

CHAPTER 7: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development chapter of the *Oconto County 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* provides an assessment of the county's labor force and economic base. This includes information on labor force characteristics such as educational attainment, unemployment rates, and industry and employment forecasts. A review of the economic base consists of revenues by industry, location quotient analysis, and an analysis of community finances. Many of these characteristics and trends are compared to the State of Wisconsin as a way to measure the county's economic standing against the rest of the state. This chapter also contains a summary of the county's economic strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and whether or not there is sufficient land and sites for such businesses and industries. In addition, there is an identification, evaluation and promotion of environmentally contaminated sites for redevelopment as potential future commercial and industrial sites.

The purpose of this inventory is to establish a set of strategies to promote the stabilization, retention, and expansion of Oconto County's economy. These strategies consist of a set of goals, objectives, policies, and programs that work in conjunction with Oconto County's General Design Plan (Chapter 2). Refer to Chapter 1 of this document for a detailed listing of these development strategies.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS

For Oconto County to maintain a strong, growing economy, economic development activities must function as a part of the entire socio-economic environment. This is accomplished through the development of strategies linked to four primary economic development components: 1) infrastructure; 2) business development; 3) workforce development; and 4) community cash flow. These components in-turn consist of several individual elements that influence the quality and effectiveness of economic development within the county. This section describes each of the four economic development components and how they pertain to Oconto County.

Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure provided by both government and private business is the support system needed for producing and delivering goods and services. Examples of infrastructure include:

- Utilities (e.g., water, sanitary and storm sewer, gas, electric, natural gas)
- Transportation services (e.g., roads, parking lots, airports, ports, rail, signage, sidewalks, trails)
- Social infrastructure (e.g., schools, hospitals, government and other public services)
- Communications infrastructure (e.g., telephone, radio, television, video, satellite, cellular)

Oconto County must be able to identify current and future needs and work with both local communities and the private sector to ensure adequate infrastructure is in place to support future businesses.

Business Development

Business development refers to business retention, expansion, attraction, and start-up activities. A business retention and expansion program should identify and monitor existing and changing

needs of core employers. It is important to appropriately remove or offset any obstacles that restrict growth of existing businesses to allow them to remain competitive through the establishment of workforce development programs, integration of technology, and other initiatives.

Business attraction activities are designed to encourage businesses looking to expand or relocate to do so in Oconto County. In order to attract new businesses, a community must provide a competitive and attractive environment. Marketing and promotion activities are used extensively to promote such attributes as a positive business climate, key quality of life elements, skill level of the workforce, and available services.

Entrepreneurship and new business development helps diversify the economic base by creating new jobs that stabilize the local economy. Building an effective support system for promising businesses is an important responsibility of the county economic development organization. An effective support system means there is land available with public infrastructure (e.g., streets and utilities), inexpensive incubator space with services, adequate transportation options, internet availability with high speed access, and permits for home-based businesses can easily be obtained.

Workforce Development

Oconto County needs a well-rounded workforce to stay competitive, keep existing businesses strong, retain young people in the county, and raise the area's general standard of living. Workforce development programs are primarily provided through partnerships with local job centers, local school districts, and institutions of higher education. Occasionally, local employers will provide instructors and equipment for use in these training programs. Companies have found it more economical to share training resources and facilities with other employers. The result is a better working relationship among those businesses participating in such collaborative training programs.

Community Cash Flow

As Oconto County pursues new dollars coming into the county, it can look at two primary sources: those brought in by individuals, and those brought in by organizations, businesses or governments.

- New dollars brought in by individuals consist of earned income (wage and salary) and transfer income (government payments and investment dividends).
- New dollars brought in by entities or institutions cover a wide range of sources to include tourism revenue, aids for roads and human services, shared revenue, and government contracts or grants.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

Strategic planning for economic development requires identification of Oconto County’s assets and limitations through a thorough evaluation of the four aforementioned economic components. The analysis of Oconto County’s economic Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (S.W.O.T.) provides a broad overview of where the county is currently and what its economic composition may be in the future. If Oconto County is to develop and maintain a vibrant and diversified economic foundation, the county needs to maximize its strengths, offset its weaknesses, take advantage of its opportunities, and minimize its threats.

On February 20, 2007, 35 individuals representing the Oconto County Planning Advisory Committee (O.C.P.A.C.), local community and county officials, business leaders, and key civic and non-profit organizations participated in an economic S.W.O.T. workshop. The complete results of the S.W.O.T. workshop can be found in [Appendix x](#) of this document. Those people participating in the workshop were divided into four groups and asked to provide input as to the county’s economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The following responses were determined by each group to be their priorities for these four categories:

Strengths:

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hwy 41/141, STH 32 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce ethics/skilled
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water features – Lakes, Green Bay, Creeks, Rivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterways – lakes/streams, natural resources
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture and ag. Support businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCEDC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campgrounds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakes and water
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large ag. base

Weaknesses:

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of employment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack manufacturing jobs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing jobs are lower paying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited/lack infrastructure for manufacturing
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance to ports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Void of technology availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech schools not affordable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of high school <u>trades</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor academic attainment

Opportunities:

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future services for aging community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and Federal money for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good manufacturing workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote tourism with established programs/lakes/streams/trails, etc.
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax incentives for businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New business development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep rail and roads in good condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countywide business recruitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand tourism 	

Threats:

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough high paying jobs in county 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent big cities draw our opportunities away
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of family farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to world economy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing of mill in Oconto Falls
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of big manufacturing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High state taxes drive business out
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater contamination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower school standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State mandates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annexation vs. local cooperation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing taxation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No training for local officials

The results of the S.W.O.T. process were instrumental in drafting the economic development goals and identifying appropriate tools for the implementation of this portion of the Comprehensive Plan.

LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

A key component to economic development is the quality and quantity of the area’s labor force. The overall skill level of the workforce dictates what types of businesses Oconto County will be able to attract and support in the future. This section focuses on several characteristics of the county’s labor force including general information on education levels; incomes; the types of occupations in which individuals are employed; the types of business in which people are working; commuting patterns; unemployment rates; labor participation rates; and a review of how these characteristics influence the region’s employment forecast.

Educational Attainment

The education levels attained by the county’s residents are often a good indicator of the type of jobs and the general standard of living found in those areas. Counties with higher percentages of people with a post high school education will be able to attract employers offering higher paying professional and technical positions. Table 7.1 illustrates the levels of education individuals age 25 and over have completed in Oconto County.

