

# Two Harbors Area Public Library 2015-2020 Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Library Board:

May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Prepared by:  
Katie Sundstrom  
Library Director

## The Planning Process:

The Two Harbors Area Public Library completed its first formal comprehensive strategic planning process between September and December 2009 via Whitney Crettol Consulting with financial support from the Arrowhead Library System. This plan was in place from 2010-2014. Beginning in September 2014, work began on a new 5-year plan, this time conducted by Katie Sundstrom, the Director of the Two Harbors Public Library, using the former strategic plan and the book Strategic Planning for Results by Sandra Nelson as guides. The process included input from staff, the Library Board, and the wider community.

Once again, a community-based process was utilized which focused on the questions: 1) *What are the strengths, needs, and opportunities in our community?* and 2) *What is the library's role in addressing these?*. Major steps included research into the community's demographics, a staff-centered SWOT analysis updating the older strategic plan, a community-wide survey, and a formal meeting between Library Board of Trustees members and Staff members.

The resulting strategic plan is intended to guide the library for the next five years, with the action plan (Appendix A) to be revised annually.

## What We Found:

Library traffic has decreased in the past four years, yet the total number of registered borrowers has continued to increase. This could be related to the rise of downloadable audiobooks and ebooks, as patrons only have to stop by once every three years to continue to use these library services which have seen nothing but substantial growth since their inception. Regarding the library collection, the total number of print materials has held relatively steady, yet it has seen a significant growth in audio-visual formats and online offerings. Inter-library loan activity has also steadily increased over the years. The total number of reference transactions has held steady the past five or so years while programming numbers and attendance have continually increased. Surprisingly, the number of computer sessions has been decreasing, which we suspect to be related to more people in the community now owning a computer at home, and the number of people bringing their own laptops to the library to use our wireless instead of using the library's desktops. Beyond this, the community demographics have basically held steady.

Staff report being pleased with the many recent renovations at the library, improving the building quality and appearance, and with the increase in the number and variety of programming opportunities. The library has also been very fortunate to continue to maintain a strong volunteer group and Friends of the Library group, as well as having the continued support of the City, County, and library system. The main topics of concern were about keeping up with new technology, having consistently low staffing levels, a lack of security, and space

issues when considering the desire for expanding newer collections yet having no empty places to utilize.

Community members re-iterated a number of these themes, in particular the need for up-to-date technology, a color copier, good computers, and a strong wireless signal. Many community members also asked that the library stay open for more hours, preferably opening earlier in the mornings and staying open on Saturdays in the summer. The community also asks the library to participate in more partnerships, especially working with the new local radio station KTWH-LP, the Historical Society, and the Friends of the Two Harbors Band Shell Park, which is looking into the possibility of building a new community center one block down from the library.

Overall, the staff, community, and Board re-iterated the previous library goals involving early literacy, entertainment, and ongoing education, but added a new priority, which is the importance of Public Internet Access.

## Organizational Values:

### Variety of Current Resources –

The Library provides a diverse variety of resources relevant to the changing needs of the community, including print materials and technology that address educational, vocational, and recreational needs. Our helpful and competent staff is one of our best assets.

### Welcoming & Accessible –

The Library is a warm and inviting place with friendly and courteous staff that treats all in a respectful manner. We maintain extensive open hours in a handicapped accessible facility, and provide free access to resources and information.

### Community Anchor –

The Library is an essential cornerstone of our community, connecting us to the wider world, facilitating interactions within our community, and preserving local heritage, including the historic Carnegie Library building.

### Stewardship –

The Library practices wise stewardship of public resources while promoting the value of knowledge, a most valuable resource.

## Mission Statement:

*An informed and engaged community needs a gathering place where they can connect with each other and the wider world. The Two Harbors Area Public Library provides a welcoming space with a wide variety of resources in print and other media for the education and enjoyment of everyone – children, youth, and adults.*

## Library Goals (In order of priority):

- 1. The Library provides appropriate technology and resources for understanding and utilizing high-speed access to the digital world to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources available online, particularly in a world of e-government, e-business, and online social networking.**
- 2. The Library advances early literacy by helping children, their families, and their caregivers get excited about books, creating a love for, and a habit of, reading.**
- 3. The Library engages the lifelong curiosity of youth and adults, enhances their learning outside of the classroom, and empowers them to be informed and enthusiastic individuals.**
- 4. The Library entertains and stimulates the imaginations of its patrons through programming and library materials that add delight and diversion to their lives.**

## Progress Indicators:

### Goal 1 (Public Internet Access)

- Number of wireless internet uses.
- Number of library-provided computer uses.
- Number of check-outs for library materials with internet access.
- Circulation numbers for computer-based instruction materials.

### Goal 2 (Early Literacy)

- Summer/Winter Reading Program participation and feedback.
- Children's library programming participation numbers.
- Number of elementary class tours held at the library.
- Number of parents and caregivers participating in children's literacy training.

### Goal 3 (Lifelong Learning)

- Number of participants in lifelong learning programs and any relevant feedback.
- Frequency of meeting room use for youth tutoring or enrichment activities.
- Number of tests proctored.
- Circulation numbers for Non-Fiction materials.

### Goal 4 (Stimulate Imagination)

- Number of participants in entertainment-based library programs and any relevant feedback.
- Circulation numbers for Fiction materials and DVDs.

## Implementation Steps:

Implementation Steps	Timeline
1. Present strategic plan to Library Board for adoption.	April 2015
2. Communicate and advertise the new plan, including to the City Council, the Arrowhead Library System, and on the library's website.	May 2015
3. Discuss strategic plan progress as a regular agenda item at Library Board meetings.	Monthly
4. Compile progress indicator data for annual review.	At Annual Meeting
5. Staff develops action plans for the next year.	Annually (December)
6. Full round of strategic planning.	Fall 2020 (new plan for Jan. 2021)

Appendix A:  
Action Plan  
February - March 2015

**GOAL 1: *The Library provides appropriate technology and resources for understanding and utilizing high-speed access to the digital world to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources available online, particularly in a world of e-government, e-business, and online social networking.***

- **Continue**
  - Remind patrons of online resources available to them (*All Staff*)
- **To be completed by the end of 2015:**
  - Set aside specific drop-in times for technology assistance (*Shannon and Nicole*)
    - Separate times for computers/laptops and tablets?
    - Separate times for basic functions and Overdrive-specific help?
    - Can we partner with Age-to-Age to provide dedicated volunteers?
  - Provide tips for a more secure internet experience (*Nicole*)
  - Get the new TV wall-mounted (*Katie*)
  - Host at least two technology learning programs (*Becky and Shannon*)
  - Write at least 3 “Resource Spotlight” items highlighting online resources for the Library News column/website (*Becky*)
- **Prepare for action in 2016:**
  - Purchase a new copier (*Katie*)
    - Color capable
    - Ability to interface with laptops and flash drives
    - Document feeder
- **Research:**
  - Improve the building’s wireless signal (*Katie*)
    - Internet provider?
    - Better router?
    - Wireless booster?
    - What other organizations are involved?
      - Blandin Foundation
      - ALS
      - City
  - Provide formal classes for using the Library Databases (*Shannon and Becky*)
  - Expand the Special Materials Check-Out Program (*All Staff*)
    - Laptops
    - Tablets with keyboards
    - GPS units for geocaching
    - Digital Cameras
    - Tripods
    - Stud Finders
  - Open up a Twitter account for the library (*Nicole*)
  - Purchase a professional software program, like “Illustrator,” for advertising purposes (*Katie and Nicole*)

