

## **CHAPTER 6 Economic Development Element**

66.1001(2)(f) Wisconsin Statutes:

**Economic Development Element.** A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion, of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in the local governmental unit, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the local governmental unit. The element shall assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the local governmental unit's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and shall designate an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries. The element shall also evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The element shall also identify county, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the local governmental unit.

### **Section 6.1 Introduction**

This element will present information about the economy within the Town of Grant. Economic development, which can be defined as the type and level of business activity within an area, is often based on a combination of market forces, regulation, and the extent of local government encouragement. The Town of Grant has historically been a rural community of primarily agricultural activity with a scattering of small-scale, home-grown commercial uses. This will likely remain. Besides agriculture, the Town of Grant has never been actively involved with economic development efforts. Most business growth affecting residents of the Town occurs in the larger cities, 5-10 miles from the Town. These jobs provide employment for the residents.

This element concludes with goals, objectives, and policies to address the stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base. County and state economic development information is included to help the Town identify potential opportunities that could be used to pursue appropriate economic development activities.

### **Section 6.2 Labor Force and Economic Base**

#### **A. Labor Force Analysis**

##### **1. Educational Attainment**

As discussed in Table 1.4, the Town of Grant has seen an increase in the percentage of its residents aged 25+ who either attended some college or received a college degree (Associate, Bachelor, or Graduate/Professional degree), from 29% in 1990 to 52% in the years 2010-2014. Refer to Chapter 1 (Issues and Opportunities) of this plan for more details.

##### **2. Earnings and Income**

Wages are not the only form of income that residents receive. "Total income" is defined by the U.S. Census as the sum of the amounts reported separately for wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips; self-employment income from non-farm or farm businesses, including proprietorships and partnerships; interest, dividends, net rental income, royalty income, or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); any public assistance or welfare payments from the

state or local welfare office; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and any other source of periodic income such as Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) payments, unemployment compensation, child support, or alimony. According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS), 83% of the 770 Grant households sampled were classified as households with earnings; 25% of those households received Social Security income; 2% received Supplemental Security Income (SSI); 23% received retirement income, and 0.4% of households received public assistance.

In order to better understand the existing wage-earning realities within the Town of Grant, “earnings” data was considered to be more informative. “Earnings” are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as the algebraic sum of wages or salary income and net income from self-employment, representing the amount of income received regularly before deductions for personal income taxes, Social Security, bond purchases, union dues, Medicare deductions etc. Table 6.1 compares mean (average) earnings, and mean household and per capita income for households and individuals in neighboring Towns and Portage County overall. According to the 2010-2014 ACS, the Town of Grant had higher earnings and income compared to the neighboring Towns of Pine Grove and Saratoga, and Portage County overall. The Towns of Grand Rapids and Saratoga are located in Wood County. Grant’s rate of change in household earnings and income growth between 1990 and 2010-2014 was also strong, however, it lagged slightly behind that of its neighbors and Portage County as a whole.

**Table 6.1: Mean Earnings, Mean Income and Per Capita Income Comparison**

	Mean Earnings Per Household			Mean Income Per Household			Per Capita Income		
	1999	2010-2014	Change	1999	2010-2014	Change	1999	2010-2014	Change
Town of Grant	\$55,528	\$64,904	17%	\$58,280	\$66,835	15%	\$21,793	\$27,786	27%
Town of Buena Vista	\$48,055	\$73,805	54%	\$51,832	\$76,800	48%	\$18,775	\$28,841	54%
Town of Plover	\$52,187	\$67,120	29%	\$56,495	\$73,335	30%	\$21,186	\$27,930	32%
Town of Pine Grove	\$47,986	\$49,081	2%	\$47,491	\$47,238	-1%	\$18,257	\$18,362	1%
Portage County	\$50,373	\$62,367	24%	\$52,102	\$62,649	20%	\$19,854	\$25,462	28%
Town of Grand Rapids	\$70,503	\$83,158	18%	NA	\$84,527	NA	\$25,331	\$34,613	37%
Town of Saratoga	\$47,881	\$58,497	22%	NA	\$58,900	NA	\$18,761	\$26,418	41%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census and 2010-2014 American Community Survey

Mean earnings= total earnings/ # households with earnings; Mean income= total income/ # households with income

According to 2010-2014 ACS data, median household income for Town of Grant residents was \$62,969, which was higher than Portage County (\$50,837). See Table 1.6 of the Issues and Opportunities chapter of this Comprehensive Plan for further information on household income.

### 3. Percent in Labor Force and Unemployment

Table 6.2 below examines labor force participation and employment percentages for the Town of Grant, as described in the 2000 Census and 2010-2014 ACS. Age sixteen is considered to be the lower threshold for being eligible for employment. The Town had a 2010-2014 labor force participation rate of 74%, which was up 3% from 71% in 2000. This rate was higher than Portage County, which had 68% of residents aged 16 years+ in the labor force. The unemployment rate in the Town for 2010-2014 was 3%, which was down 1% from the 4% rate experienced in 2000.