- The percentage of individuals who have a high school diploma in Oconto County is 45 percent, which is significantly better than the state average of 35 percent.
- Oconto County compares less favorably to Wisconsin when it comes to the number of individuals holding an Associate Degree or higher. Just over 17 percent of the county’s residents have a higher education degree compared to Wisconsin at 30 percent. The lack of a higher education facility in Oconto County may be the reason why a relatively low number of residents hold some level of education beyond high school.

Table 7.1: Educational Attainment (Age 25 and Over), Oconto County and State of Wisconsin, 2000

Education Level	Oconto County		Wisconsin	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	1,782	7.4	186,125	5.4
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2,903	12.0	332,292	9.6
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	10,908	45.1	1,201,813	34.6
Some college, no degree	4,435	18.3	715,664	20.6
Associate degree	1,594	6.6	260,711	7.5
Bachelor's degree	1,928	8.0	530,268	15.3
Graduate or professional degree	636	2.6	249,005	7.2
Percent high school graduate or higher		80.6		85.1
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		10.6		22.4

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census, DP-2; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Median Household Income

Median household income is one measure of average household income. It divides the household income distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the households fall below the median line while the other one-half are above it. The median household income is a good indicator of the general economic well-being of all households in the county.

Table 7.2 provides a comparison of median household incomes for Oconto County and State of Wisconsin for 1989 and 1999.

- The 1999 median household income for Oconto County was \$41,201 compared to \$22,927 in 1989. Both figures are significantly below the State of Wisconsin for these same time periods. However, it does represent an encouraging 80 percent increase for the county during that 10 year time span.
- The county’s median income of \$41,201 in 1999 was 93 percent of the state’s median income for the same year.

Table 7.2: Median Household Income, Oconto County and State of Wisconsin, 1989 and 1999

Location	1989	1999	Percent Change
Oconto County	22,927	41,201	79.7
Wisconsin	29,442	43,791	48.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 3A Table P080A; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000, DP-3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Occupation

Table 7.3 lists the employed persons by occupational classification for Oconto County in 2000. The employment opportunities for many of the county’s residents are located within the communities that comprise the Green Bay Metropolitan Area.

- In 2000, the majority of Oconto County residents were employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations (27 percent); or management, professional and related service fields (24 percent). The larger manufacturing plants and trucking firms in the cities of Green Bay and Marinette account for the high percentage of workers in the production, transportation, and material moving sector. The county’s public school systems, Oconto County, hospitals, and several larger manufacturers may explain why 44 percent of the county’s residents work in occupations within the management, professional, and sales fields.

Table 7.3: Employed Persons by Occupation, Oconto County and State of Wisconsin, 2000

Occupation	Oconto County		Wisconsin	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related	4,234	23.9	857,205	31.3
Service	2,504	14.2	383,619	14.0
Sales and office	3,580	20.2	690,360	25.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry	428	2.4	25,725	0.9
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	2,093	11.8	237,086	8.7
Production, transportation, and material moving	4,841	27.4	540,930	19.8
Total	17,680	100.0	2,734,925	100

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census, DP-3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Industry

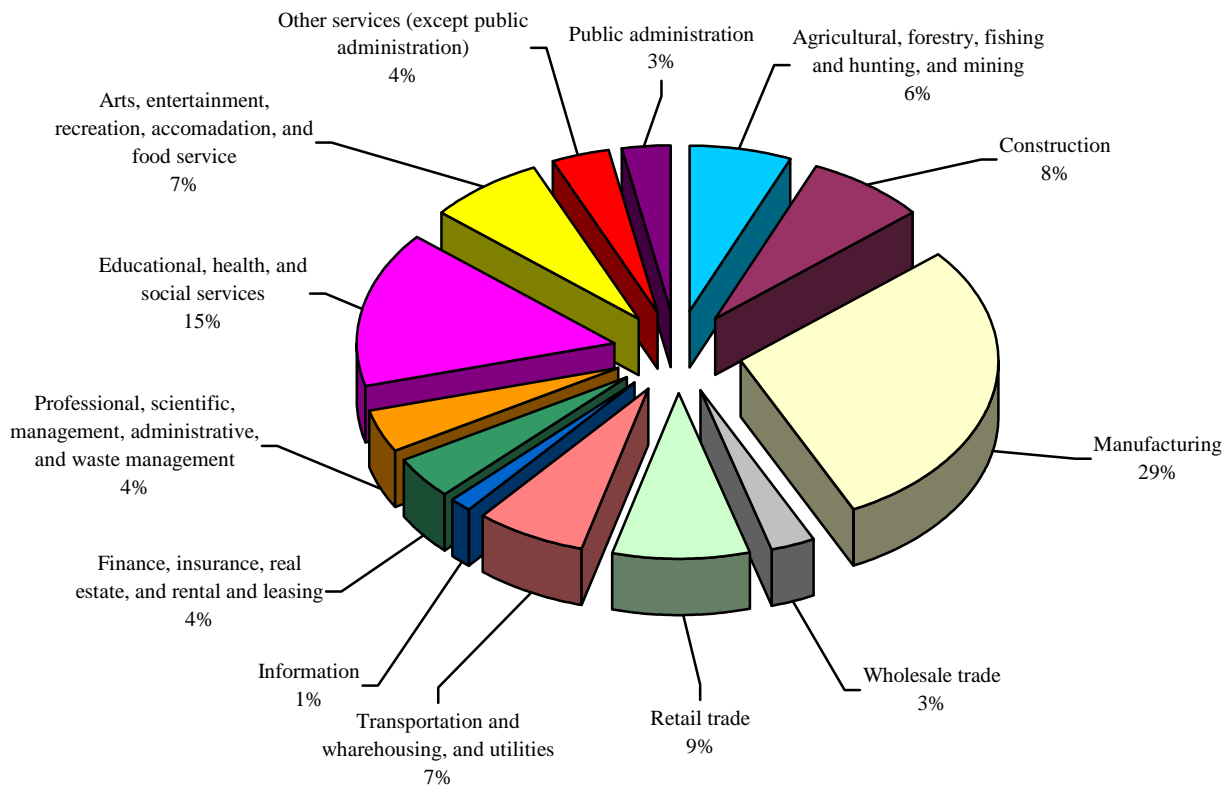
Table 7.4 and Figure 7.1 show employment by major industry group for Oconto County. In 2000, 29 percent of employed county residents worked in manufacturing followed by educational, health and social services at 15 percent. The remaining 56 percent of the employed population was evenly distributed among the other 11 industries. These percentages are similar to those of the state. Manufacturing remains the economic engine for the county and is supported strongly by the educational, health and social services industry.