***Goal 2: The Library advances early literacy by helping children, their families, and their caregivers get excited about books, creating a love for, and a habit of, reading.***

- **Continue**
  - Host summer and winter reading programs (*Shannon*)
  - Create early-literacy displays for the children's area (*Shannon*)
  - Conduct 1<sup>st</sup> grader tours of the library (*Shannon*)
- **To be completed by the end of 2015**
  - Promote more to-the-library fieldtrips (*Shannon*)
    - Advertise to the teachers, perhaps in conjunction with big reports
    - Present our resources at a teacher training workshop
  - Work with ECFE & MOPS to promote each other (*Shannon*)
  - Creation of checkout-able early literacy kits (books + activities bags) (*Shannon and Katie*)
  - Host a series of early-literacy based rotating scavenger hunts (*Shannon*)
  - Contact teachers about promoting the Summer Reading Program in the schools before the end of the school year (*Shannon*)
  - Work to bring attention and excitement to all early literacy programming (*All Staff*)
  - Write at least 3 "Resource Spotlights" highlighting early literacy resources for the Library News column/website (*Becky*)
- **Prepare for action in 2016**
- **Research**
  - Storytime that travels to preschools and daycares (*Shannon*)
  - Storytime Readings on Community Radio (*Shannon and Michele*)
  - Storytimes – many libraries report success with morning storytimes, as it doesn't interfere with kids' mealtimes, naptimes, or bedtimes. We would need to begin opening at 10:00 AM for this to happen, though. (*Shannon and Katie*)
  - Start-up of an inter-generational book group (*Becky*)



**Goal 3: The Library engages the lifelong curiosity of youth and adults, enhances their learning outside of the classroom, and empowers them to be informed and enthusiastic individuals.**

- **Continue**
  - Create non-fiction oriented teen displays (*Nicole*)
  - Host an occasional Teen Japanese Language Workshop (*Nicole*)
  - All-ages Summer and Winter reading programs (*All Staff*)
  - Passive programming for special events (*Nicole*)
  - Create interactive Kids' Area displays that change on a monthly basis and include handouts and activities (*Shannon*)
  - Passive programs in the children's area, such as crafts (*Shannon*)
  - Supply staffing and background educational materials for the book groups (*Becky and Michelle*)
  - Provide volunteer opportunities as learning experiences for young people specifically (*Becky*)
  - Provide volunteer opportunities for adults looking to serve the community (*Becky*)
  - Provide reference services (*All Staff*)
- **To be completed by the end of 2015**
  - Convert the advertising from a mess to a formal "Information Hallway" with regular review and turnover (*Katie with help of staff*)
  - Host at least 6 programs providing learning opportunities for various ages, including non-fiction author talks, historical presentations, and science-based programs (*Becky*)
  - Create a formal shelving guide for volunteers (*Becky*)
  - Begin formally training staff (especially aides) in reference services (*Becky*)
  - Write at least 3 "Resource Spotlights" highlighting learning resources for the Library News column/website (*Becky*)
  - Complete the inventory of the archives room (*Becky*)
- **Prepare for action in 2016**
  - Begin cataloging the materials in the archives room (*Becky*)
- **Research**
  - What has become of our museum passes program (*Katie*)
  - Host other book contests (*Nicole*)
  - Have a library presence at Community Events, such as: (*All Staff*)
    - Winter Frolic
    - Heritage Days
    - Mayor's Block Party
    - School Open Houses
    - Chalk-a-Lot
  - Can we get the 6<sup>th</sup> graders in for a tour of the library with an emphasis on reference tools? (*Nicole*)

***Goal 4: The Library entertains and stimulates the imaginations of its patrons through programming and library materials that add delight and diversion to their lives.***

- **Continue**
  - Create fiction-oriented Teen displays (*Nicole*)
  - Host gaming days (*Nicole*)
  - Host summer and winter reading programs (*All Staff*)
  - Host Lego Clubs (*Shannon*)
  - Support events held by the North Shore Poetry Group (*Becky and Nicole*)
- **To be completed by the end of 2015**
  - Make the board games available for check-out (*Shannon*)
  - Begin a Video Games collection, to be available for check-out (*Katie, Shannon, and Nicole*)
  - Replace the train table and seating in the kids' area (*Katie and Shannon*)
  - Re-paint the kids' area to cover all the push-pin holes and be ready for decorating again (*Katie*)
  - Get the fish tank set-up and working; have naming contest for fish (*Katie and Shannon*)
  - Host at least 6 programs for entertainment, including musical events and author talks (*Becky*)
  - Write at least 3 "Resource Spotlights" highlighting fun literary resources for the Library News column/website (*Becky*)
- **Prepare for action in 2016**
- **Research**
  - Increase our Special Materials Check-out Program (*All Staff*)
    - Cake pans
    - Other?
  - Window-paint to decorate the windows in kids' and teens' areas; also used as advertising and programming (*Katie, Shannon, and Nicole*)
  - Special programming to encourage trying new types/genres of reading (*Becky*)

Appendix B:

Community Survey – Summary

December 2014 – January 2015

# Community Survey – Summary of Responses

## Two Harbors Public Library

### January 2015

As a scaled-back form of a formal focus group, the Two Harbors Public Library instead put together a community survey of nine questions, based on Sandra Nelson's *Strategic Planning for Results*, with the aim of gathering the same type of information that had been collected for the 2010-2014 Strategic Plan. Early December 2014, 42 individuals or categories of individuals were identified and received either a paper copy of the survey or were emailed a link to Survey Monkey, where we hosted an electronic copy of our survey. Representation included elected officials, youth and youth organizations, educators, the arts community, environmentalists, health care workers, civic organizers, local businesses, the historical society, community radio, minorities, low-income residents, and more. By the end of December 2014 we had only received 12 responses, including after a second invitation for everyone to complete the survey. It was decided in January 2015 to open the survey up to the general public, posting the Survey Monkey link on the library's website and Facebook account, and printing off copies of the survey to hand out at the front service desk. By the end of January 2015, we had 24 responses total, reaching our goal of 20 responses in keeping with the previous Strategic Plan.

### Elements of a Community Vision

Participants were first asked to imagine a time in the future when their community and its people were successful and residents were proud to call Two Harbors home. They were then asked to describe what made this future so great.

