

## **Chapter VI - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Town of Richmond currently has some commercial and industrial facilities within the borders. These include a paper mill, auto repair shops, restaurants, taverns, building and construction contractors, veterinarian clinic, farm machinery repair, headquarters for CRI and the state office of the Wisconsin Town's Association. There are also a few home-based businesses.

There are two (2) Town parks; one in Forest Haven development and one on the Red River near the former Novitiate. Either of these would be interesting places for tourists to spend some time.

The area in and around the sanitary service area offers the ability to connect to the sanitary district; which could be an attractive incentive to some businesses. However, due to the rural character of the area and the closeness to the City of Shawano, it is unlikely that there would be widespread development of an industrial base. It is more likely that the development would be residential, since connecting to the sanitary district allows for smaller lots and more convenience.

On the 2008 survey, done by the Town of Richmond Plan Commission, the question of commercial development drew this response: of the 377 responses received to the question:

*Check one of the following statements about Commercial development (retail, services):*

196 or 52% said that the Town has enough commercial development - no more is needed.

181 or 48% said that the Town needs more commercial development

The question of placing zoning controls on the types and extent of new commercial development near the MMM and Highway 29 interchange(s) resulted in 79% of the respondents answering yes. A resounding indication that the Town residents would like to control what and where future commercial/industrial development locates.

## **CURRENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The 2000 Census indicates, of the population over the age of 16, 72.1% are in the labor force. The employed civilian population 16 years of age and over is 960.

A total of 19 or 1.4% are unemployed. With the downturn of the economy across the nation in 2008, it is very likely that the unemployment rate will increase.

This Census also indicates that the mean travel time to work is roughly 20 minutes. Median household income is \$43,800 with a median family income of \$46,736

**Employment by Industry, ACS 2016 5-Year Estimates**

The following chart show the various occupations held by residents of the Town:

OCCUPATION	NUMBER	PERCENT
Management, professional, and related occupations	292	30.4
Service occupations	108	11.3
Sales and office occupations	213	22.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	15	1.6
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	129	13.4
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	203	21.1

Source: 2000 US Census Fact finder

Employment opportunities exist within driving distance for residents employed outside of the Town. With easy access to State Highway 29, and U. S. Highways 41 and 141 a drivable distance, commute times of 30 minutes to an hour or more each direction are acceptable to many.

INDUSTRY	#	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	80	8.3
Construction	84	8.8
Manufacturing	224	23.3
Wholesale trade	23	2.4
Retail trade	111	11.6
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	44	4.6
Information	5	0.5
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	29	3.0
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	43	4.5
Educational, health and social services	147	15.3
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	78	8.1
Other services (except public administration)	44	4.6

Source: 2000 US Census

**Employment by Occupation, 2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Estimates**

	Town of Richmond			Shawano County	
	Estimate	MOE+/-	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	300	+/-51	32.8%	5,563	27.5%
Service occupations	116	+/-36	12.7%	3,607	17.8%
Sales and office occupations	212	+/-60	23.2%	4,368	21.6%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	121	+/-37	13.2%	2,451	12.1%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	166	+/-39	18.1%	4,252	21.0%
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	915	+/-57	100%	20,241	100%

Source: U.S. Census 2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Estimates, DP03

**Economic Development Programs**

The Town of Richmond has the authority to issue Industrial Revenue bonds.

Shawano County’s Revolving Fund Loan Program provides assistance to business and industry seeking to relocate in Shawano County.

The State of Wisconsin’s Community Based Economic Development Program provides funding assistance to local governments and community based organizations that undertake planning, development and technical assistance projects that support business development.

The U. S. Small Business Administration’s Certified Development Company Loan Program provides growing businesses with long term fixed rate financing.

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce administers several financial assistance programs to communities to promote economic development.

The State Infrastructure Bank Program is administrated through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to provide revolving loans used by communities for transportation infrastructure improvements.

### **Regional Initiative**

This area of Wisconsin is economically underperforming the state average, the U. S. Average and neighboring states. Therefore, in early 2004, Shawano County Economic Progress, Inc. (SCEPI), located in Shawano, developed regional focus groups to help in overcoming the problem of job loss in the area, try to generate high-paying jobs and attract 'bright, creative and innovative people to the area'. The region they are including is nearly all of northeastern Wisconsin. SCEPI hopes to help build cooperation and partnerships within this region of Wisconsin. This will be a three-phase effort and will involve cities, towns, villages, regional plan commissions and various businesses to recommend actions that will foster future economic prosperity of the entire region. Some of the issues discussed by the focus groups included which building blocks are considered necessary for growth in the local economy. Which of these do we already have and which are lacking; and what might be missing at the county or state level. The Town of Richmond will try to participate in these sessions to provide input in the process.

There is serious concern about the exit of young people after they have completed their education, taking their knowledge away from this area. This appears to be a problem for all of the rural areas in Wisconsin. The state ranked 31<sup>st</sup> in high tech jobs in the country in 2003. It also ranks near the bottom in federal dollars being returned to the state. The Department of Commerce is encouraging all municipalities in the state to submit applications for federal grant dollars to help bring some of these monies back to the state. The Town of Richmond will keep available grants, both federal and state, in mind while trying to improve our economic outlook.

### **SUMMARY**

The Town of Richmond's strengths in the area of the economy include the work ethic of its residents and the close proximity of good highways - State Highway 29, and County Highways A, M, MM, MMM run through the Town. Commuting is not a problem. These highways must also be considered a positive thing when planning for any influx of commercial business or industry.

The Town of Richmond Sanitary District is an example of strength in the Town of Richmond. There remains room for expansion within this district and this is a positive thing for any future influx of commercial or residential growth.

The Town of Richmond will encourage additional small home-based businesses. There are possibly e-commerce based home businesses within the Town of Richmond. It is expected that the numbers will grow as people become more comfortable with this type of enterprise.

The Town Board of Supervisors and Plan Commission will consider encouraging dialogue with Shawano County Economic Progress Inc. as a way of getting them to consider the Town as a location for future business.

The Town of Richmond will make a concentrated effort to more fully participate in the state and federal programs that are offered to municipalities for Economic Development.

The Town of Richmond encourages its citizens to patronize local businesses.

The Town has a good mix of businesses and has room in our Industrial and Commercial zones for business expansion.

The Town of Richmond understands that the lack of a public water supply may limit the type and size of new businesses wanting to locate/re-locate in the Town.

The Town of Richmond will support broadband expansion for the benefit of the entire town

DRAFT