

CHAPTER 6 Economic Development Element

Section 6.1 Introduction

This element will present information about the economy within the Town of Hull. 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 Hull has historically been a community of primarily single family residences with a scattering of agricultural and small-scale commercial or industrial uses. As such, the Town recognizes that the majority of business development will most likely occur beyond its borders. Different types of development in surrounding areas, however, can have an impact on Town growth, quality of life, and even its ability to pay for Town services. For this reason Hull wishes to participate in area economic development discussions and decisions where possible, that help assure the community the means to provide for the services and infrastructure needs of present and future residents.

This element concludes with goals, objectives, and policies to promote 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 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 Hull 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 US 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), 1,782 (88%) out of the 2,023 Hull households sampled were classified as households with earnings; 438 (22%) were households with social security income, 0 received Supplemental Security Income (SSI), 296 (15%) received retirement income, 7 households received public assistance and 245 households had other types of income.

In order to better understand the existing wage-earning realities within the Town of Hull, “earnings” data was considered to be more informative. “Earnings” are defined by the US 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, and mean household and per capita income, for households and individuals in communities within the Stevens Point urban area and Portage County overall. The Town of Hull made great percentage strides in earnings and income between 1990 and 2000. These percentage gains were not as large as some of its neighboring communities, but Hull still remains a leader among Towns in mean earnings and income per household in actual dollars.

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 Hull	\$38,798	\$58,893	52%	\$41,735	\$62,798	50%	\$14,004	\$22,433	60%
Town of Plover	\$39,877	\$52,187	31%	\$41,315	\$56,495	37%	\$13,677	\$21,186	55%
Village of Plover	\$38,652	\$57,951	50%	\$38,501	\$61,809	61%	\$13,486	\$23,085	71%
Stevens Point	\$27,265	\$41,935	54%	\$27,417	\$43,565	59%	\$10,282	\$17,510	70%
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 Hull residents was \$53,915, which was higher than Portage County (\$43,487), and the State of Wisconsin (\$43,791).

C. Labor Force and Unemployment

Table 6.2 below examines labor force participation and employment percentages for the Town of Hull, as described in the 1990 and 2000 Census. Age sixteen is considered to be the lower threshold for being eligible for employment. The Town had a 2000 labor participation rate of 73%, which was above the Portage County average of 67.1%. Hull also had a low unemployment rate of 2.6% in 2000, down from an already low rate of 3.5% in 1990

Table 6.2: Employment Status of Population 16 Years and Above

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Population 16 years and over	4,008	100%	4,221	100%
In labor force	3,110	77.6%	3,085	73.1%
Civilian labor force	3,104	77.4%	3,085	73.1%
Employed	2,964	74.0%	2,977	70.5%
Unemployed	140	3.5%	108	2.6%
Armed Forces	6	0.1%	0	0%
Not in labor force	898	22.4%	1,136	26.9%

Source: Census 1990, Census 2000

D. Type of Employment for Town Residents

Table 6.3 below provides information regarding the type of occupation that Town of Hull residents are employed in. The Management/Professional category is now the largest, followed by Sales and Office occupations. These two categories both jumped ahead of service occupations between 1990 and 2000; this correlates with the Villages educational attainment and higher income data previously discussed. Table 1.10 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 Hull.

Table 6.3: Town of Hull Employment by Occupation

Occupation	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	753	25.4%	1,046	35.1%
Service occupations	351	34.5%	279	9.4%
Sales and Office occupations	1,021	11.8%	858	28.8%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry occupations	76	2.6%	12	0.4%
Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance occupations	156	5.3%	271	9.1%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving occupations	607	20.5%	511	17.2%
Total Employed	2,964	100%	2,977	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census

E. Commuting

Census 2000 data indicates that only 5% of employed Hull residents work inside of the Town. When the 2001 Portage County Comprehensive Planning Survey was conducted, 59% of the Hull respondents indicated they worked in Stevens Point/Plover/Whiting/Park Ridge, and an additional 27% indicated they worked somewhere else in Portage County. The other residents were distributed across Marshfield (1%), Wisconsin Rapids (4%), Mosinee/Wausau (4%), Waupaca (1%), and Outside Central Wisconsin (4%). The 2000 Census listed mean travel time to work for Hull’s employed residents at 20 minutes.