#### Businesses and Jobs:

- Small-town feel near a large urban area with plenty of opportunities
- Thriving downtown Business Community
- More diversity in our business community (i.e. more than one grocery store)
- Restaurant overlooking the lake
- More coffee shops (Caribou, Starbucks, Dunn Bros.)
- New, local businesses that reinvest in the town
- More diversity in job opportunities
- Jobs that attract young college grads
- Lots of visitors boosting our economy
- People of all ages enjoy laughter, acceptance, fulfillment, and companionship
- A growing resident population
- Household income improves, finally getting us above our current status of "below average" for the state
- Lots of people work in Duluth
- Economy based on new green technologies and tourism
- Boom/Bust influence greatly lessened
- Everyone has access to jobs with a living wage

#### A Strong Community:

- People are actively involved in the community
- Beautiful new community center hosting a wide variety of meetings, parties, dances, etc., and big enough so that more than one event could be held at a time
- People take pride in their community and its achievements
- Community celebrations are big, lavish events spanning the whole town
- The library, churches, and new Performing Arts Center work together to provide festival opportunities, heritage, and historical events
- 2-3 large churches rather than lots of little ones
- A recently and fully restored library attracts flocks of people eager to share resources and feel a sense of community
- Residents devote time to working with local youth and each other
- People feel like they belong and that their contributions matter
- Diversity is embraced
- Ethnically diverse and growing more so – very attractive to non-locals
- Newcomers to the area are appreciated and valued
- People have a strong community spirit and are always helpful
- The churches cooperate for a number of programs, especially Neighbor to Neighbor
- Everyone feels safe
- A younger population
- Everybody is happy and people are treated equally
- Community rooted in its own history and history of the surrounding land
- Strong social network for those who fall on hard times
- The community as a whole is valued more than an individual

#### Physical Aspects of Town:

- No empty buildings or lots creating eyesores
- Affordable housing
- John A. Johnson either torn down or remodeled into a big community center
- Streets and roads are well-maintained
- Public transportation is available
- Turn lanes on 7<sup>th</sup> avenue preventing backed-up traffic

#### Good Education and Medical Care:

- Excellent medical care nearby
- Lots of resources for children and teens
- Great schools and sports programs
- High levels of participation in school activities
- There are opportunities for life-long learning
- Excellent higher education facilities nearby (colleges and universities)
- Well-educated people leading businesses and activities that give back to the community

- More diversity in extracurricular activities for all ages
- Education levels for residents are high in general
- Rich cultural opportunities
- Active music and theater programs
- Affordable health care

#### Environmental Aspects:

- We live and take pride in a wonderfully protected environment
- Everyone appreciates the lake
- Everyone uses and enjoys the walking trails
- The parks are well-maintained and improved
- Lots of opportunities for outdoor activities
- Two Harbors as a whole is ecologically friendly
- We have invested in “going local” with growing more local food, producing local energy, supporting local artists, etc.
- Access to fresh, local, healthy foods
- The winters are milder

### State of the Community Today

Considering local, national, or even international trends, identify what might have a positive impact on the library and what might have a negative impact on the library.

#### Strengths/Opportunities

- + Technology – audiobooks and ebooks give books a new life
- + Computer use is wide-spread and opens new possibilities
- + Technology makes it possible to have author talks, classes, or interviews with people over the internet in a group setting
- + The internet makes information available to all
- + The internet can be used to support the community
- + The library provides movies for FREE
- + The library provides free computer access
- + The library provides a place for people seeking higher education to study
- + Book sales are popular
- + Various community meetings are held at the library
- + Face-to-face human connection is resurging
- + Two Harbors needs a central place, which the library can provide
- + Provide support for regional artists
- + Support the low-power FM radio
- + Broadband to even rural areas
- + People are longing for more direct storytelling
- + Library can support groups and goals like local food system creation
- + Library helps people following the trend to be more self-supporting
- + Library supports people wanting to make things from scratch

- + Trend that using computers/devices all day is harmful to health
- + More funding for arts and crafts programs at the library
- + There is so much information out there that libraries are needed to help sort through the 'noise'
- + Price of books is always increasing, so free books from the library is invaluable
- + Reading will never get old
- + Kids come to the library for their homework
- + The library has a huge variety of things for people to read, from the supernatural to classics like *Little Women*
- + Ability to access literature from anywhere in the world
- + The library should keep buying new books to replace the old, beat-up ones as well
- + The library is a community gathering place, worth much more than just the books it keeps
- + Sustainable practices in maintaining and improving our city
- + Saving energy to relieve climate change
- + Planning ahead for severe changes in weather
- + Growing awareness of climate change and global problems
- + Emphasis on education, especially with community colleges, which will hopefully increase the number of people in the trades
- + Growing diversity of peoples in northern Minnesota

#### Weaknesses/Threats

- Current trend towards sound-bites, screens, instant and multi-format stimulation
- Ebooks draw people away from libraries, as books are downloadable anywhere
- Technology is making books obsolete
- Emphasis on computers for entertainment, where emphasis is on aesthetics and not content (poor quality works)
- People are always on the cell phones and don't want anything to do with books
- Ebooks will change how libraries look in the future; changing the way services are offered
- Emphasis on electronic usage (computers, TV, phone, etc.) leads to isolationism and removes the cohesive community atmosphere
- Computer hacking is on the rise; library computers may also be targeted
- The internet creating a homogenization of culture rather than supporting local writers, artists, etc.
- Globalization of commodities, including books
- Too many internet-based activities, ereaders, and different ways to find information; it is overwhelming
- Austerity budgets
- Shrinking of the commons for private gain
- Accessibility is limited
  - Library hours are not long enough
  - Limited days/times

- People banning education on climate change and evolution, showing the need for libraries to keep people *informed* as well as entertained
- People are insecure about the future in general, especially the elderly
- The Republican Congress may take funding away from libraries
- The growing intolerance for Muslims

## Community Needs

Given where we are today, and where we want to go, participants were asked to identify our community's service gaps and how the library might address those gaps.

- We need a single gathering place to find out what's going on, find volunteer opportunities, etc. – We should have information boards, such as an event board, food board (where can I get local eggs? Etc.), volunteer board, meeting board, school-related board, etc. etc. etc.
- We need a single gathering place for meetings and events, big enough for 50-70 people – the library's current space is too small, hot, and impractical.
- We need a retreat from a cyber-obsessed world.
- The library needs a new vision for programming –
  - In Houghton, MI, the Program Director is the hub of the community who has relationships everywhere. We called her to do an event and over 100 people attended! Chris is her name – she could teach us a lot.
  - Also, we need programming that helps kids become aware of other fun things to do offline that might broaden their horizons.
  - Cyber teleconferencing allows for more presenters and programs from farther away
  - A library sister city program
  - More visiting lecturers/presenters of all types
  - Work with the arts council to assist in the offering of arts education opportunities
  - Storytimes for kids
- The library needs to be open more hours (at least 4 people stated this) – please have Saturday hours year-round. Open up earlier, at least one morning a week open as early as 8:00 am.
- Provide more technology for families who do not have access at home. (at least 7 people stated this) – We need FREE computer education (currently it costs money through Community Ed.), more computers, longer time on the computers (1/2 hour is not enough), better wireless access, and a computer tech to help explain the use of computers.
- We need a copy shop, or at least a color copier for patrons, and equipment that is up-to-date. Something that can print *at least* 30 copies per minute.
- People of low economic means have limited access to knowledge resources to change their daily realities, including limited computer time and access, no transportation to Duluth or other regional retail and service centers, and no information on and connection to health care systems.
- The community needs the opportunity for continuing education for adults at the college level, whether professional or non-professional. – Affiliate with area colleges to offer more classes of interest through the library. Increase legacy fund offerings.
- The community needs entertainment that is not athletic in nature; an arts education.