**Table 6.2: Employment Status of Town of Grant Population 16 Years and Above**

Employment Status	2000		2010-2014	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Persons 16 years and over	1,572	100%	1,538	100%
In labor force	1,115	71%	1,131	74%
Civilian labor force	1,115	71%	1,131	74%
Employed	1,052	67%	1,087	71%
Unemployed	63	4%	44	3%
Armed Forces	0	0%	0	0%
Not in labor force	457	29%	407	27%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census and 2010-2014 American Community Survey

4. Employment by Occupation

Table 6.3 below compares information regarding the type of occupation that Town of Grant residents have been employed in since 2000. The Production, Transportation, and Material Moving category remained the largest, although employment in the occupation decreased 5% over the 15 year period. The second largest category was Management/Professional occupations; employment in this category increased 1% since 2000. The third place category, Sale and Office occupations, lost overall percentage of workforce from 22% to 20%. The fourth place category, Service occupations, had the largest increase in percentage (9%) over the 15 year period.

Figure 1.3 of the Issues and Opportunities Chapter summarizes resident employment by industry between 2010-2014. Information for Table 6.3 and Figure 1.3 represents what type of occupation/industry the working residents of the Town were employed in, and is not a listing of the employment opportunities currently located in the Town of Grant.

**Table 6.3: Town of Grant Employment by Occupation**

Occupation	2000		2010-2014	
	Number	%	Number	%
Management, professional, and related occupations	228	22%	247	23%
Service occupations	93	9%	194	18%
Sales and Office occupations	227	22%	216	20%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry occupations <sup>(1)</sup>	15	1%	NA	NA
Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance occupations <sup>(2)</sup>	158	15%	140	13%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving occupations	331	32%	290	27%
Total Employed	1,052	100%	1,087	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census and 2010-2014 American Community Survey

(1) Category was changed to an "Industry" during the 2010 Census period.

(2) Category was changed during the previous Census period and may reflect the addition or subtraction of other occupations.

5. Commuting

According to 2010-2014 ACS data, 95% of employed residents work outside of the Town, while the remaining 5% live and work in Grant. The fact that the majority of the labor force works further from Town is also supported by the mean travel time to work, which is 22 minutes for Grant residents.

## B. Local Economic Base Analysis

The economic base in the Town is mainly agricultural and the Town has a range of businesses relating to the agriculture industry. The Town has approximately 10,600 acres of irrigated cropland. The community supports the development of agriculture related businesses that are in harmony with existing land uses and are complimentary to the agricultural activities that currently exist in the Town. It also supports some commercial growth in the Kellner area. Types of existing businesses located in the Town of Grant include:

- Agriculture
- Construction
- Auto sales/repair
- Services
- Banking
- Stables
- Landscaping
- Forestry
- Trucking
- Home businesses
- Restaurant/Tavern

## **Section 6.3 Strengths and Weaknesses for Attracting/Retaining Businesses**

### A. Strengths

- Plentiful groundwater for agricultural users
- Highway and rail access
- Utilities
- Strong agricultural base
- Available work force
- Central to Stevens Point, Plover and Wisconsin Rapids
- Close to UW-Stevens Point, Mid-State Technical College, and public and parochial schools

### B. Weaknesses

- No municipal sewer and water
- High water table in some areas
- Improved roads are limited
- No economic development plan/committee to promote growth

## **Section 6.4 Desired Businesses**

The Town will evaluate new proposals for industrial and commercial activities and sites on a case-by-case basis. New businesses in the Town are anticipated to be primarily agricultural related businesses. Desired businesses in the Town, as identified by the Plan Commission, include:

- Agriculture-related commercial and industrial
- Agriculture and forestry
- Home businesses
- Commercial services for local residents
- Commercial and light industrial businesses

## **Section 6.5 Environmentally Contaminated Sites**

Contaminated sites, also known as brownfields, serve as potential land base for economic development. Brownfields are defined as abandoned or underutilized commercial and industrial properties where redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination. The Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources (DNR) has prepared a guide to help finance brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. It can be found online at: [www.dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/rr/rr539.pdf](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/files/pdf/pubs/rr/rr539.pdf)

There is currently one site listed in the Town of Grant with the WI DNR as a brownfield site with open status. Open status refers to a contaminated site in need of clean up or where cleanup is still underway. The site, identified as Stenzel's Auto Sales and Service, 8010 Cty Rd WW, was last acted upon in 1996. A complete list of all brownfield sites can be obtained by contacting the DNR or through their website at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Brownfields/WRRD.html>

## **Section 6.6 Economic Development Resources**

The following is a list of potential resources and programs that could provide technical support and financial assistance to Town businesses.

### **A. Central Wisconsin Economic Development Fund**

The Central Wisconsin Economic Development Fund (CWED) is a regional loan program established from the consolidation of state-funded Community Development Block Grant Revolving Loan Funds within Central Wisconsin. Participating counties include Adams, Forest, Lincoln, Marathon, Portage, Vilas and Wood. CWED works with entrepreneurs and their lenders to structure financing packages for start-up and expanding businesses to encourage economic growth in the area. Use of funds may be put toward acquisition of land, buildings, and fixed equipment; site preparation, construction, or remodeling; equipment financing; working capital; and investment in technology to keep the business competitive. CWED loans usually have low interest rates, reduced collateral requirements, and flexible terms.

