

CHAPTER FOUR

Economic Development

Local governments play an increasingly critical role in promoting private sector economic development, for economic strength is critical to the vitality of a community. Economic development is the process by which a community organizes and then applies its energies to the task of creating the type of business climate that will foster the retention and expansion of existing businesses, attract new businesses, and develop new business ventures.

Economic development efforts to create jobs are important beyond generating additional income for the Village residents. These efforts can help to generate additional tax base for the provisions of local services and may assist in establishing an environment for long-term economic vitality.

The key to an economic development strategy is having a quality product/community to market. The entire Village of Howard Comprehensive Plan is geared toward promoting future development in Howard in a manner that results in a high quality community that is attractive to existing and new businesses.

Labor Force Analysis

Figure 1-6 in the Issues and Opportunities chapter indicated that the Village of Howard's residents are currently more educated than the populations of Brown County and the State of Wisconsin as a whole, and Figure 4-1 shows that the percentage of Village residents 16 years of age and above that are in the labor force is significantly higher than the percentage of people in the labor force in Brown County and Wisconsin. Howard's 2000 unemployment rate of 2.4 percent is also significantly lower than Brown County's 2.7 percent and the state's 3.2 percent. The data indicates that there is a very active workforce in Howard and that significant competition for employees exists.

Figure 4-1: Employment Status by Percentage of Population 16 Years and Above

| | Wisconsin | Brown County | Village of Howard |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| In labor force | 69.1% | 72.0% | 78.4% |
| Civilian labor force | 69.0% | 71.9% | 78.4% |
| Employed | 65.8% | 69.1% | 75.9% |
| Unemployed | 3.2% | 2.7% | 2.4% |
| Percent of civilian labor force | 4.7% | 3.8% | 3.1% |
| Armed Forces | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| Not in labor force | 30.9% | 28.0% | 21.6% |

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

Figure 4-2 shows that Howard has a higher percentage of persons employed in occupations, such as sales and office, construction/extraction/maintenance, finance, insurance, and real estate rental/leasing. These numbers reflect the presence of major employers, such as American Medical Securities (AMS), and the high level of real estate activity in the Village associated with new development.

Figure 4-2: Employed Civilian Population as a Percentage of People 16 Years and Above

| | Wisconsin | Brown County | Village of Howard |
|---|-----------|--------------|-------------------|
| OCCUPATION | | | |
| Management, professional, and related occupations | 31.3 | 30.6 | 30.5 |
| Service occupations | 14.0 | 12.6 | 10.8 |
| Sales and office occupations | 25.2 | 28.5 | 29.8 |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations | .9 | 0.5 | 0 |
| Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations | 8.7 | 9.2 | 10.9 |
| Production, transportation, and material moving occupations | 19.8 | 18.7 | 17.9 |
| INDUSTRY | | | |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining | 2.8 | 1.2 | 0.1 |
| Construction | 5.9 | 6.2 | 7.2 |
| Manufacturing | 22.2 | 21.1 | 22.2 |
| Wholesale trade | 3.2 | 4.0 | 5.3 |
| Retail trade | 11.6 | 12.6 | 12.0 |
| Transportation and warehousing and utilities | 4.5 | 6.2 | 6.3 |
| Information | 2.2 | 2.0 | 1.3 |
| Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing | 6.1 | 8.1 | 9.7 |
| Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services | 6.6 | 6.3 | 6.8 |
| Educational, health and social services | 20.0 | 17.6 | 15.1 |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services | 7.3 | 7.3 | 6.6 |
| Other services (except public administration) | 4.1 | 4.5 | 5.4 |
| Public administration | 3.5 | 2.9 | 2.0 |

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

Existing Economic Development Activities

The most important economic activity that Howard can pursue is the creation of an environment that encourages entrepreneurs to engage in business activities. Encouraging entrepreneurs involves attracting new businesses and assisting existing businesses. The three types of programs most relevant to the Village are business attraction, business retention, and commercial development.

Business Attraction

Business attraction involves letting businesses know what a community has to offer. For example, some of the activities that are involved in a business attraction program include:

- Providing information on available sites.
- Identifying labor and community characteristics.
- Marketing sites to industries that would be complementary to existing industries or would provide diversity to the local economy.
- Offering low-cost land, state or federal grants, or other incentives to encourage industry to locate in the community.

Business Retention

Since a good portion of the economic growth that occurs is from businesses already in a community, business retention is essential. Activities associated with business retention programs include:

- Helping businesses learn about potential sites for expansion, offering low-cost loans, and identifying state and federal grant funds to finance business expansions.
- Providing business areas with efficient, reliable public services, such as snow removal, road repair, and sewer/water utilities.
- Providing a contact person to answer business questions and solicit information from business leaders regarding local development problems.