- The library's collections are still small; after seeing all the movies in the library, people are going to want something new. The same for books. The library needs to widen its horizons.
- I use the Duluth Public Library more because they have more new releases and even new books can be checked-out for four weeks.
- New bathrooms, a new service desk, and get rid of the tile.
- The library has a rack especially for new adults' books; why not have one for new kids' books?
- Will the library please buy hard copies of the NY Times (even just Sunday) – the online version is hard to access and much reduced
- Ideally, the library would host reading classes for students with the help of volunteers.
- Ideally, the library should purchase a membership to a good genealogy website for the public (they're really expensive)
- Ideally, the library would have a coffee shop.

## Community Groups

In keeping with Sandra Nelson's *Strategic Planning for Results*, we also asked how the library might work as a resource for community groups and organizations as opposed to just serving individuals.

- Have both online and physical resources to connect individuals to organizations, so if somebody walks in and says "I want to find..." there is an easy way to connect them.
- Make the meeting space available to other organizations, and let them know it is available.
- Lend materials to organizations without fines/overdues.
- Integrate partnerships into all the strategic plans as addenda, with their own goals and strategic mini-plans
- Embark on a weekly/daily exchange on the KTWH-LP, partner with the radio to bring children's reading hour on air, host a local oral history collection with the radio and Historical Society, etc.
- Consider joint ventures and grant projects with other organizations.
- Partner with the historical society – help them archive their material and they can help the library evaluate donations/collections, all with a goal of maximizing accessibility while protecting/preserving items. It would be fun to do a crowd-sourced community research project of some sort – also a way to teach/promote information literacy.
- As long as the district stays on a 4-day school week, provide Friday programming for youth.

## Other Comments

The community was permitted the opportunity to provide any other comments or feedback they wished. This is what they had to say:

### Active Suggestions

- Put new book titles online for readers
- Sometimes it is the small things. I hear often that the library's hours are not good for everyone. This is primarily the opening time. People want it to open at least by 10:00 am. Overall, I believe the library does a good job of meeting the needs of individuals in the community and the community as well.
- The library is great but the search engine is a little hard to use.
- "If" funds are limited, look at where services are offered elsewhere already and help to enhance/support them without having to offer the same services.
- Maybe move all the adult books and movies upstairs and have the downstairs be a "kids" area.
- Have a section of local authors/books on local history or peoples.

### Notes of what we do well

- THANK YOU for all you do! The library is such a great center already - I don't want to appear critical.
- You do a great job with the resources you have. Great staff.
- There's no card in my wallet that is more important than my library card.
- You all do a great job.
- I like the access and exchange we're able to do with other libraries.
- We love the kid movies on Friday and in the summer the Lego Club was a great idea.
- Thank you for being there! I love to read but cannot afford to buy books. I love the feel of a book and cannot imagine reading one in electronic form.
- The library is the heart of and most optimistic manifestation of the present town of Two Harbors - Thanks!
- You are wonderful right now! Thanks for taking a central role in our community and for your openness and acceptance and helpfulness shown to all of us (regarding library policies). Lots of wonderful ideas.
- I think you do an admirable job considering the financial constraints of the days and times. Kudos.
- They are doing a great job!
- I like the activities you have been doing. Nice variety for all ages.
- You have a great staff and volunteers.

## Library Priorities

Finally, participants were asked to vote on their top three library priorities, stating where they think the library should focus its work and resources in the future.

Library Service Responses	Number of Votes
Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access	12
Create Young Readers: Early Literacy	11
Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning	11
Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing, and Listening for Pleasure	9
Understand How to Find, Evaluate, and Use Information: Information Fluency	5
Visit a Comfortable Place: Physical and Virtual Spaces	4
Succeed in School: Homework Help	3
Be an Informed Citizen: Local, National, and World Affairs	2
Get Fast Facts: Ready Reference	2
Know Your Community: Community Resources and Services	2
Celebrate Diversity: Cultural Awareness	1
Discover Your Roots: Genealogy and Local History	1
Express Creativity: Create and Share Content	1
Learn to Read and Write: Adult, Teen, and Family Literacy	1
Make Informed Decisions: Health, Wealth, and Other Life Choices	1
Build Successful Enterprises: Business and Nonprofit Support	0
Make Career Choices: Job and Career Development	0
Welcome to the United States: Services for New Immigrants	0

## Appendix C:

### Library SWOT Analysis October 2014

STAFF FOCUS GROUP  
SUMMARY OF RESULTS  
Two Harbors Public Library

A total of seven staff members were given copies of the 2010-2014 Strategic Plan's SWOT analysis and asked to update the document, deleting items that no longer applied to the library's situation, adding new items as they saw fit, and editing the line items that needed modifying. These are the results.

Strengths: *What does the library do best?*

- Our historic building—a Carnegie Library!
- Beautiful outdoor patio
- New carpet, furniture, and art work make the library more attractive
- Fast, new computers with a variety of programs
- Collection is current and varied for a small library
- For visitors (and locals) information on, and maps of, local area. Library material relevant to this subject, which can be referenced or borrowed
- Access to many databases, ebooks, downloadable audiobooks, and online magazines
- Internet access, wireless, copier, fax
- Good use of ILL—Arrowhead region and MNLink
- Meeting room is available at no cost to the public
- Good, friendly, patient service
- Lots of open hours including four evenings and Saturdays
- Variety of programming to reach many different audiences
- Fun teen programming (Teen Anime Club, Wii Gaming)
- Outreach program delivering to nursing homes, assisted living, etc (Library started and Friends adopted it)
- Continuous book sale as well as a few large book sales throughout the year
- Active and dedicated volunteers who play an important role in day-to-day operations. Also, volunteering gives community members (especially young people) work experience
- Strong Friends group providing financial support and writing grant applications
- Support from the local schools and school librarians as well (advertising and joint programming)
- Interested Library Board
- Knowledgeable staff (educated in a variety of subjects plus experience in local community)
- Staff has maintained good teamwork and transmission of public service philosophy through considerable turnover
- Supportive library system (Arrowhead Library System) offers help with grant applications, scholarships for professional development opportunities and conferences, regional training workshops, and arranges for library programming
- City Council is positive toward the Library and has generally preserved funding

