

CHAPTER 6 Economic Development Element

Section 6.1 Introduction

This element will present information about the economy within the Town of Lanark. 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 Lanark has historically been a rural community of primarily agricultural activity with a scattering of small-scale commercial uses. In the recent past, an increase in residential development has occurred due to the desirable rural character and scenic beauty, easy access to commercial and employment centers via Highways 54 and USH 10, and increased affluence from the prosperity of the 1990's. The Town recognizes that the majority of business development will most likely occur beyond its borders; however, an increase in demand for convenience-type businesses may result from increased residential development. Different types of development in surrounding areas can have an impact on Town growth, quality of life, and even its ability to pay for Town services. For this reason Lanark wishes to recommend economic development opportunities that will complement the rural character of the area and assure the community the means to provide for the services and infrastructure needs of present and future residents.

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. This element concludes with goals, objectives, and policies to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base.

Section 6.2 Labor Force Analysis

A. Educational Attainment

As discussed in the Issues and Opportunities chapter of this plan, and illustrated by Table 1.4 of that chapter, the Town of Lanark has seen an increase in the percentage of its residents who have achieved a college degree (Associate, Bachelor, or Graduate/Professional degree).

B. 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 business, 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 sources of income received regularly such as Veterans' (VA) payments, unemployment compensation, child support, or alimony. According to the 2000 Census (Summary File 3 Tables P58, P60, P62-66), of the 555 households in Lanark: 457 (82%) were classified as households with earnings while 98 (28%) reported no earnings; 148 (27%) were households with social security income, while 407 (73%) reported no social security income; 16 households received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) while 539 households had no Supplemental Security Income; 101 (18%) received retirement income, while 454 (82%) reported no retirement income; 4 households received public assistance income while 551 households received no public assistance income; and 125 (23%) households reported other types of income, while 430 (77%) reported no other types of income.

In order to better understand the existing wage-earning realities within the Town of Lanark, “earnings” data was considered to be more informative. “Earnings” are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as the algebraic sum of wage or salary income and net income from self-employed, 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, mean household, and per capita income for households and individuals in Lanark, surrounding communities, and Portage County overall. The Town of Lanark made great percentage strides in earnings and income between 1990 and 2000. Mean earnings and income per household in actual dollars in 2000 were very close to surrounding Towns and the County overall.

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

	Mean Earnings Per Household			Mean Income Per Household			Per Capita Income		
	1989	1999	Change	1989	1999	Change	1989	1999	Change
Town of Lanark	\$32,396	\$50,273	55%	\$32,682	\$52,223	60%	\$10,511	\$19,246	83%
Town of Amherst	\$34,883	\$54,644	57%	\$34,198	\$53,581	57%	\$11,387	\$19,751	73%
Town of Belmont	\$27,505	\$46,799	70%	\$28,211	\$49,333	75%	\$10,456	\$20,427	95%
Town of Buena Vista	\$35,365	\$48,055	36%	\$35,204	\$54,436	55%	\$11,246	\$18,775	67%
Portage County	\$33,230	\$50,373	52%	\$33,184	\$52,102	57%	\$11,730	\$19,854	69%

Source: Census 1990, Census 2000, Portage County Planning & Zoning Department

According to 2000 Census Data, median household income for Town of Lanark residents was \$41,932, which was slightly lower than both Portage County overall (\$43,487) and the State of Wisconsin (\$43,791). See Table 1.6 of the Issues and Opportunities element of this Comprehensive Plan for further discussion of median household income.

C. Labor Force and Unemployment

Table 6.2 below examines labor force participation and employment percentages for the Town of Lanark, as described in the 1990 and 2000 Census. Age sixteen is considered to be the lower threshold for being eligible for employment. In 2000 the Town had a labor participation rate of 70.9%, which was above the Portage County Average of 67.1%. Lanark did experience a slight increase in its unemployment rate over the 10-year period, from 3.8% in 1990 to 4.0% in 2000.

Table 6.2: Employment Status of Population 16 Years and Above

Employment Status	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Persons 16 years and over	835	100%	1,572	100%
Labor force	550	65.9%	1,115	70.9%
Civilian labor force	550	65.9%	1,115	70.9%
Employed	518	62.0%	1,052	66.9%
Unemployed	32	3.8%	63	4.0%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Not in labor force	285	34.1%	457	29.1%

Source: Census 1990, Census 2000

D. Type of Employment for Town Residents

Table 6.3 below provides information regarding the types of occupations that Town of Lanark residents are employed in. The Sales and Office occupations is now the largest, followed by Management/Professional category. These two categories experienced the highest percentage increase between 1990 and 2000, while the percentage of occupations in the farming, fishing and forestry category experienced the largest decline. Table 1.9 of the Issues and Opportunities Chapter summarizes resident employment by industry for the last three census years. Information for both these tables 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 Lanark.