Commercial Development

Commercial development activities allow communities to identify market needs and seek prospective businesses to fill the needs. In the future, the Village may be able to assist in this process by creating or modifying Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts to encourage development by offering publicly-owned and improved land for sale to commercial developers. The Village can also encourage the redevelopment of existing structures and

the development of new structures and can ensure that the designs meet the standards established for the community. In addition, economic development incentive revolving loan fund programs can be established to assist in financing commercial projects that meet the goals of the Village.

Howard is well-positioned to compete with larger communities in attracting businesses and industries. It is important that the Village wisely use any resources available to it to attract new businesses and industries. It is presently a member of Advance, a branch of the Green Bay Chamber of Commerce. Advance acts in part as an informational and referral service for potential businesses and industries looking to locate in Brown County. This enables a potential business or industry looking to locate in Brown County to hear about Howard when it otherwise may have no knowledge of the opportunities available in the Village.

In addition to Community Profile information packets prepared by the Village, the Wisconsin Public Service Corp. has put together a community profile of the Village. This is a fact sheet that provides information about the community, which is something a prospective business may find valuable when looking at potential locations. This can be handed out or sent to potential businesses at their request.

Howard Industrial Park

The Howard Industrial Park is located in the northeast portion of the Village near Velp and Woodale Avenues. The industrial park includes approximately 575 acres of occupied/sold land and 65 acres of currently vacant land. The park contains Omnova Solutions, Inc., Eka Chemicals, Inc., Fox Converting, Inc., and other businesses. Although this property is difficult to see from Velp Avenue and US 41, it does have adequate access to US 41 from the interchange at Lineville Road (CTH M). Access will be improved with the expansion of the Mountain-Bay Trail underpass at Woodale Avenue and the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Woodale and Velp Avenues in 2002.

The development of the Howard Industrial Park represents a commitment on the part of the Village to ensure that industrial land is available for development. The majority of the park's 65 remaining acres has been divided into small lots of less than 5 acres, which limits the Village's ability to recruit larger businesses to the industrial park. To encourage future economic development activity, the Village should consider new sites for industrial park development. Additional infrastructure improvements, such as roadways, sewer extensions, and water utility extensions, may be necessary to allow an expanded industrial park to achieve its ultimate potential.

AMS and Lancaster Creek Business Parks

The AMS Business Park on the Village's south side was developed within the last 15 years, and only 4.8 of the original 101 acres remain available for development. This business park has been very successful due to the location of the American Medical

Securities headquarters. The Lancaster Creek Business Park has also been very successful, for only 11 acres of land remain available out of the original 55-acre development. Sales of lands within these business parks have enjoyed the benefits of a very visible location adjacent to STH 29. If the Village wishes to continue to encourage future economic development activity, it should consider new sites for business park development.

US 41/STH 29 Retail Center (Woodman's Shopping Center)

This privately developed shopping center occupies approximately 100 acres of land in the northwest quadrant of the US 41 and STH 29 interchange. Presently, the major occupant of this center is the Woodman's Grocery Store, but approximately 31 acres remain available for future commercial and retail development. It is anticipated that this land will provide sufficient space for regional "big box" commercial development over the next several years.

Future Business and Industrial Properties

To provide for future commercial and industrial development, it is essential to maintain a capital improvement plan to ensure that necessary infrastructure, such as sewer, water, roads, and storm sewer, are in place prior to development.

Future sites for commercial and industrial development are being proposed with consideration of the community's desire to maintain the current overall balance between residential and non-residential development. The proposed location of future industrial and commercial areas also discourages commercial and industrial land uses along STH 29 that promote the need for frontage roads when the highway is eventually converted from an expressway to a freeway.

Village of Howard Industrial Park Expansion

Approximately 360 acres of privately-owned property exist to the east of the existing Howard Industrial Park. Due to the presence of large wetlands in this area, approximately 260 acres would be available for an expanded industrial park. Therefore, this property should be acquired by the Village for future industrial park expansion.

Lancaster Creek Business Park Expansion

If additional office space becomes necessary, particularly for a major headquarters (like AMS), the land between STH 29 and Shawano Avenue west of the existing business park should be considered. Development in this area as a business park should consider including mixed residential and retail uses and should utilize a street pattern that ties to the surrounding streets rather than a system that is fully contained with only one or two entrances. Approximately 154 acres of land are available in this area with some limitations for development due to steep slopes and ravines to Lancaster Creek.

Village Center

In addition to residential, recreational, and institutional uses, the village center should contain various commercial uses that can easily be reached on foot, by bicycle, and by motorized vehicle. As mentioned earlier in the plan, many of these commercial developments should be located on the first floor of buildings that line the streets and should contain residential units on the floors above. It is also important for the Village to develop a village center improvement design policy to create an image of what the center should look like and to provide consistent direction for the physical improvements of buildings and streets.

