to us as well.
- Thanks to Waterford for doing this with us!

First Impressions Community Exchange Photo Log

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