Table 7.4: Employed Persons by Industry Group, Oconto County and State of Wisconsin, 2000

Industry	Oconto County		Wisconsin	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agricultural, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1,112	6.3	75,418	2.8
Construction	1,346	7.6	161,625	5.9
Manufacturing	5,126	29.0	606,845	22.2
Wholesale trade	463	2.6	87,979	3.2
Retail trade	1,517	8.6	317,881	11.6
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	1,263	7.1	123,657	4.5
Information	210	1.2	60,142	2.2
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	733	4.1	168,060	6.1
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management	730	4.1	179,503	6.6
Educational, health, and social services	2,723	15.4	548,111	20.0
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accomadation, and food service	1,286	7.3	198,528	7.3
Other services (except public administration)	640	3.6	111,028	4.1
Public administration	531	3.0	96,148	3.5
Total	17,680	100.0	2,734,925	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census, DP-3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Figure 7.1: Percent Employment by Industry Group, Oconto County, 2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census, DP-3; and Bay-Lake RPC, 2006.

Commuting Patterns

Identifying and tracking commuting patterns is a labor market concept that refers to worker flows between municipalities and/or counties. These commuting patterns highlight the counties that have a strong economic base and are able to attract workers from surrounding communities and counties. Conversely, it demonstrates which areas lack local employment opportunities for their residents or perhaps serve as “bedroom” communities that may offer a greater number of, and perhaps more affordable, housing options in comparison to other locations.

- In 2000, approximately 50 percent (8,784) of the 17,444 employed Oconto County residents worked within Oconto County (Table 7.5).
- In the same year, 8,660 working residents of Oconto County commuted out of the county for work, whereas 2,141 workers from other counties traveled into Oconto County to work. The result is a net loss of 6,519 Oconto County working age residents to other counties for employment.
- Oconto County’s residents primarily traveled to the neighboring counties of Brown, Marinette, and Shawano for work. Furthermore, 356 residents of Oconto County traveled to Outagamie, Winnebago, and Marinette counties, and even further distances to work. In comparison, only 73 individuals from those same areas traveled to Oconto County for employment. This is a good indication that the state’s well maintained highway and road system make traveling long distances safer and more efficient.

Table 7.5: County-to-County Worker* Flow, Oconto County, 2000

County	County Residents Commute to	County Workers Commute from	Net Commute
Brown	6,518	644	-5,874
Marinette	701	712	11
Shawano	436	269	-167
Forest	207	65	-142
Outagamie	195	55	-140
Winnebago	123	9	-114
Menominee, MI	51	93	42
Kewaunee	29	60	31
Elsewhere	400	234	-166
Total	8,660	2,141	-6,519
Work w/in Oconto	8,784		

*Workers 16 years old and older

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000; WDOA; BLRPC, 2006.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate is the proportion of the civilian labor force that is currently unemployed and actively seeking employment. Oconto County’s civilian labor force is comprised of employed persons and those seeking employment that are age 16 and older. It excludes persons in the armed forces and those residents under age 16. Persons not employed and not looking for work are not counted as part of the labor force; therefore, they are not counted as unemployed. Table 7.6 and Figure 7.2 highlight the fluctuations in Oconto County’s civilian labor force since 1990. Variations in the number of persons in the labor force are the result of many factors

including shifts in the age and sex characteristics of the population; the proportion of citizens age 16 and over working or seeking employment; and seasonal occupations.

Companies looking to expand operations frequently inquire about areas with higher unemployment rates or excess labor from which to draw labor. With rapidly growing economies in many parts of the Upper Midwest, one of the major criteria companies use in selecting an area in which to locate is the amount of available labor that is already skilled or have the potential for obtaining the skills they are seeking for their particular operations.

Based on WDOA population estimates, the civilian labor force comprised 47 percent of Oconto County’s population in 1995 and 54 percent in 2005.

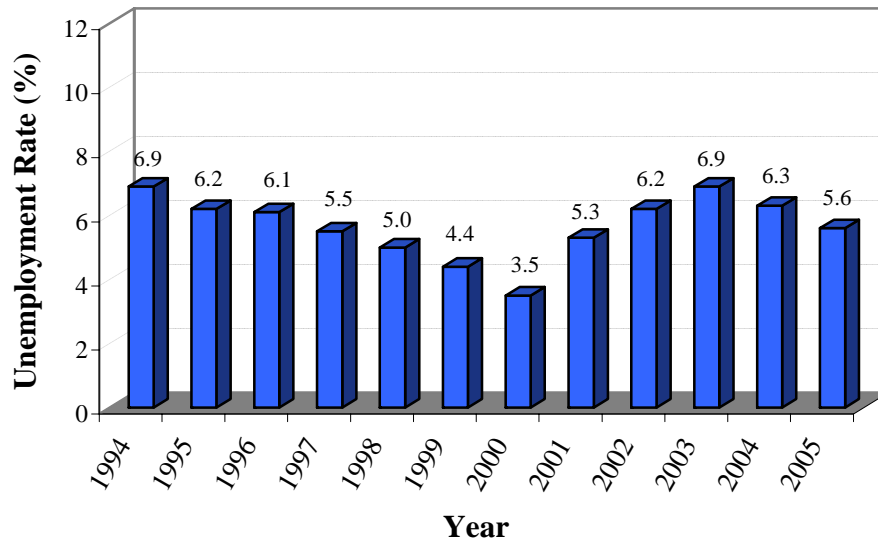
- The county’s labor force increased by 5,680 workers, or 38 percent, from 1990 to 2005.
- Between 1994 and 2005 the county’s unemployment rate amongst the civilian labor force averaged 5.7 percent. The county’s unemployment rate of 3.5 percent in 2000 was the lowest during this time span, whereas the 1994 and 2003 unemployment rates of 6.9 percent were the highest (Figure 7.2). It is important to note that continued high unemployment rates can be the result of a much greater problem that may indicate an under-skilled or under-educated workforce or an area that lacks sufficient infrastructure or capital investment to support economic expansion.
- The number of employed Oconto County residents rose from 13,868 to 19,418 between 1994 and 2005, which reflects an additional 5,550 workers. This translates to a 40 percent increase in employment between 1994 and 2005.