Once the vision for the village center is established, Howard should evaluate the use of Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) districts, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), and other funding methods to finance the development of the village center.

Neighborhood Centers

The neighborhood centers recommended in the plan should contain smaller, neighborhood-oriented businesses (such as medical clinics, small shops, and other commercial uses) that primarily serve the immediate areas.

Western Office/Business Park

The first priority for business and industrial park expansion should be for the Village to expand at locations presently served or adjacent to sewer and water utilities. As public facilities are extended to the west over the next 20 years, the potential exists to develop a western Howard office/business park in the northeast quadrant of the proposed STH 29/CTH VV interchange. Approximately 300 acres of relatively flat property exist in this area with good visibility and access to STH 29. It is important to stress that the development of this area as an office/business park should be delayed until utility services are in place and development has been extended to the area. The Village should, however, consider acquiring the property in order to reserve the land for future development when the time is appropriate.

Industrial and Commercial Design Standards

The Village can promote higher quality development and minimize the negative impacts of commercial and industrial development in the community through the use of restrictive covenants in the business and industrial parks, zoning restrictions, and design standards. Special care should also be taken to ensure that ESAs are not developed commercially and industrially by placing them in conservancy. These features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership.

Sensitivity to Parkways

Commercial and industrial development should be designed with consideration of the parkways that this plan identifies along the Village's primary drainage corridors, which include Duck Creek, Lancaster Brook, and Bakers Creek. These parkways would allow the corridors to remain mostly undeveloped as wildlife corridors, preserve natural beauty, provide stormwater management areas, and link parts of the Village together. Commercial and industrial development should be consistent with the Village's comprehensive stormwater management plan and erosion control ordinance. Where appropriate, the Village should require the dedication of land for trails before approving commercial and development proposals.

Site Plan Review

Presently, the site plan review process and design standards only apply for lands located within the B-3 Business District, which only affects a small portion of the commercial development in the community. These standards and reviews should be expanded to include all commercial and industrial development in the Village, but flexibility should be allowed to address the concerns of existing businesses and businesses located on relatively small lots.

Incorporation of Natural Areas

Natural areas and other greenspace should be incorporated into newly developed areas. Howard should continue its policy of requiring the planting of street trees for commercial and industrial subdivisions. The Village should also seek to preserve existing trees by either working with developers to design around the trees or through a tree preservation ordinance. Howard's Tree Board and Village Forester should be utilized to accomplish these goals.

Commercial design standards should include sidewalks, walkways and bike paths, reducing the expanse of parking areas along the streets, significant parking lot landscaping standards, and landscaped islands within large parking lots that break up the expanse of asphalt. In the village center and neighborhood centers, buildings should also have zero or minimal setbacks that provide direct pedestrian access to structures, and buildings should be constructed with parking in the rear.

Brownfield Development

For commercial and industrial uses, the Village should complete and maintain an inventory of existing vacant buildings and land identified as brownfield sites. This information can be used to encourage infill development and redevelopment opportunities to take advantage of existing infrastructure and services and prevent blighting created by vacant and dilapidated buildings and parcels. Economic development grants for rehabilitation and other incentives should be utilized to fund projects in these areas.

Once identified, brownfields should be cleaned and promoted for redevelopment through the use of state and federal brownfield cleansing funds and the Village's Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund. Although considered an option of last resort, the Village should also consider the use of condemnation and eminent domain powers to acquire and remove blighted properties in order to create new development opportunities.

Community Preparedness for Economic Development

Howard needs to identify issues and opportunities facing major industries in the Village and the Green Bay metropolitan area as a whole to enable it to continue operations and to expand. Examples of these major industries include healthcare, paper and related products, insurance, financial services, government offices, education and training, hospitality, food processing, logistics, transportation, warehousing, and related services. Economic development efforts must encourage development and redevelopment for major businesses with strong market potential.

The Village should also cooperate with local lending institutions to provide financial loan or grant assistance for commercial and industrial development through sources, such as the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, and the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority.

Village Promotion

The Village should be promoted as a good place to do business through the efforts of local, regional, and state industrial development organizations. Economic development promotional materials, including a website that identifies industrial building sites and development opportunities, should be maintained and updated. This information should identify an economic development team that includes Village staff, local businessmen, and elected officials. This team should assist in recruiting new businesses and work on retaining existing businesses. The Village should also consider creating a redevelopment authority/industrial park commission to assist in this process.

Communication with local businesses can be maximized by meeting with local organizations, such as the Howard-Suamico Business Association, to determine the needs of area businesses and to promote job creation and economic development with locally-owned businesses.

Economic Development Funding Assistance

The Village should continue to seek grant funding from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce's Economic Development Grant Program to encourage commercial and industrial investment. The Village should also maintain economic development partnerships with agencies, such as Advance, Brown County Planning, Wisconsin Public Service, and the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. In addition, the Village of

Howard Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund Program should be marketed to encourage use by existing businesses in the Village and for recruiting new businesses.

