

7.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

General Overview and Basic Objectives

Above all, we want to preserve the rural nature of the Town. Growth can be and should be directed for the benefit of the entire community.

Basic Objectives

- Understand the economic base of the community and statewide trends affecting the community and region. The Department of Commerce has identified agriculture and tourism as the top two trends.
- Identify economic development programs at the local and state level.
- Assess the community's strengths and weaknesses relative to attracting and retaining agricultural economic growth.
- Identify desirable businesses and industries.
- Identify desirable park and recreation opportunities.

Survey Analysis

- **AGRICULTURE**

There is a strong agreement that farmland should be preserved and kept in farmland as much as possible.

- **HOUSING**

The predominant minimum lot size desired by the residents for a home in the Town of Tilden is one acre. Many survey respondents were concerned with protecting landowner rights as well as preserving the rural character of the Town.

- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Citizens would like the Town to control development with the majority of industrial and commercial development along the Highway 53 corridor at the County Hwy. S and County Hwy. B Interchanges.

- **NATURAL RESOURCES**

The citizens of the Town of Tilden acknowledge the valuable asset they have in the Duncan Creek Watershed and Hay Creek Trout Project and they are concerned about development along its banks as well as possible pollution of the water. Many respondents felt that voluntary measures should be explored to encourage landowners to preserve wildlife habitat. Other natural resources include the bluffs, soils and forested areas.

- **TRANSPORTATION**

While some of the respondents perceive traffic to be increasing on their town roads, a strong majority are satisfied that the town roads meet their needs.

- **LAND USE**

Citizens would like to see a minimum of land use regulations, but would support those regulations that protect the rural and agriculture characteristics of the town. Respondents support Town land use regulations if it would limit problems caused by development before they occur.

- **SUMMARY**

Overall interpretation is that the respondents from the Town of Tilden Survey felt it is important to maintain the rural character of agriculture in the Town and protect the productive agriculture land by limiting the location and density of commercial and non-farm residential development.

The citizen opinion survey and the entire survey analysis are in Appendix E page 83 and Appendix D page 80.

Labor and Economics

Labor Force

According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the civilian labor force in Chippewa County has increased from 30,643 in 1997 to 34,095 in 2007 (11.3% increase). In that same time period, unemployment in the County has increased from 4.0% to 5.4%. According to the 2000 census, the Town of Tilden had an unemployment rate of 2.4%. (Over this reporting period, Chippewa County has maintained close parallels with the state regarding unemployment rates.)

Statistical data from the 2010 census, when available, will be included in this document to provide an updated profile of the Town. Comparisons can then be made to reflect changes in the Town.

Table 7- 1

Employed Civilian Population		Source: 2000 Census	
OCCUPATION	Number	Percent	
Management, professional and related occupations	223	34.9	
Service occupations	56	8.8	
Sales and office occupations	157	24.6	
Farming, fishing and forestry	36	5.6	
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	45	7.0	
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	122	19.1	
TOTAL	639	100.0	

The work force is fairly evenly distributed among the above occupational categories with management, professional and related occupations being the largest sector of the workforce with 223 people (34.9%). Farming, fishing and forestry makes up only 5.6% of the town work force.

Employment by Industry (See Table 2-11, page 16)

Table 7- 2

Class of Worker	Source: 2000 Census			
	Town of Tilden		Chippewa County	
OCCUPATION	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Private wage and salary workers	454	71.0	21,635	78.4
Government workers	63	9.9	3,078	11.2
Self employed workers in own non incorporated business	109	17.1	2,717	9.9
Unpaid family workers	13	2.0	152	0.6
Total	639	100.0	27,582	100.0

Table 7- 3

Commuting to work	Source: 2000 Census	
	Town of Tilden 2000	
	Persons	Percent
16 years and older	635	100.0
Work at Home	94	14.8
Drove Alone	475	74.8
Carpooled	33	5.2
Walked	27	4.3
Other means	4	.06
Mean Travel Time = 18.8 minutes		

About 19.1% of the working residents work at home or walked to work. The remainder of the town commutes on average of 18.8 minutes to get to their place of employment.

Largest Employers in the Area (Surrounding Tilden)

Chippewa County businesses, Eau Claire businesses, Bloomer businesses, school districts, medical field.

Local Tilden Employers

Local farmers and area small businesses make up the local employers.

Regional Industrial/Businesses Parks in Chippewa County

Table 7-4

Bloomer Industrial Park
Cadott Industrial Park
Chippewa Falls – Riverside Industrial Park and East Industrial Park
Cornell Industrial Park
Lake Wissota Business Park
Stanley Industrial Park
Chippewa County Industrial Park

The Town of Tilden is an easy commute to the City of Chippewa Falls and the neighboring counties of Eau Claire and Dunn. These counties also have industrial and/or business parks.

Environmentally Contaminated Sites

A search of the Wisconsin DNR BRRS database revealed that the Town of Tilden has had 2 sites that have been contaminated in the past. Both of these sites have been remediated and closed. Two former landfill sites have also been identified and both of those sites are also closed. No additional environmentally contaminated sites were identified in the Town.

Economic Development Programs

State and County Programs

There are a variety of local, regional and statewide economic development plans and tools available to municipalities to assist them with supporting existing businesses and recruiting new businesses. The Town may participate in activities offered by these organizations and encourage economic growth not only locally, but regionally and state-wide as well. Town citizens preferred industrial and commercial development along the Highway 53 corridor and at the Highway S and Highway B interchanges.

Selected Economic Development Programs (Partial Listing)

1. Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
2. Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Administration (WHEDA)
3. Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC)
4. Wisconsin Department of Commerce
5. Wisconsin Department of Transportation
6. Enterprise Development Zone (EDZ) Program
7. Community Development Zones
8. Transportation Economic Assistance and Development (TEA-Grant) Program
9. XCEL Energy
10. Chippewa Valley Electric
11. Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC)
12. Realtors Association of Northern Wisconsin
13. West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)

Community Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- A strong labor pool.
- High quality local schools
- Proximity to UW System & Chippewa Valley Technical College, for education and community services
- Well-maintained local roads
- Beautiful natural environment
- Good access to medical services
- Clean groundwater supply
- Strong sense of community
- Fire Department and Emergency Services
- Services provided are that of a rural environment

Weaknesses

- Lack of public sewer and water system for more dense populated areas
- Minimal economic assistance programs to promote new businesses
- Poor infrastructure for high-speed internet access
- Need to rely on other municipalities for youth recreation and sporting activities
- Lack of a convenience store/gas station
- Rural infrastructure