Table 7.6: Average Civilian Labor Force Estimates, Oconto County, 1994 – 2005

Year	Total Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	% Civilian Labor Force Unemployed
1994	14,893	13,868	1,025	6.9
1995	14,971	14,050	921	6.2
1996	15,114	14,197	917	6.1
1997	15,391	14,538	853	5.5
1998	15,785	14,992	793	5.0
1999	15,922	15,217	705	4.4
2000	19,496	18,811	685	3.5
2001	19,899	18,848	1,051	5.3
2002	20,062	18,824	1,238	6.2
2003	20,521	19,101	1,420	6.9
2004	20,685	19,384	1,301	6.3
2005	20,573	19,418	1,155	5.6

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Civilian Labor Force Estimates, for years cited; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Figure 7.2: Unemployment Rate, Oconto County, 1994 – 2004



Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Civilian Labor Force Estimate, 1990-2005; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Labor Participation Rate

According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, approximately 69 percent of Oconto County's population, age 16 and older, are in the labor force. This percentage is referred to as the labor force participation rate (LFPR). The LFPR is a strong economic measure that is sometimes a better indicator of the area's labor market health than its unemployment rate. Oconto's LFPR is slightly below Wisconsin's LFPR of 71 percent but higher than the national rate of 65 percent. Like the state and nation, the county's LFPR is projected to decrease over the coming decades due to an aging, retiring population.

As outlined in the Population and Housing chapter, Oconto County currently has a slightly older than average population in comparison to the State of Wisconsin. This is projected to continue as individuals age 65 and over comprise a larger percentage of the population while the younger portion of the population decreases proportionately. From a labor market perspective, the implications of declining labor force participation rate due to a growing and aging population points to future labor shortages in certain industries and occupations.

Industry and Employment Forecast

Industry and employment projections have been developed for the ten county Bay Area Workforce Development district which consists of Brown, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Shawano, and Sheboygan counties. According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development:

- Overall total non-farm employment in the region will increase by 12 percent or 35,980 new jobs.
- Manufacturing is currently the largest employing industry sector in the region and will remain the largest industry sector through 2012. Although manufacturing jobs will continue to increase, the rate of increase will slow down.

- Occupations in manufacturing are expected to move away from general labor positions to more semi-skilled and skilled operator and technician jobs. This is due primarily to production processes that have integrated more efficient technology.
- The education and health services sector is projected to show the largest numeric employment growth by adding 12,620 jobs from 2002 to 2012.
- Goods producing industry sectors such as construction, mining, natural resources, and manufacturing will decline slightly from 31 percent total employment to 29 percent by 2012.
- The leisure and hospitality industry will demonstrate strong growth by adding nearly 3,600 new jobs by 2012.

Local Employment Forecast

- From 1990 to 2000, the manufacturing and educational, health, and social services industries continued to have the largest share of employment for residents of Oconto County as seen in Table 7.4. This county trend does follow the regional trend and is expected to continue for the next several years.
- According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, there are a number of occupations that will be in great demand by the year 2012. They include:
 - Teachers
 - Waiters and Waitresses
 - Machinists
 - Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers
 - Registered Nurses
 - Nursing Aids, Orderlies, and Attendants
 - Truck Drivers
- Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, St. Norbert College, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, and the University of Wisconsin-Marinette will be important components in educating the area’s workforce for these growing fields.

ECONOMIC BASE

Revenues by Industry

Table 7.7 and Figure 7.3 provide an overview of how much each industry contributes to the overall Oconto County economy. Please note this does not include agriculture. Manufacturing continues to be one of the cornerstones for the county’s economy by contributing over \$96 million, or just over 31 percent, of the total income provided by all seven industries. The transportation and utilities industry grew a healthy 463 percent in the last 20 years. Overall, income from all industries rose a robust 246 percent in the last 20 years indicating the local economy is strong and growing.

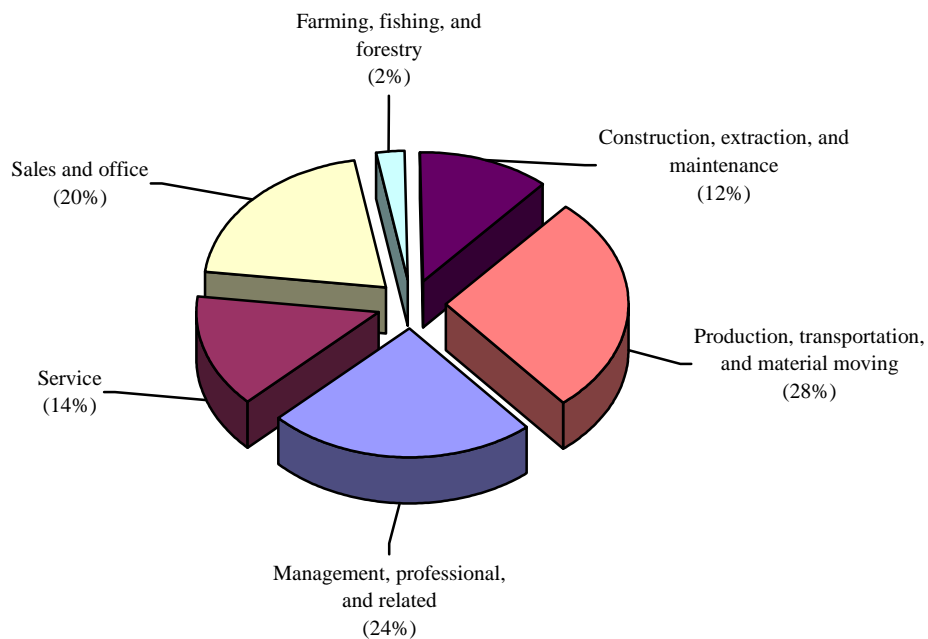
Table 7.7: Income by Industry Type, Oconto County, 1980 – 2000

Area	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change
Mining	\$803	\$1,166	\$1,830	127.9
Construction	\$6,979	\$12,138	\$26,500	279.7
Manufacturing	\$31,979	\$67,008	\$96,831	202.8
Transportation and Public Utilities	\$4,239	\$12,749	\$23,866	463.0
Trade	\$15,746	\$25,118	\$38,355	143.6
Services	\$16,162	\$32,525	\$63,600	293.5
Government	\$14,424	\$34,192	\$60,567	319.9
Total	\$90,332	\$184,896	\$311,549	244.9

*Figures Provided in Thousands

Source: Wisconsin Department of Commerce 2006.

Figure 7.3: Percent Revenue by Industry Type, Oconto County, 2000



Source: Wisconsin Department of Commerce 2006.