Steps for Economic Development Preparedness

Community preparedness for economic development requires a great deal of work, and planning provides a framework for economic decision-making. The Wisconsin Department of Commerce suggests the following steps for economic development preparedness:

Step 1: Organize for Economic Development

- Determine if there is sufficient interest in entering into a detailed economic development planning process. A good planning process requires commitment of time by government, business, and community leaders.
- Educate those who are participating in the planning process so that they fully understand the economic development process.
- Select and designate an initial organizational structure.
- Decide on an organizational structure.
- Identify community leadership.
- Structure membership and define responsibilities. The Village should provide staffing.
- Designate a Village contact person to work with economic development organizations.

Step 2: Identify Basic Community Resources

For this step, the Village should secure very basic economic development information and package it in a form usable by business and community leaders.

- Prepare a community profile that contains basic information on the community, such as location, income, taxes, population, employment, labor force, transportation, utilities, housing, education, and contact persons.
- Gather available building and site data according to the recommended state site data format available from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce.
- Survey existing businesses to gather information on community strengths and problems, on businesses that are candidates for expansion in the community, and on businesses that are likely to leave or go out of business.

Step 3: Prepare a Community Analysis

For this step, the Village should complete an objective, detailed analysis of its situation. The items below are important to the retention, attraction, and creation of businesses, and the preparedness planning group needs to know the strengths and weaknesses of the community for each section.

- Identify community assets and liabilities:

Physical capabilities:

- Utility capabilities.
- Transportation systems.
- Local labor force characteristics.
- Industrial/commercial site characteristics.

Programmatic capabilities:

- Existing business base analysis.
- Available government services.
- Specific inhibitors to development.
- Employee/manager training programs.

Financial capabilities:

- Tax information and comparisons.
- Available incentives for development.
- Banking capability and/or capacity.

Quality of life capabilities:

- Housing price and type/condition.
- Overall community appearance.
- Quality of education.
- Recreation and arts.
- Healthcare.
- Community services.

- Clarify the key (strategic) issues, opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses in the community.

This community analysis will identify opportunities for economic growth and issues that need to be resolved. In order to identify key issues and opportunities that are critical to the Village's long-term economic stability and growth, the following questions should be answered:

- What is the match/mismatch between the needs of industry and the Village's assets? What are the Village's location advantages/disadvantages related to specific industry needs?

- What is the match/mismatch between industry and the needs/desires of the community? Consider here who needs work (now and in the future) and what kind of skills they have. Consider environmental concerns, space availability, current business base, and overall type of community.
- What are the high growth industries? What kinds of businesses are likely to create future jobs by expanding in your community?
- What are the nature and capacities of your community facilities/services? What are your strengths? Weaknesses? Plans? How is this related to the needs and desires of various industry sectors?

Step 4: Develop a Long-range Economic Development Plan

- Develop a detailed economic development action plan.

A rather comprehensive list of potential action areas is presented below. It is expected that no community will use all of these. The specific local action plan will flow out of the goals/strategies.

- Existing industry problem identification and plan for resolution (based on the study in Step 1.)
 - Targeted marketing/promotion program:
Fact books.
Brochures.
 - Financing plan for:
Business development.
Infrastructure building.
 - Small business support programs.
 - Volunteer development.
 - Infrastructure projects.
 - Quality of life/image improvement.
 - Downtown revitalization.
 - Recreation/tourism development.
 - Industrial park/special building programs.
 - Employee development programs.
 - Permit simplification/zoning.
 - Information/ombudsman programs.
 - Foreign export, government procurement assistance.
 - Business attraction response team.
 - Business counseling/technical assistance programs.
- Examine possible development structures and select/establish an ongoing structure.

Communities should consider a range of possible local economic development organization structures and choose the alternative most appropriate to meet local

needs and goals. The possible organizational structures are a chamber of commerce or business association, an industrial development corporation, or a community development corporation. The community should also determine whether the organization will be structured as public, private non-profit, or private for-profit.

- Design a one-year work plan:
 - Identify individual objectives/projects.
 - Identify task lists and timelines for each project.
 - List participants, roles, and responsibilities.
 - Develop an evaluation plan to annually compare activities with long-range goals and redesign action plans.
 - Secure the endorsement of local organizations, such as the local government, the chamber of commerce, the industrial development corporation, and service clubs.

Step 5: Evaluate Community Preparedness Efforts

Evaluation is an integral part of a successful ongoing planning and local development effort. The evaluation can be used to determine the success of local development projects and to provide the basis for future community preparedness efforts. Specific evaluation activities should include:

- Document completed activities as specified in Part II of this document.
- Design a new plan each year.
- Review and revise a community analysis every two years, rethink the strategic issues, and/or change goals/strategies.