Weaknesses: *What do you think the library could improve?*

- Building is old, has two physical units (Carnegie portion and later addition, each heated and cooled separately as well), and has only part-time maintenance staff
- Two levels without staffing upstairs
- Not enough space; need more comfortable cozy spots in general, and more than one table to make an actual 'teen area.' Also, we are out of room to expand the large print collection, the audiobooks, and the graphic novels, all three collections with growing demand
- Lacks a good place to post information about community events
- The archives room and FOL space don't cohabit well
- Limited display space
- Lack of parking
- Not open on Saturdays in the summer
- Short staffed—no one is full-time, so there isn't enough time for extra projects and programming. Also, if someone is sick or requests time off, there is no good way to fill-in
- Challenges of internal communication with schedules that don't all overlap
- High turnover leads to limited training, and newer staff need better training in most fields, but especially for reference services, using Horizon, and computer troubleshooting
- Having one main computer for check-out and reference sometimes leads to a back-log of work and disruption with staff at other terminals; could maybe use a second check-out station
- FOL is dependent on a very small number of dedicated and hardworking people; we are concerned that they might 'burn-out'
- Problem getting attendance at some programs (e.g. story time not regularly held now, teen programs attendance and adult programs attendance is "all over the map")
- We do lots of advertising, but still don't seem to reach people. Perhaps we need to find other methods to help us advertise more widely
- Not many patrons are using our periodicals anymore
- Not too many patrons seem to be using Overdrive, Zinio, or other online collections
- We have no IT experts on staff for computer maintenance, troubleshooting, or computer networking
- Staff do not have enough staff time to assist patrons with computers and other devices (e.g. kindles, nooks, laptops, etc.)
- Staff do not have enough staff time to assist patrons with using Overdrive, Zinio, or other online resources
- Technology is often moving faster than we can afford to keep up
- No color printer for the public
- No wireless printer for the public
- No computers for patrons upstairs
- Adults sometimes get upset when they see children playing games on the computers, but we don't have separate 'kids and gaming' computers as opposed to 'adults and no gaming' computers.

Opportunities: *What needs do you see in the community that could be opportunities for the library to make a difference?*

- Potential patrons—draw in those people who aren't currently using the Library
- Homebound service to individuals in their own homes
- Additional public relations efforts to create more excitement (we have added significantly since 5 years ago, including regular newspaper columns, a popular Facebook page, and more, but are still looking for other avenues)
- Two Harbors Community Radio—once set-up and on the air, this will be a great opportunity for reaching the community
- Highlight what the Library has going on in an attractive, eye-catching way that can be seen when driving by
- We can use balloons attached to outside signs to advertise events for children
- Advertising could be larger and more colorful—flyers, billboards, newspaper inserts...
- Should we plan a 110-year celebration, since we didn't celebrate our centennial?
- Branching out into more diverse programming ideas instead of sticking with only traditional book clubs and author talks
- We have been successfully working with the high school library, and look to work with the school librarians and teachers more in the future
- We could partner with other community organizations, such as Age-to-Age, for new programs
- Become a location for local artists to showcase their work. We could host receptions as well, bringing more visitors into the library
- We can build on our good fortune of having a Carnegie Building with changing history displays, possibly partnering with the local historical society or the Depot.
- What's next in technology (branching out into lending ereaders and such)
- Branching out into creating a more diverse library collection (technology, playaways, graphic novels, board games, video games, and more)
- The community in general has no access to a color copier or printer; is this something that we should look into offering?
- Can we somehow make our online services more approachable so that they will be more utilized?
- Teach more patrons how to request materials on their own, especially with MNLink—it would probably increase our circulation numbers and patrons would be happy to learn that they can request almost any library book in the state of MN
- Grant opportunities are out there—time consuming and onerous to apply, but opens further opportunities for library materials and programs
- We could try to fashion a more inviting area upstairs (the downstairs is often utilized, with big windows, lots of lighting, and fun benches and seating; upstairs, not so much)
- Upcoming windows project for Carnegie portion of building will continue the library's renovation, improving the structure, indoor climate, and attractiveness
- The train table is extremely popular, but is wearing out; should we try to design a newer, more attractive, children's space?
- Creation of a special "cozy wi-fi" area upstairs
- If staffing time ever permitted, staff would like to process materials away from the front desk
- Staff would like a basic 'in-house' tech course for library technology

Threats: *What outside forces do you feel could negatively affect the library?*

- Uncertainty of funding
- High staff turnover, partly due to so few hours (finding full-time or even part-time jobs with more hours at other businesses)
- Staff don't necessarily feel 'secure' - are name badges really necessary? Do we have safety protocols? What if a patron begins to cause problems or even turns physical?
- People relying on Internet at home rather than using print sources, the library, or staff
- People in general are becoming less involved with their community, turning us into a stay-at-home society
- There is a perception that the library is antiquated which discourages use
- People have a general view that libraries will be replaced by the online world as we progress into the digital age
- We are losing readers to ebooks; even those who read library ebooks we only see once every three years when they are forced to renew their library card
- Failure of some patrons to return materials, less sense of responsibility, and occasional outright theft
- Some people having trouble paying fines; using a collection agency
- Children in the library without supervision
- Graffiti is becoming an ongoing problem—kids are not respecting library property
- The library is occasionally used as sick child care for the day; we lack capacity to provide social services in the library
- Occasional interruptions in internet service
- Website malfunctions regularly
- Problems regularly arise with the printers, copier, fax machines, computers, etc., and we have no IT person to handle them

**Closing Sentiment by a staff member:**

“The opportunities and strengths, all the positive aspects of a community library cannot be stressed enough. Our strong ground is the knowledge that losing or having restricted access would be a great loss.”



## Appendix D:

# Library & Community Profile

October 2014

## Library & Community Profile:

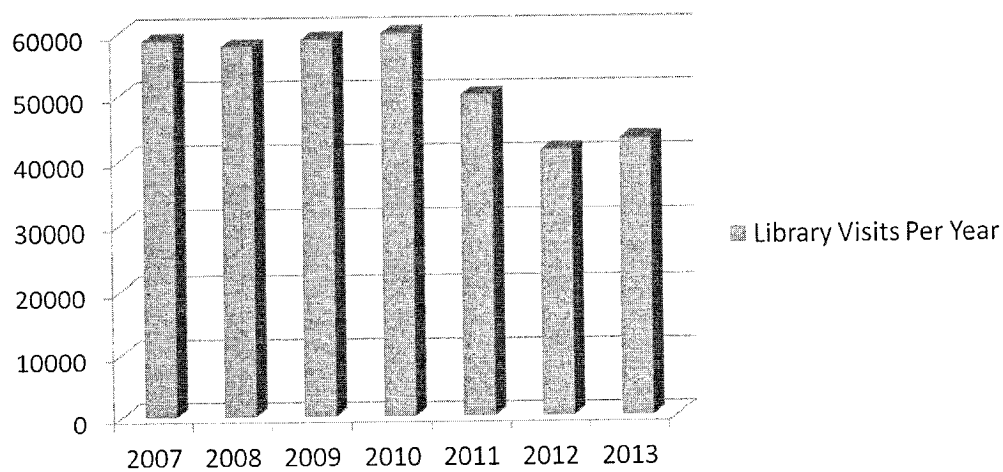
### Two Harbors Public Library

#### I. Library Statistics

##### Library Traffic

The Two Harbors Public Library has consistently been open 47 hours a week (42 hours a week in the summers) for the past seven years. Over this time, traffic into the library has remained over 40,000 visits per year, although 2011 on has dipped lower than the previous decade's high numbers of nearly 60,000.

