

## Chapter VI

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## INTRODUCTION

Economic development is an issue that must be considered in the town's future decision-making process. Without good paying jobs and growing businesses within the Town of Byron and the region, it is difficult to maintain and expand Byron's high quality of life. Historically, the Town of Byron's economy focus was agricultural production. Rural unincorporated hamlets provided for the basic needs of the community and the City of Fond du Lac served as a destination for more substantial goods and services. The industrial revolution, the mass production of the automobile, and significant investment in transportation infrastructure has changed the region significantly. Today, the Town of Byron is a healthy mix of small businesses, residential homes, and farms. Residents of the Town have easy access to transportation that provides ready access to Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, Appleton, Milwaukee, Madison, and Chicago.

In order to maintain the highest quality of life for its residents, the Town of Byron must be a partner in the regional economy. If it fails to help foster job growth, and small business development the town will position itself as a bedroom community where its residents will commute longer distances or move elsewhere to work.

## LABOR FORCE ANALYSIS

Both the Town of Byron and Fond du Lac County have a high labor participation rate. The labor force continues to grow in the region. The population is aging in place and based on current projections from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the number of people reaching age 65 will exceed those turning 18 for about a six-year period beginning after 2020. The end result may be a possible labor shortage of replacement workers over the next 20 years. This may have an impact on future economic growth if opportunities are not provided for younger workers to remain in the area.

Table VI-1

### FOND DU LAC COUNTY LABOR FORCE PROJECTIONS, 2010 & 2020

Age Group	2010	2020
16 to 24	9,301	8,333
25 to 34	12,223	11,845
35 to 54	26,002	25,666
55 to 65	8,892	10,158
65 and Over	2,833	4,011
Total	59,251	60,014

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 2004

**Table VI-2**

**CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE, 1990&2000**

Year	Employment Status	Town of Byron		Fond du Lac County	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
1990	Total Civilian Labor Force	499	379	25,353	21,491
	Number Employed	475	365	24,210	20,692
	Percent Employed	95.2%	96.3%	95.5%	96.3%
	Number Unemployed	24	14	1143	799
	Percent Unemployed	4.9%	3.7%	4.5%	3.7%
2000	Total Civilian Labor Force	494	404	28,371	25,312
	Number Employed	492	397	27,165	24,209
	Percent Employed	99.5%	98.2%	95.7%	95.6%
	Number Unemployed	2	7	1206	1103
	Percent Unemployed	0.5%	1.8 %	4.3%	4.4%

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

**ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS**

**Income**

The median household income increased more significantly in the towns of Byron, Oakfield, Eden, and Fond du Lac than in the surrounding counties, villages and cities. The median household income for Byron increased from \$36,875 to \$56,667 between 1990 and 2000. The median household income in the Town of Bryon was 21 percent higher than Fond du Lac County and 25 greater than the City of Fond du Lac in 2000.

Between 1990 and 2000, the Town of Byron’s median household income increased almost 60 percent. During the same period, Fond du Lac County’s median household income increased by about 55 percent. Per capita income increased significantly in the region as well between 1990 and 2000. Towns, villages, cities, and counties all recorded substantial gains in per capita income between 1990 and 2000. Per capita income increased by 70 percent in the Town of Byron and Fond du Lac County experienced a 60 percent increase in per capita income over this period.

Despite the impressive income growth between 1990 and 2000, a small percentage of the population in the Town of Byron lived in poverty. The 2000 census information revealed that 2.9 percent of families in the town and 4.9 percent of individuals reported living in poverty. These figures were slightly higher for Fond du Lac County and the City of Fond du Lac. The family poverty rate for Fond du Lac County was 3.5 percent and 5.8 percent for individuals. The 2000 census reported a 4.6 percent rate of poverty for families and a 7.3 percent poverty rate for individuals in the City of Fond du Lac.