Agriculture

According to a 2004 UW-Extension report entitled, *Oconto County Agriculture: Value and Economic Impact*, agriculture:

- Provided jobs for 2,694 county residents, or 19 percent, of the county’s entire workforce.
- Contributed \$318 million, or 25 percent, of the county’s total economic activity and 14 percent of the county’s total income. Of this \$318 million, \$245 million is the result of the sale of all farm and value-added products, \$61 million in business to business purchases, and \$12 million in the spending of earnings of those in agriculture related occupations.
- Paid nearly \$8 million in taxes (not including all property taxes paid to local schools).

Additionally, the market value of production per farm in Oconto County increased from \$60,322 in 1997 to \$65,322 in 2002.

The county's milk producers and dairy industry contribute over \$221 million to the county's economy. The on-farm production and sale of milk accounts for \$52 million whereas the processing accounts for an additional \$169 million. Currently, there are four plants processing dairy products in Oconto County.

The production of landscape trees and plants, as well as landscape and grounds maintenance, are rapidly growing segments of Oconto County's agricultural industry. Horticulture generates \$3 million in county economic activity and provides over 93 full-time and seasonal jobs.

Tourism

Sitting on Green Bay of Lake Michigan, Oconto County is strategically located in and adjacent to some of Wisconsin's most beautiful forests. The county has plenty to offer everyone – the outdoor enthusiast, people interested in cultural/historical attractions, and those individuals seeking unique shopping venues. Tourism is a vital component of Oconto County's local economy. Businesses that cater to tourism such as resorts, motels, campgrounds, bed and breakfast's, and retail stores are expanding services to meet the diverse needs of the thousands of people who come to the county to take advantage of the walking and biking trails, the many parks, golf courses, historic sites, and area attractions.

The following information was taken from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's 2005 Tourism Economic Impact Study conducted by David-Peterson Associates, Inc. The survey includes 2,000 face-to-face interviews with travelers from throughout the state while attending a variety of events during each of the four seasons; 1,600 telephone interviews with lodging properties; and 1,000 telephone interviews with Wisconsin households. The statistics gathered from the three survey components were analyzed, averaged, and applied county by county using standard economic modeling.

- In 2005, Oconto County ranked 46th in the state for traveler spending down from 45th in 2004.
- Travelers spent an estimated \$66 million in Oconto County in 2005 up from \$65 million in 2004.
- Sixteen percent of all expenditures were made in the winter, which amounted to \$10 million; 20 percent were made in the spring (\$13 million); 39 percent in the summer (\$26 million) and 25 percent in the fall (\$16 million).
- It is estimated that employees earned \$40 million in wages generated from tourist spending.
- Traveler spending in 2005 supported 1,681 full-time equivalent jobs down from 1,716 in 2004.
- Local revenues (property taxes, sales taxes, lodging taxes, etc.) collected as a result of travelers amounted to an estimated \$2.8 million in 2005, which was the same as 2004.
- Travelers generated just over \$8 million in state revenues (lodging, sales and meal taxes, etc.).
- When this study was first initiated in 1993, travelers spent \$22 million in Oconto County. By 2005, travelers spent \$66 million, representing an increase of 193 percent.

Major Employers

Oconto County boasts a variety of large employers from both the public and private sectors. Residents of Oconto County have a number of employment opportunities both within the county and in the adjacent Green Bay Metropolitan Area. The public sector employers include the two local school districts, county, and CESA 8. KCS, Inc. is the largest private employer employing over 500 people. The private industries are from a number of different sectors including manufacturing, health care, and food processing. The size and diversity of these employers provide a solid economic foundation for the county and its many communities.

Table 7.8: Top Ten Employers, Oconto County, 2004

Establishment	Product or Service	Location	Size (Dec. 2004)
KCS Intl Inc	Boat building	City of Oconto	500 - 999 employees
Oconto Falls Public School	Elementary & secondary schools	City of Oconto Falls	250 - 499 employees
Saputo Cheese USA Inc	Cheese manufacturing	Village of Lena	250 - 499 employees
County of Oconto	Executive & legislative offices, combined	City of Oconto	250 - 499 employees
Unlimited Services of Wisconsin Inc	Current-carrying wiring device mfg.	City of Oconto	100 - 249 employees
Community Memorial Hospital Inc	Gen. medical & surgical hospitals	City of Oconto	100 - 249 employees
Oconto Public School	Elementary & secondary schools	City of Oconto	100 - 249 employees
Coop Educational Service Agency #8	Administration of education programs	City of Gillett	100 - 249 employees
TRM Inc	Hardwood veneer & plywood mfg.	City of Gillett	100 - 249 employees
Heyde Health Systems - Oconto	Nursing care facility	City of Oconto Falls	100 - 249 employees

Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, ES-202, July 2005.

Employment by Economic Division

The future of Oconto County requires an understanding of the local and county economies. The Economic Base Analysis technique divides the economy into basic and non-basic sectors.

- A. The basic sector is made up of local businesses that are dependent on external factors. Manufacturing and local resource-oriented firms depend principally upon non-local factors and usually export their goods.
- B. The non-basic sector is comprised of those firms that depend largely upon local business conditions.

Location Quotient Analysis

In order to strengthen and grow the county’s overall economy, it is important to develop and enhance the basic sector. To conduct a Location Quotient (LQ) Analysis, there are nine basic economic divisions that are used:

- Four goods-producing sectors: agriculture; forestry and fishing; mining; construction; and manufacturing; and
- Five services-producing sectors: transportation and public utilities; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance and real estate; and services.

The LQ technique is used to identify the basic and non-basic sectors of a local economy. LQs highlight how the balance of employment in a local economy compares to the balance in employment in the region as a whole. The proportion of jobs in each local industrial sector is measured, as a ratio, against its corresponding sector at the regional level. The analysis uses the United States as the standard for comparison with the county’s economy (Table 7.9).

- If the LQ is less than 1.0, all employment is considered non-basic, therefore that industry is not meeting local demand and implies that the goods or services of that sector are being “imported” into the locale from somewhere else within the region.

- An LQ equal to 1.0 suggests that the local employment is exactly sufficient to meet the local demand for a given good or service, employment is still considered non-basic.
- An LQ greater than 1.0 suggests that local employment produces more goods and services than the local economy can use; therefore these goods and services are exported to non-local areas, which makes them basic sector employment.

When the location quotient increases over time, this suggests that the county’s economy is getting closer to reaching and exceeding local demands. Having strong basic sector employment and industry will strengthen and further diversify Oconto County’s economy.