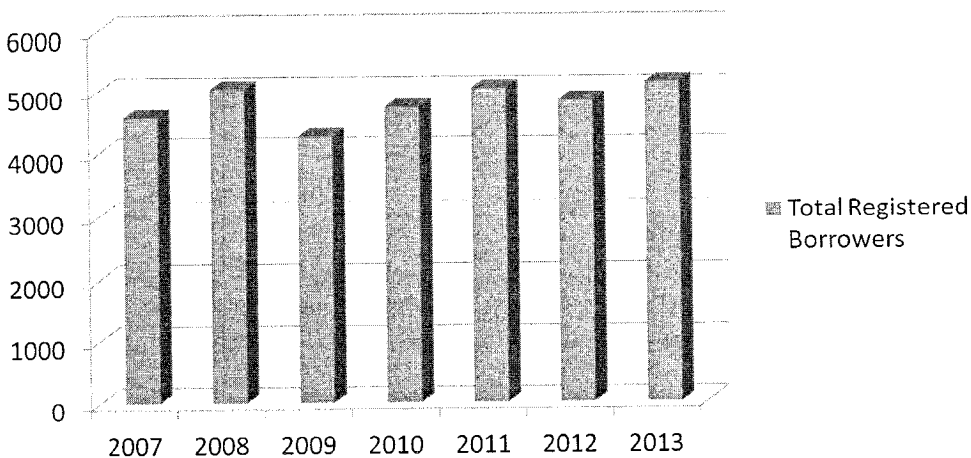
**Library Visits Per Year**



##### Number of Resident Borrowers

Inactive library cards with little or no fines are periodically removed from the system. Despite this process, the number of library card holders has remained fairly steady, and in fact reached a high point in 2013.

**Total Registered Borrowers**



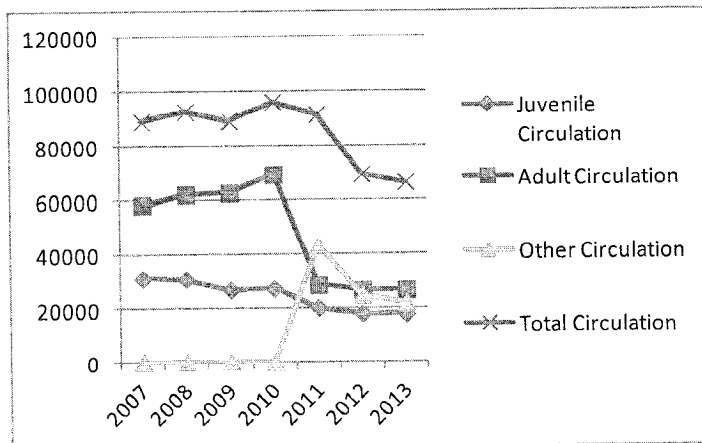
### Collection Size

An October 2014 review of last check-out date identified 4,406 items, approximately 13% of the library's total collection, that have not circulated during the past three years.

Type of Material	2008	2013	Change
Print	28,689	28,363	-326
Audio/Visual	2,819	3,757	+938
Other/Multi-format	1,321	59	-1,262
<b>Total Collection</b>	<b>32,829</b>	<b>32,179</b>	<b>-650</b>

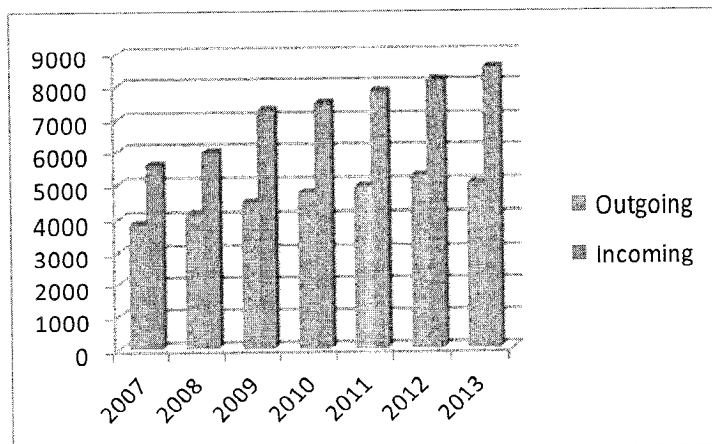
### Circulation

Consistent with the decreasing number of library visits since 2011, overall circulation in Two Harbors is also on a downward trend. Note: "Adult Circulation" split into two categories starting in 2011, explaining the start of "Other Circulation" and the sudden and extreme drop in the "Adult Circulation" category.



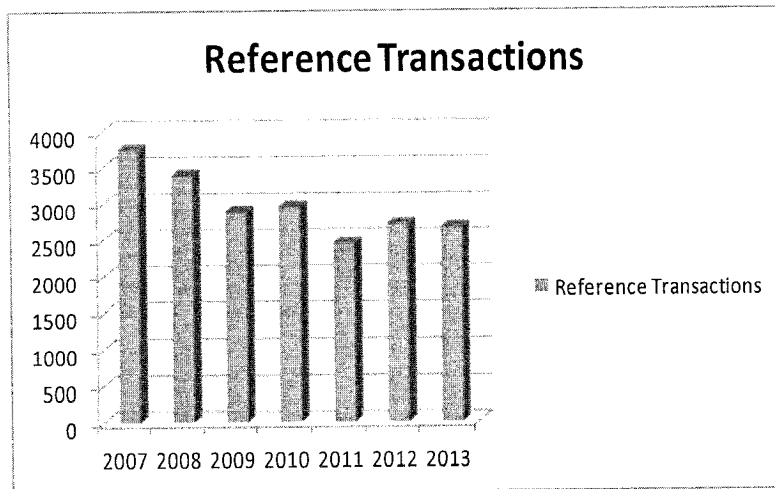
### Inter-Library Loans

Inter-library loan activity, both providing and receiving, has increased over the years, regardless of the rest of the library's downward trends.