Table 6.3: Town of Lanark Employment by Occupation

Occupation	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	88	17.0%	182	25.0%
Service occupations	82	15.8%	105	14.4%
Sales and office occupations	78	15.1%	187	25.7%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	86	16.6%	16	2.2%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	118	22.8%	95	13.0%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	66	12.7%	143	19.6%
Total Employed	518	100%	728	99.9%*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census *99.9% due to rounding of decimals

E. Commuting

According to U.S. Census 2000 data, only 8.3% of Lanark residents worked inside the Town boundaries. The fact that the majority of Lanark’s labor force works outside the Town is further supported by additional Census data indicating that mean travel time to work was 22.9 minutes. In addition, 27% of respondents to the 2001 Portage County Comprehensive Planning Survey indicated that they worked in the Waupaca area while 25% indicated that they worked in the Stevens Point/Plover area.

Section 6.3 Local Economic Activity

The Town of Lanark is primarily a rural bedroom community without a defined commercial center or area. Residents maintain hopes of retaining their existing agricultural operations and natural rural setting, as such; they have expressed support for businesses that are appropriately-scaled for a rural township. They also wish to maintain adequate regulations to ensure harmony with surrounding uses. Existing businesses located in the Town of Lanark include:

- Agriculture
- Home-based businesses
- Taxidermy
- Construction
- Wood working
- Campground
- Salvage yard
- Tavern
- Septic Hauler
- Trucking
- Vehicle Upholstery
- Silo Repair
- Tackle shop
- Printing
- Yoga Instruction
- Day care
- Sustainable Energy
- Elderly Group home/Hospicecare
- Electrician
- Bible Camp (Recreation/ Education)
- Greenhouse
- Lumber
- Tree cutting
- Christmas Tree Farm

Section 6.4 Strengths and Weaknesses for Attracting/Retaining Business

A. Strengths:

- Low local taxes
- Great transportation network access
- Soils suitable for tree production
- Central to major transportation centers
- Aesthetics

B. Weaknesses:

- Large businesses may conflict with rural character.
- Lack of utilities
- Distance from population centers
- Availability of liquor licenses
- Limited appropriate sites

Section 6.5 Desired Businesses

Sites designated for new commercial or industrial development in the Town of Lanark will only be considered on a case-by-case basis; however, these sites will only be considered near the Village of Amherst or along Highway 54. Desired types of businesses for the Town of Lanark include:

- Home-based businesses
- Cottage industries that expand from small home-based businesses and do not employ a large number of employees.
- Appropriately-scaled businesses for a rural Township, with regulations to ensure they are in harmony with their surroundings.

Section 6.6 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 Commerce and Natural Resources have jointly prepared a guide to help finance brownfields cleanup and redevelopment. It can be found on the internet at: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/archives/pubs/RR539.pdf>

There are currently no sites in the Town of Lanark that are listed 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. A complete list of all brownfield sites can be obtained by contacting the DNR or through their website at: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/brrts/index.htm.

Section 6.7 Economic Development Resources

• **Revolving Loan Fund Programs (Portage County)**

Purpose: Funds administered by local communities, which provide local government the ability to assist in economic development projects that will create jobs for low-to-moderate income persons. Typically, the revolving loan fund program provides "gap" financing to local projects that make the project economically feasible.

Use of Funds: Land, working capital, buildings, and inventory.

Amount Available: Programs are different in each community.

Advantage: Offers terms to make the project economically feasible, maximize the return on and provide businesses the ability to finance job creation efforts locally. This program provides a quicker approval process than the Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant - Economic Development Program.

- **Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant-Economic Development (WI Dept. of Commerce)**

Purpose: To provide resources to local governments to assist economic development projects that provides jobs to low-to-moderate income persons and expands the local tax base.

Use of Funds: Land, working capital, buildings, and inventory.

Amount Available: \$750,000 maximum award, \$75,000 to \$500,000 is usual. Provides fixed-rate long term financing.

Advantage: Offers terms to make the project economically feasible, maximize the return on public funds, and provide business with rate of return comparable to industry norms. In addition, these funds remain locally for the creation or expansion of a existing Revolving Loan Fund.

- **Wisconsin Rural Economic Development Program (WI Dept. of Commerce)**

Purpose: To stimulate the start-up and expansion of small businesses in rural and/or small communities.