The most notable changes in the county’s economy since 1990 are the *declines* in wholesale trade; transportation and utilities; and services, and the *increases* in employment in construction; agriculture, forestry, and fishing; and local government. Overall, Oconto County’s economy is quite diversified providing a number of different employment opportunities for its residents.

Table 7.9: Employment by Industry Group, Oconto County and United States, Location Quotient Analysis, Oconto County, 1990 – 2000

Item	Oconto County		United States		Percent Change 1990-2000		Oconto County Location Quotient	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	Oconto	U.S.	1990	2000
Total full-time and part-time employment	12,095	14,400	139,380,900	166,758,800	19.1	19.6		
Farm employment	1,582	1,464	3,153,000	3,113,000	-7.5	-1.3	5.78	5.45
Nonfarm employment	10,513	12,936	136,227,900	163,645,800	23.0	20.1	0.89	0.92
Private employment	8,943	11,039	114,995,900	140,701,800	23.4	22.4	0.90	0.91
Ag. Services, forestry, fishing & other	117	245	1,454,000	2,121,100	109.4	45.9	0.93	1.34
Mining	52	53	1,044,100	784,200	1.9	-24.9	0.57	0.78
Construction	560	930	7,261,800	9,446,300	66.1	30.1	0.89	1.14
Manufacturing	2,875	3,285	19,694,200	19,114,800	14.3	-2.9	1.68	1.99
Transportation and public utilities	541	633	6,550,600	8,244,400	17.0	25.9	0.95	0.89
Wholesale trade	286	245	6,720,500	7,584,100	-14.3	12.9	0.49	0.37
Retail trade	1,844	2,291	22,885,500	27,222,300	24.2	18.9	0.93	0.97
Finance, insurance and real estate	472	580	10,714,600	13,193,800	22.9	23.1	0.51	0.51
Services	2,196	2,777	38,670,600	52,990,800	26.5	37.0	0.65	0.61
Government and government enterprises	1,570	1,897	21,232,000	22,944,000	20.8	8.1	0.85	0.96
Federal, civilian	125	129	3,233,000	2,892,000	3.2	-10.5	0.45	0.52
Military	147	119	2,718,000	2,075,000	-19.0	-23.7	0.62	0.66
State and local	1,298	1,649	15,281,000	17,977,000	27.0	17.6	0.98	1.06
State	68	30	4,404,000	4,949,000	-55.9	12.4	0.18	0.07
Local	1,230	1,619	10,877,000	13,028,000	31.6	19.8	1.30	1.44

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, REIS 1969-2000; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Threshold Analysis

Export Base (“Basic Employment”)

In 2000, three “basic employment areas” within the Oconto County economy were considered exporters: farm employment, construction, and manufacturing. They produce more goods and services than the local economy can use and export excess goods to other areas.

Non-Export Base (“Non-Basic Employment”)

Several industries stand out with lower LQs: wholesale trade; services; and finance, insurance, and real estate. These industries are not meeting local demand for given goods or services and therefore import those needed services from other counties.

County Finances

Table 7.10 and Table 7.11 illustrate a history of the taxes levied and collected in Oconto County. From 2000 to 2005, the county’s full value increased by 50 percent or \$1.032 billion. The total property tax also increased \$14.3 million or 35 percent for the same period. These numbers are a good indication the county is growing at a healthy and steady rate.

Table 7.10: Comparative Tax Appropriations, Oconto County, 2000 – 2005

Year Levied	Full Value	Total Property Tax	State Tax Credit	Full Value Rate		Taxing Jurisdiction Share				
				Gross	Effective	School	Vocational	County	Local	Other
2000	\$2,045,717,800	\$40,964,791	\$2,678,148	0.02002	0.01871	\$19,842,209	\$2,824,722	\$10,969,548	\$6,311,021	\$1,017,292
2001	\$2,255,310,300	\$45,384,122	\$2,866,799	0.02012	0.01885	\$21,384,245	\$3,619,227	\$12,811,245	\$6,347,569	\$1,221,836
2002	\$2,471,809,200	\$48,400,285	\$3,054,788	0.01958	0.01834	\$22,547,060	\$3,956,878	\$13,989,713	\$6,572,949	\$1,333,691
2003	\$2,741,651,900	\$50,807,007	\$3,244,654	0.01853	0.01734	\$23,360,273	\$4,240,489	\$15,046,346	\$6,719,057	\$1,440,835
2004	\$2,895,927,000	\$54,646,338	\$3,266,948	0.01887	0.01774	\$25,854,923	\$4,383,113	\$15,605,256	\$7,251,024	\$1,552,024
2005	\$3,077,200,600	\$55,262,071	\$3,298,885	0.01795	0.01688	\$25,473,579	\$4,561,627	\$16,003,970	\$7,601,113	\$1,621,787

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, City, Village and Town Taxes, for years cited; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

The ability to finance development and infrastructure projects is calculated by general obligation debt capacity. The aggregate amount of indebtedness, including existing indebtedness of any municipality, shall not exceed five percent of the value of the taxable property located in the municipality.

Oconto County’s debt as of December 31, 2004, was \$4,105,000. This left a debt margin of \$140,691,350. The county’s existing debt has dropped \$2.8 million from 2000 to 2004, while growing at a healthy 42 percent rate over this time period. This reduction in debt corresponds to 97 percent. Oconto County is growing at a steady rate while maintaining a manageable debt; therefore, the county has access to considerable financing for future projects to include emergency infrastructure or facilities improvements, if necessary.

Table 7.11: Public Indebtedness, Oconto County, 2000 – 2005

Year	Full Value	Debt Limit*	Existing Debt	Debt Margin
2000	\$2,045,717,800	\$102,285,890	\$6,966,933	\$95,318,957
2001	\$2,255,310,300	\$112,765,515	\$6,398,071	\$106,367,444
2002	\$2,471,809,200	\$123,590,460	\$5,675,986	\$117,914,474
2003	\$2,741,651,900	\$137,082,595	\$4,909,265	\$132,173,330
2004	\$2,895,927,000	\$144,796,350	\$4,105,000	\$140,691,350

*Debt Limit equals five percent of the full value.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Bureau of Local Finance Assistance, Equalized Value and Debt Limit Value, for years cited; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

SITES FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Existing Site Inventory and Analysis

As detailed on the county's 2007 land use map (Map x.x), there are _____ acres designated as commercial land and an addition _____ acres of industrial land.