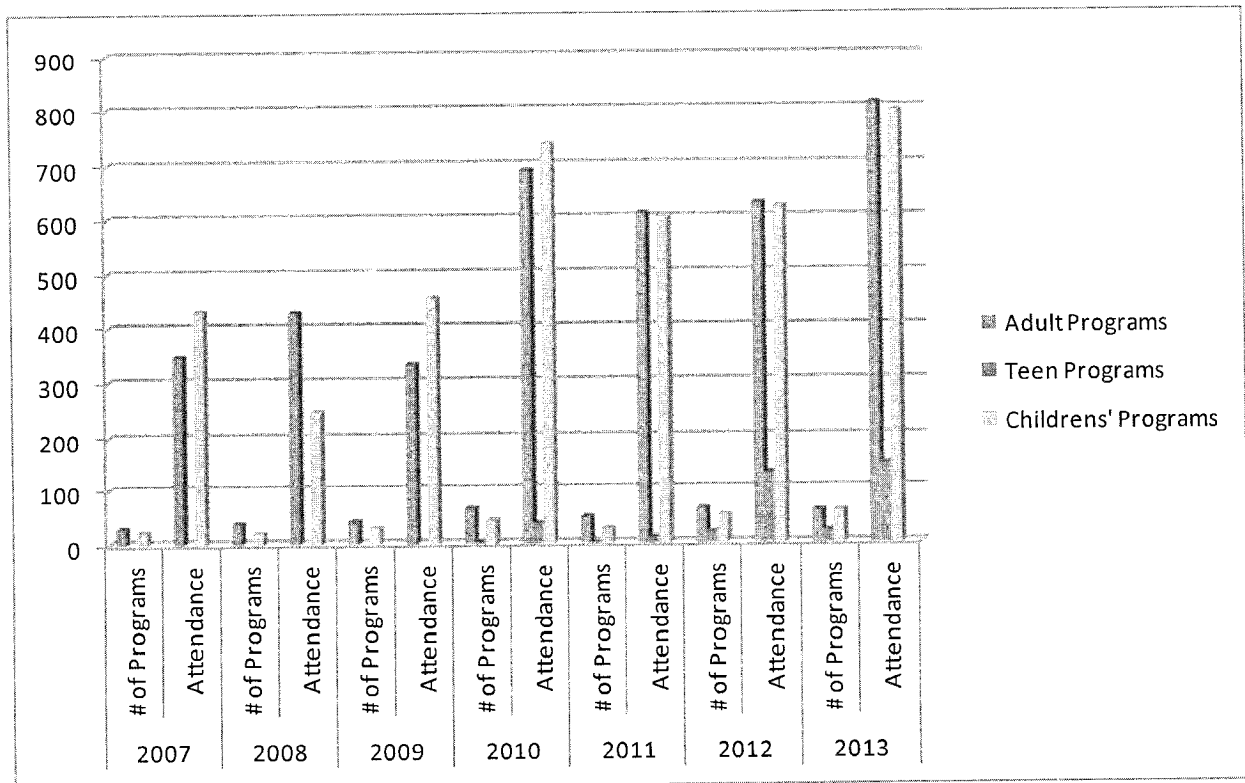
## Reference Requests

The number of reference transactions, while still decreasing overall, has leveled out considerably, and seems to be holding steady once again.



## Programs & Meeting Room Usage

In addition to its use for library-sponsored programs, the meeting room is open to the public to reserve for private events or hosting informational sessions. Only library-sponsored events are recorded in the annual reports. The number of library programs, and in turn the number of attendance, has steadily increased over the years.



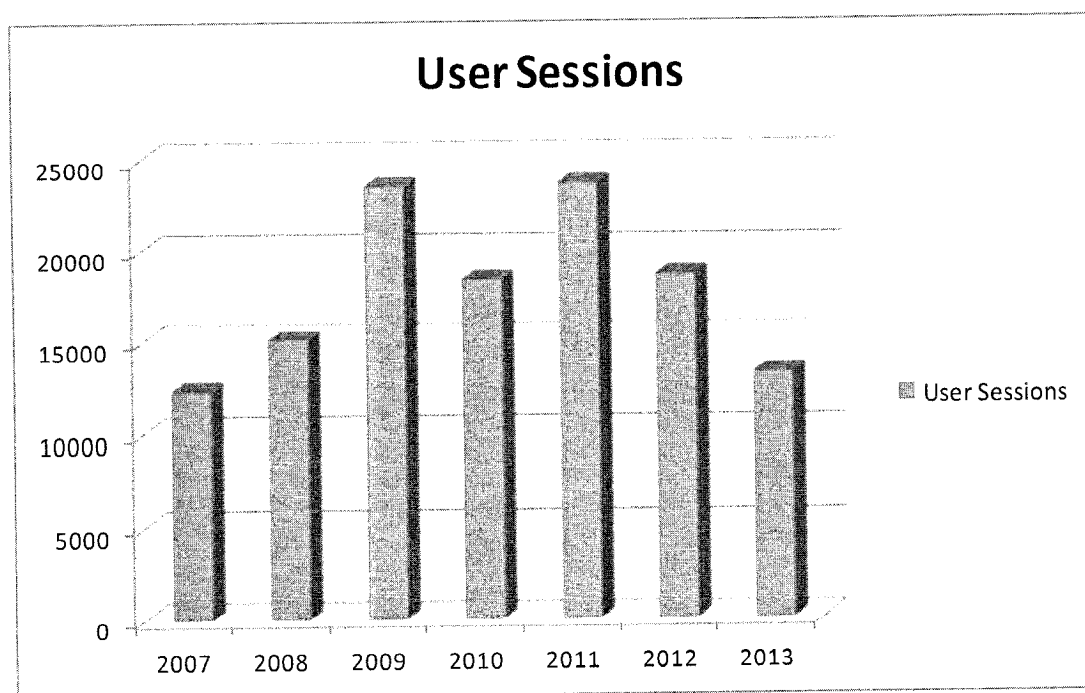
## Programs & Meeting Room Usage cont.

The numbers:

Year	Statistic	Adult Programs	Teen Programs	Childrens Programs	Totals
2007	# of Programs	31		24	55
	Attendance	348		432	780
2008	# of Programs	38		22	60
	Attendance	431		249	680
2009	# of Programs	42		30	72
	Attendance	334		456	790
2010	# of Programs	65	4	43	112
	Attendance	691	37	737	1465
2011	# of Programs	49	2	27	78
	Attendance	611	13	603	1227
2012	# of Programs	64	21	50	135
	Attendance	628	131	621	1380
2013	# of Programs	59	23	59	141
	Attendance	810	147	794	1751