**TABLE VI-3**

**TOWN OF BYRON LARGEST EMPLOYERS**

Business Name	Address	Business Type	Number of Employees
Rademann Stone & Landscape	W5551 County Rd B	Stone Quarry and Landscaping	50 to 99
Tecre Co Inc	W5747 Lost Arrow Road	Industrial Machinery Manufacturing	50 to 99
Oakfield Stone Co Inc	W5751 County Rd B	Dimension Stone	20 to 49
Midpark Nurseries	W5757 Lost Arrow Road	Nursery and Tree Production	20 to 49
Abel Landscaping, Inc	N4193 Highway 175	Landscaping	10 to 19
Saint Wire and Cable Inc	N4932 County Rd V	Motor Vehicle Electrical and Electronic Equipment Manufacturing	10 to 19
Laudolf Excavating and Septic	N3438 Maple Lane	Residential Site Preparation	10 to 19
Engel and Associates Inc	N4737 Highway 175	Environmental Consulting	5 to 9
Rademann Trucking Inc	W5551 County Rd B	Freight Trucking	5 to 9
KJ Searl Concrete and Masonry Inc	W5928 Warber Lane	Concrete and Masonry Construction	5 to 9
North Manufacturing	N3104 Highway 175	Machine Shop	5 to 9

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 2004

**Industry Sectors**

The largest industry sector that provided the most jobs for Town of Bryon and Fond du Lac County residents is manufacturing. This sector made up over 27 percent of all jobs for residents of Fond du Lac County and almost 25 percent of jobs for citizens in Byron in 2000. By 2004, the percentage of manufacturing jobs declined to about 22 percent in Fond du Lac County and 18 percent in Wisconsin. In fact, manufacturing employment declined by over 90,000 jobs in Wisconsin since 2000. Education, health, and social services places second for jobs in Fond du Lac County and ties for second with retail trade in Byron. The agriculture and mining industry provides the third highest number of jobs for residents of the Town of Byron.

**Largest Employers**

As mentioned in the first chapter of this plan, the major job sectors in the Town of Byron are manufacturing, nonmetallic mining, and agriculture. It is no surprise that most of the largest employers in the Town of Byron are land resources and manufacturing related. Rademann Stone & Landscape Co., Inc is a design/build landscape contractor, a producer of natural stone products, and a landscape supply center. Rademann and Tecre Company Inc, an industrial machinery manufacturer on Lost Arrow Road provide the most jobs in the Town of Byron. Oakfield Stone Company Inc also provides a significant number of jobs. Buechel Stone Corp. operates on over 700 acres of land in east central Wisconsin and provides over 100 types of stone products. In addition to quarry operations, they own a 10,000 square foot retail showroom in the Town of Byron. Fond du Lac Stone has operated in the Town of Byron for over 60 years. In 1997, it began a new partnership with Michels Corporation. Midpark Nurseries employ people in nursery and tree

production. Abel Landscaping Service, Inc. provides commercial, industrial, and residential landscape services. Other services provided by the largest employers in the town include excavating and septic tank installment, concrete and masonry work, construction, trucking, and light manufacturing.

Charter Steel, located just north of the Town of Byron on South Hickory Street, and Quad Graphics, located on Byron's southern border in the City of Lomira are the two largest employers in close proximity to the town. Mercury Marine, a division of the Brunswick Corporation and International Paper in the City of Fond du Lac are the largest employers in the county.

### **Small Businesses**

In addition, the Town of Bryon has a diverse group of small microenterprise businesses with fewer than 5 employees. Some of these businesses are concentrated in Byron and South Byron and the remainder is commercial, home based, and agribusinesses that are scattered throughout the town. Collectively, these businesses provide a significant economic impact for the town. These businesses include restaurant, tavern, welding, storage, carpentry, supply wholesaling, auto repair, marine repair, residential and commercial rental property, real estate sales, light manufacturing, camping, accounting, computer services, construction, trucking, and asphalt paving.

### **Sites for Business and Industry**

Locations for business and economic development within the Town of Byron are detailed on the Potential Land Use Map for the Town of Byron (Appendix A, Map 13).

### **Strengths and Weaknesses in Business Attraction and Retention**

Byron is a small family oriented community with a high quality of life. Its location, as well as its environment makes Byron an attractive place to live and operate a small business. The town is served by an excellent transportation system made up of local and county roads State Highway 151 and the U.S Highway 41 corridor. Over 45 percent of the population in Byron aged 25 and over has some higher education training beyond high school. The community has the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, Marian College, University of Wisconsin-Fond du Lac, and Moraine Park Technical College in close proximity and is served by four public school districts.

The Town of Byron has an independent entrepreneurial spirit. These business owners use their knowledge, experience, and creativity in their work. Historically, Byron was a community with a large number of small farm businesses. The decline in the number of farm businesses has not reduced the entrepreneurial spirit. The town of Byron has a diverse group of growing small businesses that help keep revenue in the community, create a stable base and reduces the threat of the town becoming a bedroom community where people commute outside the area to their place of employment.