Evaluation of Environmentally Contaminated Sites for Commercial and Industrial Uses

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), there have been 468 environmental incidences that have occurred in Oconto County with the first being noted in 1980. The incidents listed for Oconto County can be viewed in [Appendix x](#). Please refer to the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) on the WDNR website for further details on these listings.

According to the WDNR, 41 incidences remain open as of January 2007 while 427 have been closed. A majority of the open cases are leaking underground storage tanks or a site that has been identified as having some level of contaminated soil or groundwater. During the Comprehensive Planning process, county officials should be familiar with these sites. Local community officials should also understand the type and location of the incidences occurring within their municipalities. These areas may be prime locations for redevelopment for another land use such as commercial or industrial development.

Depending on the type of incident, it will fall under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection; Wisconsin Department of Commerce; or the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources either in their Waste Management Division or the Remediation or Redevelopment Division. The incident will have been identified by type with a status report as described below.

Types of Activities

Abandoned Container (AC): An abandoned container, with potentially hazardous contents, has been inspected and recovered. No known discharge to the environment has occurred. If the container discharged a hazardous substance, a SPILL activity will be created at this location.

Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST): A LUST site has contaminated soil and/or groundwater with petroleum, which includes toxic and cancer causing substances. However, given time, petroleum contamination naturally breaks down in the environment (biodegradation). Some LUST sites may emit potentially explosive vapors.

Environmental Repair (ERP): ERP sites are sites other than LUSTs that have contaminated soil and/or groundwater. Examples include industrial spills (or dumping) that need long term investigation, buried containers of hazardous substances, and closed landfills that have caused contamination. The ERP module includes petroleum contamination from above-ground (but not from underground) storage tanks.

SPILLS: A discharge of a hazardous substance that may adversely impact, or threaten to impact public health, welfare or the environment. Spills are usually cleaned up quickly.

General Property Information (GP): This activity type consists of records of various milestones related to liability exemptions, liability clarifications, and cleanup agreements that have been approved by DNR to clarify the legal status of the property.

Case Status

Open Status: This status pertains to Spills, LUST, ERP, VPLE and Abandoned Container activities in need of clean up or where cleanup is still underway.

Conditionally Closed Status: These activities are where cleanup actions were approved, but the site closure will not be approved pending receipt of documentation of abandonment of wells or disposal of soil.

Closed Status: This category includes activities where investigation and cleanup of the contamination has been completed and the state has approved all cleanup actions.

Historic Spill: These Spills are where cleanups may have been completed prior to 1996 and no end date is shown. Spill Activities in this category show Historic status. Please contact the regional spills coordinator if you need more information.

GeneralProperty: These areas involve liability exemptions, liability clarifications, etc. to clarify the legal status of the property. The same property may include other open or closed activities, e.g. Spills, LUST, etc.

No Remediation or Redevelopment Action Required: There was, or may have been, a discharge to the environment and, based on the known information, DNR has determined that the responsible party does not need to undertake an investigation or cleanup in response to that discharge.

Designation of Business and Industrial Development

Future industrial or commercial businesses are being directed to locate adjacent to or within the county's incorporated communities and along major highways with safe access (Map x.x).

Reserved for further discussion

Acreage Projections

Reserved for OCPAC, community, and citizen input

Oconto County Economic Development Tables

Table 7.12: Median Household Income, Oconto County Municipalities, 1989 and 1999

Geographic Location	1989	1999	Percent Change
Town of Abrams	\$30,313	\$51,250	69.1
Town of Bagley	\$20,938	\$36,875	76.1
Town of Brazeau	\$20,608	\$34,750	68.6
Town of Breed	\$20,750	\$36,103	74.0
Town of Chase	\$30,556	\$55,385	81.3
Town of Doty	\$12,273	\$32,188	162.3
Town of Gillett	\$25,852	\$41,053	58.8
Town of How	\$22,054	\$39,167	77.6
Town of Lakewood	\$19,500	\$33,869	73.7
Town of Lena	\$24,600	\$45,556	85.2
Town of Little River	\$22,292	\$40,804	83.0
Town of Little Suamico	\$33,304	\$60,160	80.6
Town of Maple Valley	\$21,667	\$35,795	65.2
Town of Morgan	\$30,167	\$50,221	66.5
Town of Mountain	\$16,364	\$30,598	87.0
Town of Oconto	\$25,114	\$45,721	82.1
Town of Oconto Falls	\$27,625	\$49,531	79.3
Town of Pensaukee	\$30,625	\$48,098	57.1
Town of Riverview	\$16,833	\$32,550	93.4
Town of Spruce	\$22,986	\$35,658	55.1
Town of Stiles	\$26,900	\$43,882	63.1
Town of Townsend	\$15,134	\$28,456	88.0
Town of Underhill	\$18,359	\$31,905	73.8
Village of Lena	\$22,778	\$30,000	31.7
Village of Suring	\$19,559	\$26,023	33.0
City of Gillett	\$15,329	\$36,667	139.2
City of Oconto	\$18,816	\$34,589	83.8
City of Oconto Falls	\$21,500	\$34,884	62.3
Oconto County	\$22,927	\$41,201	79.7
State of Wisconsin	\$29,442	\$43,791	48.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, STF 3A Table P080A; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000, DP-3; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Table 7.13: Educational Attainment (Age 25 and Over), Oconto County Municipalities, 2000