## Public Computer / Internet Usage

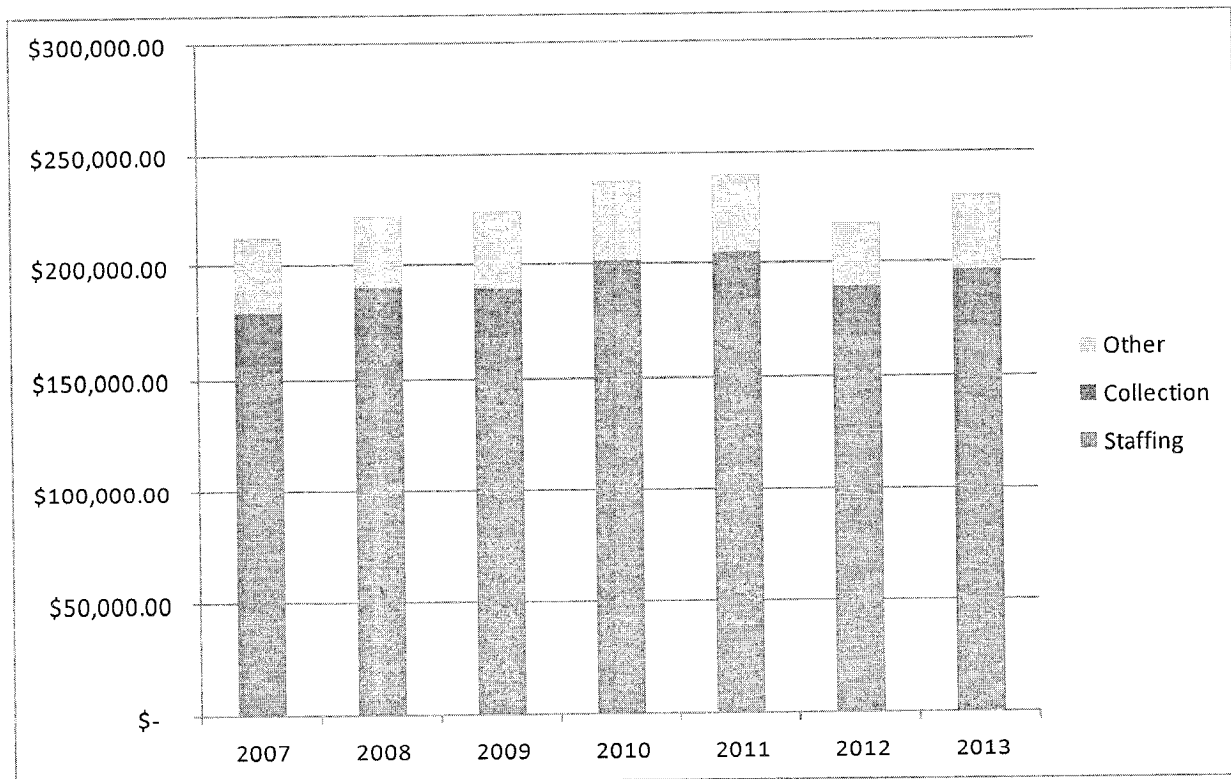
The library offers seven public access terminals with internet connection, and free wireless. Starting in 2013, the library switched one of its Windows terminals out for an Apple computer, offering patrons a new type of operating system. The library also has a printer and scanner available to the public. Wireless user sessions are not counted, nor is the number of times the library's website or other online resources have been accessed. The number of counted computer use sessions has begun to drop in recent years, perhaps due to the increase of patrons bringing their own laptops into the library.



### Operating Expenditures

The staffing level in 2007 was recorded as 3.2 FTEs, with 1.35 staff having ALA/MLS certification. That number changed to 3.53 FTEs in 2009, with 1.35 staff having ALA/MLS certification, and changed again in 2011 to 3.56 FTEs and 1.95 staff having ALA/MLS certification. In 2013, the staffing level was still sitting at 3.56 FTEs, with 1.95 staff having ALA/MLS certification. All staff are part-time, including the Library Director, 3 Library Assistants, and 3 Library Aides. In 2013, the Director and 2 Library Assistants held MLS degrees.

The total operating expenses for the library has remained relatively stable over the past few years, having actually dropped from 2010 and 2011's highs.



Year	Staffing	Collection	Other	Total
2007	\$ 156,488.00	\$ 23,226.00	\$ 33,425.00	\$ 213,139.00
2008	\$ 167,689.00	\$ 22,507.00	\$ 31,980.00	\$ 222,176.00
2009	\$ 168,415.00	\$ 20,300.00	\$ 34,710.00	\$ 223,425.00
2010	\$ 178,495.00	\$ 22,880.00	\$ 35,177.00	\$ 236,552.00
2011	\$ 184,143.00	\$ 20,561.00	\$ 34,974.00	\$ 239,678.00
2012	\$ 167,739.00	\$ 21,484.00	\$ 27,887.00	\$ 217,110.00
2013	\$ 171,051.00	\$ 25,435.00	\$ 33,685.00	\$ 230,171.00

## II. Community Demographics

### Population of Two Harbors

The City of Two Harbors has experienced very little population change since the 1990 Census. Below are some key demographic figures.

Time of Count	Number of Residents	Change from Previous Period
1990 Census	3651	
2000 Census	3613	-38
2010 Census	3745	132

### Race

Although the vast majority of Two Harbors residents are Caucasian (97.2%), the 2010 Census recorded 47 non-Caucasian individuals, and 58 individuals who identify as 2-or-more races. In addition, 37 individuals identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

### Age

While the total number of residents grew, the number of children, age 0-17, actually dropped from 831 (23%) children in 2000. Two Harbors is facing an aging population.

Age Group	Number of Residents	Percentage of Total Population
Children 0-17	824	22%
Adults 18-64	2132	57%
Adults 65 & over	789	21%

### Education

Two Harbors' schools are part of the Lake Superior School District. The Two Harbors High School 2013 on-time graduation rate was 86.1% [source: rc.education.state.mn.us]. There is also a nearby charter school and a strong home-school community. The Lake Superior School District has been on a 4-day school week for a few years now, for budgeting reasons, but will be returning to a 5-day school week next year, due to dropping test scores. 93.9% of the adult population has a high school diploma or higher, but only 14.8% of the adult population has a bachelor's degree or higher. This number has dropped since the strategic plan was last compiled in 2008, from a previous 19.2% of the population having a bachelor's degree or higher.

School	Number of Students (2014)
Minnehaha Elementary (K-5)	406
Two Harbors High School (6-12)	607
North Shore Community School (K-6) <i>Charter</i>	333
<b>Total Students:</b>	<b>1346</b>

### Income

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average annual pay for the state of MN in 2013 was \$50,116. In comparison, the average annual pay for Lake County, MN, was \$40,395. The 2012 American Communities Survey estimates that 15.7% of Two Harbors residents live below the poverty line.

## Housing

In 2012, the City's median assessed home value was \$120,372.00, a noticeable rise from 2000's \$70,200.00, and average rent was \$588.00, another noticeable rise from 2000's \$396.00.

Housing Type	Number of Units	Percentage of Total
Homeowner	1060	58.92%
Rental	589	32.74%
Vacant Housing Units	150	8.34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1799</b>	<b>100%</b>

Statistics were taken from the United States Census Bureau, both their formal census and their American Community Survey, the Minnesota Department of Education, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and City-Data.com, which obtains their numbers from the US Census.