### **B. Portage County Business Council**

The Portage County Business Council (PCBC) serves as the Chamber of Commerce and economic development organization for the Portage County community. PCBC works with local municipalities and state agencies to promote business development in the area and smooth the way for businesses expanding or relocating to Portage County. The Business Council promotes the Portage County community by featuring available properties, resources and news of interest to potential and growing businesses.

### **C. Wisconsin Department of Administration**

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) has a broad range of financial assistance programs to help communities with economic development. The federally funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program can be used for housing, economic development and public facilities improvements.

#### **1. Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Loan**

*Purpose:* To support economic development projects that spur job creation for low to moderate income residents located in Wisconsin communities of under 50,000 residents. The State will grant funds to a municipality. The municipality, in turn, makes a loan to a business for the purpose of job creation.

*Use of Funds:* To purchase equipment or provide working capital. Project must create/retain jobs and be documented for a period not to exceed 24 months.

*Amount Available:* Up to \$1,000,000, based on an allowance of up to \$35,000 per job created.

#### D. Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) is the state's lead economic development agency. WEDC helps businesses, communities and individuals take advantage of new opportunities for growth and job creation through innovative market-driven programs. WEDC's economic development programs are designed to retain and attract businesses, create jobs and encourage economic growth.

##### 1. Workforce Training Grants

*Purpose:* To support businesses making a firm commitment to locate a new facility in Wisconsin or expanding an existing facility within the State which is developing a product, process, or service that requires training in new technology and industrial skills.

*Use of Funds:* Job training that focuses on new technology, industrial skills, or manufacturing processes. The training must not be currently available through other resources (Wisconsin Technical College System), such as Microsoft Office training, OSHA courses, welding, etc.

*Amount Available:* A grant of 50% of eligible training costs, up to \$5,000 per employee trained. The maximum award is \$200,000.

*Eligibility:* Eligible training costs include training wages (of production employees through first line supervisors), training materials and trainer costs. Routine training is ineligible. Eligible training costs do not include travel expenses, food and lodging.

#### E. Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

A voluntary, non-governmental organization controlled by member families to represent them on legislative issues and to provide farm marketing, business and planning consultation and services. Contact information:

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation  
PO Box 5550  
Madison, WI 53705-0550  
1-800-261-FARM or 608-836-5575

#### F. United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development Administration (Wisconsin)

The Rural Development Administration is an organization affiliated with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that provides funding for home purchase and rehabilitation, technical assistance and funding to new cooperative ventures, and financing for new business development. A full list of their programs can be found online at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services> or by contacting the Wisconsin office at:

USDA Rural Development - WI  
5417 Clem's Way  
Stevens Point, WI 54482  
Phone: (715)345-7600 FAX: (715)345-7669

#### G. Small Business Development Center

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) located at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point, is one of 12 university-based SBDC's in Wisconsin. The center offers

confidential, no-cost business counseling to current or prospective small-business owners on issues ranging from financial management to sources of capital. Assistance is available to businesses located throughout nine counties including Adams, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, Waupaca, and Wood.

#### H. Centergy (Central Wisconsin Alliance for Economic Development)

Centergy is an economic development corporation representing the central Wisconsin counties of Adams, Lincoln, Marathon, Portage, and Wood. The corporation works with area chambers, including economic development organizations to encourage business cluster development, support local businesses, attract new businesses, achieve growth for higher education facilities, and improve life in general for all central Wisconsin residents.

#### I. Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership

In an effort to improve quality and productivity of small to medium sized Wisconsin Manufacturers, a partnership between government, industry, labor, and education was formed. The Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WMEP) has expertise in addressing the needs of Wisconsin manufacturers, whether the primary concern is cost and efficiencies, growth, establishing a winning culture or gaining a specific certification.

### **Section 6.7 Economic Development Issues Identified by the Town of Grant**

The following issues were identified during the comprehensive planning process:

- How can the Town support regional economic development efforts with limited local funds?
- Municipal wells or commercial water bottling operations are not desirable because the water is exported.
- Understand the economic impact of residential development for the Town of Grant.

### **Section 6.8 Economic Development Goals, Objectives and Policies**

#### A. Goals:

1. Promote the stabilization and expansion of the current economic base, especially small businesses.
2. Promote established development areas throughout the Town.
3. Establish areas for new commercial development.

#### B. Objectives:

1. Identify lands having good commercial use potential.
2. Identify and preserve productive agricultural land.
3. Identify areas suitable for non-agricultural related business.
4. Allow for a range of employment opportunities.

5. Encourage businesses that support or service the agricultural, recreational, and conservation activities within the Town.

C. Policies:

1. New businesses shouldn't hinder existing agricultural operations.
2. Review commercial and industrial development proposals on a case-by-case basis.