Use of Funds: Planning and managerial assistance only. This could include development of a marketing strategy for a new product line. Program pays for technical assistance such as consulting fees.

Amount Available: Maximum loan award is \$30,000. This program allows straight loans and/or forgivable loans.

Eligibility: Businesses with fewer than 25 employees. The business should be starting or expanding operations.

- **Community Development Block Grant - Customized Labor Training (WI Dept. of Commerce)**

Purpose: To stimulate the expansion of existing businesses, the attraction and creation of businesses, and the "retooling" of Wisconsin's Industrial base by providing customized labor training. Program is for new technology to industry and industry sector.

Use of Funds: Training costs incurred in the upgrading of manufacturing skills. This includes training on the shop floor while not producing salable product.

Amount Available: Grant Award. Training grant, competitively awarded, requires 50% match from company. Maximum \$2,500 per employee trained.

Eligibility: Proposed training must not supplant training available through existing federal, state and local resources (such as the Technical College and University System). Projects are evaluated on economic contribution; quantity and type of jobs created or saved; cost effectiveness significance of skill upgrading and local unemployment situation.

- **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

- **USDA – Rural Development Administration (Wisconsin)**

The Rural Development Administration is an organization affiliated with the United States Department of Agriculture 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 on the internet at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/wi/programs/index.htm> Contact information:

USDA Rural Development - WI
4949 Kirschling Ct.
Stevens Point, WI 54481
Phone: (715)345-7615 FAX: (715)345-7669

Technical Assistance

- **Small Business Development Center**

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) located at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point, is one of ten university-based SBDC's in Wisconsin. Their mission is to provide learning opportunities and practical guidance to help individuals make informed business decisions. The Stevens Point SBDC works with small business in eight central Wisconsin counties, and offers several types of services including seminars, customized in-house training, and individualized counseling. (715) 346-3838.

- **Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WMEP)**

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 WMEP assessment process is designed to be broad based rather than in-depth. The purpose is to "raise flags" where more effort should be placed. After the assessment, this can lead to a technical assistance project, in which your company is paired with a facilitator to help design and implement solutions.

- **Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center (SHWEC)**

The University of Wisconsin-Extension's SHWEC program was created to provide pollution prevention services to waste generators in Wisconsin. SHWEC' pollution prevention specialists will assess hazardous waste systems, provide no-cost non-regulatory technical assistance, and identify potential waste reduction options.

Section 6.8 Economic Development Issues

The following issues were identified by the Lanark Plan Commission during the comprehensive planning process:

- Reconciling agricultural practices with environmental impacts and conflicts with new residential development.
- Non farm residences perception of agricultural practices.
- Potential issue of expansion from Amherst Industrial park over longer time period & Hwy 10 corridor.
- How can the Town work with adjacent Townships to help direct commercial/industrial development?
- How can the Town keep track of local businesses?
- How will the Town address expanding home based business operations?

Section 6.9 Economic Development Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Preserve productive agricultural land.

Objective 1.1: Recognize the importance of farmland to the local economy and protect economically productive areas by adopting, enforcing, and supporting regulations and programs directed toward protecting prime farmland.

Policy 1: New businesses shouldn't hinder existing agricultural operations.

Policy 2: Limit new commercial growth.

Goal 2: Allow for desirable commercial development in appropriate locations, in order to provide services and employment opportunities to local residents.

Objective 2.1: Encourage commercial development in well planned nodes or concentrations, where possible, as opposed to commercial strips.

Policy 1: Address proposals for new commercial development on a case by case basis, due to the highly variable nature and potential impacts of certain types of development. Design techniques that can be use to minimize conflicts between adjoining uses include landscaping, screening, shielded lighting, and transitional use buffering.

Policy 2: Higher intensity commercial uses should not be located in close proximity to existing or planned concentrations of residential development, where land use conflicts are likely to occur, unless the commercial use can be designed to mitigate such impacts.

Policy 3: Direct large industrial uses toward existing Industrial parks in surrounding communities.

Policy 4: A proposed commercial site should be free of physical limitations that would pose significant problems for the proposed development. Factors to be considered when determining site suitability include, but not limited to, those specified in the Portage County Zoning Ordinance and the Portage County Subdivision Ordinance. In those cases where the commercial use would cause a town road to deteriorate more rapidly than normal, such as frequent use by heavy equipment, the developer may be required to sign a road maintenance agreement to share maintenance costs with the Town.

Objective 2.2: Support tourism and small scale development that is in harmony with the Town's rural character.

Goal 3: Encourage public and private educational efforts to maximize the investment in our workforce.