Section 6.3 Local Economic Base Analysis

The Town of Hull is primarily made up of suburban and rural residential neighborhoods with a diverse mix of smaller scale commercial operations. Many of the existing businesses are home-based and have been identified by Hull’s Assessor through real estate designations, personal property lists and/or listings in the telephone book. Existing businesses located in the Town of Hull include:

- Advertising/Public Relations (1)
- Restaurants (1)
- Taverns (3)
- Gas Stations (2)
- Janitorial Services (1)
- Cable Service (1)
- Construction (15)
- Mobile Home Parks (2)
- Salvage Yard (1)
- Greenhouse (1)
- Septic System Installation (1)
- Engineering (1)
- Photography (1)
- Kennels (1)
- Electronic Publishing (1)
- Private Club (1)
- Appliance Sales/Service (1)
- Communication (1)
- Glass Sales (1)
- Dairy Services (1)
- Truck equipment and parts (1)
- Travel Agency (1)
- Collectibles (1)
- Excavating & Trucking (1)
- Wood Manufacturing (1)
- Dental (1)
- Medical (5)
- Plumbing & Heating (1)
- Fencing (1)
- Automotive Repair (1)
- Tavern/Ballroom (1)
- Golf Course (1)
- Fish Farm (2)
- Storage Facilities (2)
- Security (1)
- Manufacturing (1)
- Tree Service
- Misc (2)
- Dairy Farms

Section 6.4 Strengths and Weaknesses for Attracting/Retaining Business

A. Strengths

Proximity to Stevens Point urban area and centrally located within the County.

B. Weaknesses

No public sewer and water.

Section 6.5 Desired Businesses

As the Town grows, residents would like to continue to see small scale commercial development that has minimal environmental impact and does not require public sewer and water.

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. The guide can be found on the internet at:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/archives/pubs/RR539.pdf>

There is currently a 1-acre site near the intersection of STH 66 and Cty Rd Y that is listed with the WI DNR as a brownfield site with open status. Open status means a contaminated site in need of clean up or where cleanup is still underway. The Town of Hull has not identified any brownfield sites as being appropriate for redevelopment at this time. 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

Below are listed economic development programs in Portage County. As of August 2005, Hull officials know of no such program operating in the Town of Hull. But Hull citizens may be participating in programs operating in Stevens Point or Villages.

• 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 provide jobs to low-to-moderate income persons and expand 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.

- **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 a 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.

Wisconsin Learning Center

Located in the Portage County Business Park the Wisconsin Learning Center provides seminar and courses to upgrade skills of employees in Portage County. Recently established, the Learning Center has been well received by business, non-profit and government officials.

Section 6.8 Economic Development Conclusions

A. Summary of Findings

The Town of Hull will continue to see very limited business expansion. The community will continue to consist almost exclusively of single family residential. Nearly all of Hull citizens will continue to be employed outside of Hull. The Town Board currently provides financial support to the Portage County Business Council.

B. Issues Outstanding

The Town of Hull is in the path of business and residential development in the Stevens Point growth area. Pressure on Hull land adjacent to Stevens Point to develop will continue. The Hull Plan Commission will consider proposals for new commercial or industrial uses on a case-by-case basis. Potential impacts to surrounding land owners will be taken into consideration.

C. Goals (short & long term)

The Town of Hull supports:

- Small-scale, non-polluting, neighborhood compatible businesses
- Urban Area economic development efforts that promote the expansion of good jobs in a planned and environmentally sensitive way
- Education, training, and recruitment efforts to sustain and diversify the economic base in Portage County.

D. Action Plan

1. The Plan Commission should receive quarterly updates about economic activity in Portage County from the Portage County Business Council, Central Wisconsin Economic Research Bureau, or such other sources of economic analysis.
2. The Town of Hull Plan Commission should identify lands adjacent to or near Stevens Point that are in the path of urban development, and explore with Stevens Point officials intergovernmental agreements and revenue sharing.