

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The ability for a community to attract new and innovative businesses, industries, and workers is a key element for the community’s economic survival and prosperity. Providing a good climate for business development enhances the community’s overall well being both in financial terms as well as in morale and civic pride. By providing for its businesses, and the residents who comprise its workforce, the community insures its future success.

This element of the plan contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, and programs to promote the retention and stabilization of the economic base in the Town of Stinnett. As required by §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes, this element includes an assessment of new business and industries that are desired in the town, an assessment of the town’s strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and includes an inventory of environmentally contaminated sites. It also identifies applicable county, state, and regional economic development programs that apply to the Town of Stinnett.

6.2 LABOR FORCE AND ECONOMIC BASE

According to the 2000 Census, of the 263 inhabitants in the Town of Stinnett, 188 are 16 years or over. Of those 188, 55.9 percent, or 105, comprise the civilian labor force. At that time, 98 of the 105 were identified as employed and 7 as unemployed, or 6.7 percent.

Between the 1990 Census and the 2000 Census, the percentage of the population over the age of 25 that have attained some education past high school has increased considerably, from 19 percent to 33 percent. Of the 171 people over 25 years old, 56 have some higher level of education with 48 percent achieving an associate degree or higher.

In the Town of Stinnett, the age groups with the largest increase in population were 15-24 and 35-44 and the largest decrease was in the 25-34 years age group. These trends are somewhat consistent with the rest of Washburn County and the northwest region of Wisconsin. If these demographic changes continue, the town may have difficulty replenishing its workforce as younger members seek educational and employment opportunities elsewhere, and many older persons seek retirement.

In 2000, the average annual wage for Washburn County was \$21,410. The highest paying industry in the county is government at \$28,442, followed closely by finance, insurance, & real estate at \$27,774 and then manufacturing at \$24,698. The lowest paying industry is retail trade at \$13,200.

For the Town of Stinnett residents, the manufacturing industry provided 25 percent of the jobs in 2000, which is up from 13 percent in 1990. Other services (12%), construction (11%), and retail trade (10%) were the next largest industry employers of the town residents. In 1990, the

industries employing the most people were retail trade (32%); educational, health, and social services (15%); manufacturing (13%); and transportation, communications, and other public utilities (10%). Over the last decade, the increase in higher paying manufacturing jobs and the decrease in retail trade jobs has had an impact on the economic base of the community.

6.3 ENVIRONMENTALLY CONTAMINATED SITE RE-USE POTENTIAL

The State of Wisconsin and its county governments encourage the effective cleanup, reuse, and reclamation of sites damaged through prior usage. Several programs exist to fund or assist in funding the redevelopment of these sites. The Brownfield’s Initiative, which provides grants to individuals, businesses, local development organizations, and municipalities for environmental remediation activities for Brownfield sites where the owner is unknown, cannot be located, or cannot meet clean-up costs. Additionally, the Department of Commerce’s Petroleum Environmental Clean-Up Fund reimburses property owners for eligible clean-up costs related to discharges from petroleum tank systems.

6.4 ATTRACTING AND RETAINING BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

The attraction of business and industry is not necessarily an important goal for the town, and the plan commission of the town has indicated a preference for maintaining the rural atmosphere of the community. Approximately 51 percent of respondents to the planning survey answered that it is important to attract new industry to the area, although not specifically in the Town of Stinnett. The Town of Stinnett has several attributes that would make it a potential place to locate a business should the town choose to go in that direction. Specifically the town has:

- Properties with U.S. Highway 63 frontage
- The unincorporated town of Stanberry which may accommodate some future commercial enterprises

There are several disadvantages or weaknesses that the town must address if it chooses to attract new business and industry. In particular:

- Large tracts of county forest land
- Resident wishes to maintain the rural atmosphere of the town

6.5 APPLICABLE COUNTY, REGIONAL, AND STATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS THAT APPLY TO THE TOWN OF STINNETT

The U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration offers two programs for assistance with economic development that apply to the Town of Stinnett and/or Washburn County. One is the Public Works and Economic Development Facilities Assistance Program, which supports the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and development facilities necessary to generate private sector jobs and investment, including

investments that support technology-led development, redevelopment of brownfield sites, and eco-industrial development. Secondly, the Economic Adjustment Assistance Program is available to: (1) address the immediate needs of businesses and communities presently undergoing transition due to a sudden and severe job loss; and (2) demonstrate new and proactive approaches for economic competitiveness and innovative capacity for threatened regions and communities.

Another program available at the federal level to public entities is the USDA Rural Development Community Facility Loan Program. The purpose of this program is to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services in rural areas and towns with a population of 50,000 or less.

Three programs are available to local units of government through the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. The first program is the Community Development Block Grant for Economic Development (CDBG-ED). Its purpose is to provide resources to local governments that will enable them to assist economic development projects in their community. The local unit of government is the applicant and recipient of the funds. A specific business, which must be located in a municipality of 50,000 or less, is loaned the funds for eligible business development uses. When the funds are repaid to the local government, they may stay in the community to be used as a revolving loan fund to assist other businesses in the community.

The second program is the Community Development Block Grant Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED). Its purpose is to provide grant funds to local governments that will enable them to provide needed public facilities (i.e., streets, sewer mains, water mains, etc.) to private business enterprises that are going to create full time jobs by starting or expanding their businesses because of the availability of the funded public facilities.

The third program available from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce is the Community-Based Economic Development Program (CBED). Its purpose is to provide financing assistance to local governments and community-based organizations that undertake planning or development projects or that provide technical assistance in support of business (including technology-based businesses) and community development.

Available from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is a program called the Transportation Facilities Economic Assistance and Development Program (TEA). The intent of the TEA program is to help support new business development in Wisconsin by funding transportation improvements that are needed to secure jobs in the state. A governing body, a business, a consortium group, or any combination thereof can apply for TEA program funding.

There are many programs related to business development available to businesses located in Washburn County. On a regional level, there are revolving loan funds administered by Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Corporation (NWBDC), an affiliate of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission in Spooner. Washburn County also has a CDBG-ED revolving loan fund available to local businesses.

A strategic planning initiative called Build Wisconsin was initiated to produce the first cohesive economic development plan for the State of Wisconsin. As part of Build Wisconsin, six counties

in northwest Wisconsin, including Washburn, were designated a technology zone. The Technology Zone program brings \$5 million in income tax incentives for high-tech development to the area. Eligible businesses can receive tax credits based on their ability to create high-wage jobs and investment and support the development of high-tech industries in the region.

There are many more federal, state, and local programs offering assistance to businesses that are too numerous to mention here; however, they are listed in the Economic Development Manual prepared by the Wisconsin Bankers Association and the Wisconsin Financing Alternatives booklet prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce.

6.6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION STATEMENTS

Goal: To promote economic development activities that provide for a healthy, diversified, and sound economy with minimal effects on the environment.

Objective 1: Promote industry commercial and home-based enterprises that are compatible with our rural and recreational atmosphere, keeping in mind noise, traffic, and surrounding environment.

- A. Work with existing economic development organizations to assist with any potential economic development of the township.

Objective 2: Encourage industrial development along County, State, Federal roadways and railroads.

- A. Develop focus groups to identify acceptable industrial development in the township.

Objective 3: Consider location of development of future community systems and services.

- A. Update and review the towns land use plan annually and ensure county zoning restrictions reflect Town of Stinnett’s Land Use Plan.
- B. Review the need of community systems and services annually.