

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Spider Lakes rural location and its environs exhibit a different kind of economic development model, one with businesses relying on the area’s Northwood’s character, plentiful water resources, and acres of public (state and federal) forest resources. No major manufacturing/industrial development activities are present. Rather, residents commute to varying types of employment in surrounding communities and counties.

LABOR FORCE

Key labor force characteristics identify the population 16 years or older for the Town that are employed or unemployed but looking for a job (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: General Characteristics of Spider Lake			
Characteristics	Town of Spider Lake	Sawyer County	Wisconsin
Civilian Labor Force	193	7,709	2,869,236
Unemployment Rate	1.0%	6.6%	4.7%
Labor Participation Rate	50.1%	60.3%	69.1%
Education Beyond High School (25 and over)	59.0%	44.7%	50.6%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher (25 and over)	30.7%	16.5%	22.4%
Per Capita Income	\$26,461	\$17,634	\$21,271
Median Household Income	\$37,396	\$32,287	\$43,791
Poverty Rate	4.2%	12.7%	8.7%
Median Age	52.9	42.1	36.0

Source: U.S. Census 2000, SF 1 & SF 3

Only half of the population 16 years and over are in the labor force (50.1 percent). This number is lower than the Sawyer County average and may point to a higher age level as represented in the median age.

ECONOMIC BASE

Employment by Industry

Table 6.2 represents the number and percent of employed residents in the Town by industry sector. A total of 191 residents were employed according to the last decennial census. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service represents the greatest percent of employment. This employment sector fits the character of the Town and surrounding area.

Table 6.2: Employed Residents by Industry Sector

Industry	Census 2000 Number	Percent
All Industries	191	100.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	7	3.7%
Construction	31	16.2%
Manufacturing	2	1.0%
Wholesale trade	6	3.1%
Retail trade	26	13.6%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3	1.6%
Information	-	
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	9	4.7%
Professional, scientific, mgmt., administrative, and waste mgmt.	5	2.6%
Educational, health and social services	22	11.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food serv.	54	28.3%
Other services (except public administration)	18	9.4%
Public administration	8	4.2%

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Historically and today, new businesses and industry are limited due to our rural location. Small family owned businesses compatible with the comprehensive plan and Northwood’s character are welcome. Bait stores, nurseries, restaurants, and home businesses are business types encouraged.

A key resource that could potentially increase home based business and could provide greater support to existing businesses is the development telecommunication services. Much of the Town and northern Sawyer County is without cellular service. While siting and placement of towers can be controversial, cooperative efforts and discussions could enhance labor and income levels for Town residents.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The following are strengths and weaknesses in attracting and retaining business. It is important the community continue to work on strengthening its position to meet future business and industry needs.

Area strengths include the local Northwood’s character and recreational opportunities such as skiing, biking and snowmobiling. Area weaknesses include distance to markets and sources of raw materials, and the lack of labor force for key industries.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SITES

The Town has no business and industrial sites. Resort and other commercial type businesses rely on the natural environment to sustain and build their clientele. The Town's future land use map represents the communities desired land use pattern and can accommodate businesses meeting the Town's objectives in promoting Northwood's character businesses.

REDEVELOPMENT AND CONTAMINATED SITES

There are no known contaminated land sites. If any sites and problems are found, the Town will take a proactive role in resolving and working with local, state, and federal agencies.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

There are many economic development related programs at the federal, state, county, and regional. While the list below is not intended to be all inclusive, it does provide a listing of commonly used resources.

FEDERAL

Economic Development Administration

The U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration offers two programs for assistance with economic development that apply to the Town of Sand Lake. The Public Works and Economic Development Facilities Assistance Program, supports the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and development facilities necessary to generate private sector jobs and investment, including investments that support technology-led development, redevelopment of brownfield sites, and eco-industrial development.

USDA Wisconsin Rural Development

Several loan and grant programs are available from the USDA Rural Development. One of those programs is the Community Facility Guaranteed Loan Program, which provides funding to local units of government to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services in rural areas and towns.

The Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants Program helps develop projects that will result in a sustainable increase in economic productivity, job creation, and incomes in rural areas. Projects may include business start-ups and expansion, community development, incubator projects, medical and training projects, and feasibility studies.

The purpose of the Business and Industry Direct Loan Program is to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. Loan purposes include purchase and expansion of land,

equipment, buildings, and working capital. Loans to public bodies can be used to finance community facilities and construct and equip industrial plants for lease to private businesses.

The Community Facilities Direct Loans and Grants Program provide funding for essential community facilities (CF) such as municipal buildings, day care centers, and health and safety facilities. Examples include fire halls, fire trucks, clinics, nursing homes, and hospitals. CF loans and grants may also be used for such things as activity centers for the handicapped, schools, libraries, and other community buildings.

STATE

Wisconsin Department of Commerce

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

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

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

Wisconsin Departments of Tourism and Commerce

The Tourism Department ia a multi-faceted program designed to assist tourism businesses. The program offers planning and training grants that focus on tourism development and diversification at the business and municipal levels.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

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

REGIONAL

Northwest Regional Planning Commission

The Northwest Regional Planning Commission is a cooperative venture of the local units of governments in the ten counties of Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Sawyer, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, and Washburn and the five tribal nations of Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, Red Cliff, St. Croix, and Lac du Flambeau in the region. The purpose of NWRPC is to assist the communities of the membership to promote sustainable economic development, develop public facilities, provide planning and technical services, efficiently manage and conserve natural resources, and protect the environment.

Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Corporation

A strategic partner of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, the Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Corporation, has available revolving loan funds to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed rate, low down-payment, and low interest financing to assist businesses in job creation/retention and growth.

LOCAL

Sawyer County Development Corporation

The Sawyer County Development Corporation (SCDC) was created by community members in Sawyer County with the objective of promoting sound economic development within the county while maintaining the natural resources and quality of life appreciated by both residents and visitors. The Board of Directors represents a cross section of the business community, local and tribal governments and others.