The Town of Byron has fewer zoning requirements for a person who intends to operate a home-based business. This is an important issue if the town intends to continue to nurture small business growth. According to the National Federation of Independent Business, 53 percent of all small businesses in the United States are home based and this number is growing as we see more and more people self-employed. In fact, 67 percent of all new jobs are being created by local small businesses. These home based business

developments have created very little conflict with neighbors in Byron due to the lower density of development in the town.

Finally, lets not forget the agricultural base as an economic strength. Despite, the loss of small farms, the majority of land in the town is being used for agricultural production that supports an agricultural industry that is rapidly changing. This area will be discussed further in the agriculture and natural resources element.

It will be difficult for the Town of Byron to retain businesses as home-based businesses grow and require larger facilities. This presents the greatest issue with light manufacturing businesses. As growth occurs, they will need additional commercial space and infrastructure. The town has an abundance of land resources and has designated a few areas for commercial and industrial development. The biggest issue is the need for sewer and water should these small businesses wish to expand. Potential options to offset these weaknesses include partnering with nearby cities and villages or utilizing the new tax increment financing (TIF) state legislation that allows towns to create a TIF for agricultural, forestry, manufacturing, or tourism projects. Eligible TIF expenditures include infrastructure, land acquisition, development incentives, and administrative, organizational, and finance related expenses.

The current businesses in the town do not have a mechanism to network with each other. As businesses continue to specialize they will become more interdependent on networking with other firms, organizations, and suppliers. The closest organization is the Fond du Lac Area Chamber of Commerce. The creation of a business association would provide opportunities for networking and provide more opportunities to collaborate with the Small Business Development Center at UW-Oshkosh. An association would also provide the opportunity for better marketing the products and services that are available through businesses in the Town of Byron.

Finally, businesses in the town need to have better access to high speed internet. The recent digital revolution has helped many home-based businesses utilize the world wide web to market and sell their products and services. This is an essential tool for small business expansion. Small communities can become significant players in sectors of industry once dominated by major cities. Technology, the information highway moves easily around the globe and may help retain and keep younger workers in the area.

## **ENVIRONMENTALLY CONTAMINATED SITES FOR COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL USE**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) encourage the clean-up and use of environmentally contaminated sites. WDNR developed the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System which lists environmentally contaminated sites by community in Wisconsin. The Town of Byron has eight sites listed in this tracking system. However, seven of the sites have been closed meaning that all clean up requirements were met. The only remaining open site is Majerus Landfill. This site either has contaminated groundwater or soil due to old historic releases to the environment.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

### **Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation**

The Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation, a public private partnership provides services to all villages, cities, and towns in Fond du Lac County. FCEDC provides free and confidential services and helps businesses make siting decisions and access to resources at the local, regional, state, and national levels.

### **UW-Oshkosh Small Business Development Center**

The UW-Oshkosh, Small Business Development Center provides business counseling and education courses to support the needs of small business. All of the programs SBDC offers are listed on their website ([www.wisconsinsbdc.org](http://www.wisconsinsbdc.org)). In addition, the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning commission maintains a data site ([www.eastcentralrpc.org/data\\_center.htm](http://www.eastcentralrpc.org/data_center.htm)) with county level data.

### **Wisconsin Department of Commerce**

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce offers assistance to businesses as well. They recently published *An Entrepreneur's Guide for Going Into Business In Wisconsin: Piecing It All Together*. This information is available by calling 1-800-435-7287 or visiting their website at [www.wisconsin.gov](http://www.wisconsin.gov).

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Goal**

Retain existing businesses and provide opportunities for growth, expansion, and new business development.

### **Objectives**

1. Create opportunities for local businesses in the town to network with each other.
2. Partner with the Small Business Development Center at UW-Oshkosh and the Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation to offer small business training seminars.
3. Town Government should continue to identify local business needs.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Policies**

1. The Town of Byron will adopt areas that are deemed acceptable for development on the potential future land use map for business development.
2. The Town of Byron shall support home-based small microenterprise businesses that do not negatively impact surrounding neighbors.
3. The Town of Byron will support state and regional efforts to maintain agriculture as a component of the local economy.

**Recommendations**

1. The town will support expansion of existing businesses and new businesses in areas deemed acceptable for business development on the potential future land use map.
2. Byron will provide education to landowners and citizens about all possible options for land development.
3. Byron will maintain and enhance local roads to continue to meet the needs of businesses. (Related to Transportation Element Policies and Recommendations)