Geographic Location	Less than 9th Grade		9th to 12th grade, no diploma		High school graduate (includes equivalency)		Some college, no degree		Associate degree		Bachelor's degree		Graduate or professional degree	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Town of Abrams	58	4.8	83	6.9	538	44.9	243	20.3	127	10.6	116	9.7	33	2.8
Town of Bagley	34	13.8	36	14.6	122	49.4	43	17.4	3	1.2	7	2.8	2	0.8
Town of Brazeau	109	10.4	148	14.1	477	45.3	184	17.5	50	4.7	66	6.3	19	1.8
Town of Breed	48	9.7	100	20.2	220	44.4	76	15.3	21	4.2	15	3.0	16	3.2
Town of Chase	73	6.0	66	5.4	537	43.9	242	19.8	132	10.8	148	12.1	26	2.1
Town of Doty	20	8.8	33	14.5	98	43.0	40	17.5	15	6.6	19	8.3	3	1.3
Town of Gillett	59	7.8	90	12.0	395	52.5	114	15.1	52	6.9	36	4.8	7	0.9
Town of How	29	7.7	34	9.1	208	55.5	57	15.2	22	5.9	23	6.1	2	0.5
Town of Lakewood	35	5.3	84	12.7	278	41.9	153	23.0	36	5.4	60	9.0	18	2.7
Town of Lena	46	8.0	61	10.6	273	47.6	82	14.3	32	5.6	73	12.7	6	1.0
Town of Little River	54	7.6	100	14.0	336	47.2	101	14.2	44	6.2	49	6.9	28	3.9
Town of Little Suamico	75	3.0	165	6.5	1,140	45.1	516	20.4	198	7.8	360	14.3	72	2.9
Town of Maple Valley	37	8.1	65	14.3	207	45.6	77	17.0	32	7.0	29	6.4	7	1.5
Town of Morgan	70	12.4	37	6.6	262	46.5	101	17.9	53	9.4	34	6.0	6	1.1
Town of Mountain	49	8.4	80	13.7	282	48.3	109	18.7	25	4.3	22	3.8	17	2.9
Town of Oconto	20	2.5	121	15.1	389	48.6	157	9.6	40	5.0	48	6.0	26	3.2
Town of Oconto Falls	48	6.7	61	8.5	333	46.3	122	16.9	58	8.1	77	10.7	21	2.9
Town of Pensaukee	40	5.0	105	13.0	377	46.8	140	17.4	56	7.0	61	7.6	26	3.2
Town of Riverview	60	8.1	136	18.4	317	42.9	121	16.4	35	4.7	49	6.6	21	2.8
Town of Spruce	43	7.7	75	13.5	266	47.8	98	17.6	27	4.8	31	5.6	17	3.1
Town of Stiles	42	4.2	116	11.7	461	46.4	208	20.9	66	6.6	69	6.9	31	3.1
Town of Townsend	43	5.7	127	17.0	353	47.1	127	17.0	35	4.7	43	5.7	21	2.8
Town of Underhill	58	10.2	93	16.3	230	40.3	127	22.2	23	4.0	31	5.4	9	1.6
Village of Lena	32	10.5	32	10.5	125	41.1	48	15.8	31	10.2	23	7.6	13	4.3
Village of Suring	104	25.1	39	9.4	141	34.0	89	21.4	21	5.1	17	4.1	4	1.0
City of Gillett	101	12.2	155	18.8	288	34.9	160	19.4	40	4.8	53	6.4	29	3.5
City of Oconto	188	6.1	428	13.8	1491	48.2	511	16.5	178	5.8	215	7.0	80	2.6
City of Oconto Falls	207	10.5	233	11.9	764	38.9	389	19.8	142	7.2	154	7.8	76	3.9
Oconto County	1,782	7.4	2,903	12.0	10,908	45.1	4,435	18.3	1,594	6.6	1,928	8.0	636	2.6
State of Wisconsin	186,125	5.4	332,292	9.6	1,201,813	34.6	715,664	20.6	260,711	7.5	530,268	15.3	249,005	7.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000, DP-2; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.

Table 7.14: Employed Persons by Occupation, Oconto County Municipalities, 2000

Geographic Location	Management, professional, and related		Service		Sales and office		Farming, fishing, and forestry		Construction, extraction, and maintenance		Production, transportation, and material moving	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Town of Abrams	205	20.6	129	13.0	255	25.7	14	1.4	132	13.3	259	26.1
Town of Bagley	28	17.8	21	13.4	25	15.9	5	3.2	19	12.1	59	37.6
Town of Brazeau	141	22.5	82	13.1	130	20.7	31	4.9	81	12.9	163	26.0
Town of Breed	50	17.8	31	11.0	35	12.5	16	5.7	62	22.1	87	31.0
Town of Chase	289	27.6	94	9.0	238	22.7	21	2.0	139	13.3	267	25.5
Town of Doty	29	27.6	24	22.9	20	19.0	0	0.0	15	14.3	17	16.2
Town of Gillett	161	28.0	81	14.1	94	16.4	25	4.4	62	10.8	151	26.3
Town of How	79	27.1	28	9.6	49	16.8	21	7.2	34	11.7	80	27.5
Town of Lakewood	102	28.4	71	19.8	101	28.1	7	1.9	30	8.4	48	13.4
Town of Lena	161	35.6	47	10.4	53	11.7	34	7.5	45	10.0	112	24.8
Town of Little River	147	27.1	61	11.3	93	17.2	19	3.5	81	14.9	141	26.0
Town of Little Suamico	677	29.6	274	12.0	571	24.9	47	2.1	294	12.8	428	18.7
Town of Maple Valley	105	29.5	50	14.0	44	12.4	15	4.2	35	9.8	107	30.1
Town of Morgan	120	24.4	40	8.1	104	21.2	14	2.9	64	13.0	149	30.3
Town of Mountain	54	15.5	74	21.2	61	17.5	7	2.0	50	14.3	103	29.5
Town of Oconto	124	20.6	81	13.4	146	24.2	6	1.0	61	10.1	185	30.7
Town of Oconto Falls	173	26.9	74	11.5	150	23.3	27	4.2	87	13.5	132	20.5
Town of Pensaukee	140	22.6	80	12.9	109	17.6	4	0.6	74	12.0	212	34.2
Town of Riverview	82	25.5	66	20.5	60	18.6	6	1.9	39	12.1	69	21.4
Town of Spruce	97	25.9	39	10.4	68	18.1	8	2.1	43	11.5	120	32.0
Town of Stiles	173	22.6	93	12.1	151	19.7	14	1.8	102	13.3	234	30.5
Town of Townsend	54	14.0	95	24.5	83	21.4	13	3.4	47	12.1	95	24.5
Town of Underhill	62	16.7	65	17.5	43	11.6	23	6.2	50	13.4	129	34.7
Village of Lena	51	22.1	46	19.9	28	12.1	3	1.3	44	19.0	59	25.5
Village of Suring	37	15.9	45	19.4	49	21.1	6	2.6	15	6.5	80	34.5
City of Gillett	139	24.9	74	13.2	83	14.8	7	1.3	59	10.6	197	35.2
City of Oconto	470	20.8	380	16.8	436	19.3	23	1.0	207	9.1	747	33.0
City of Oconto Falls	284	20.4	259	18.6	301	21.7	12	0.9	122	8.8	411	29.6
Oconto County	4,234	23.9	2,504	14.2	3,580	20.2	428	2.4	2,093	11.8	4,841	27.4
State of Wisconsin	857,205	31.3	383,619	14.0	690,360	25.2	25,725	0.9	237,086	8.7	540,930	19.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000, DP-3; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2006.