

Economic Development

Major Findings

- ❑ The Sheboygan Falls Metropolitan Area communities have developed business parks, and compete for tenants.
- ❑ The Sheboygan Falls Downtown businesses and the Chamber of Commerce have been able to create a tourism niche that has revived the downtown.

Recommendations

- ❑ The Sheboygan Falls Downtown businesses and the Chamber of Commerce need to continually rehabilitate buildings, create an interesting mix of retail and services, and provide ample parking to maintain tourism interest.

Goals and Objectives

Goal #1

- ❑ Strive to retain existing businesses, especially in the downtown area, and be open to proposals for new businesses that serve both local residents and tourism.

Objectives

1. **Chamber Main-Street:** Continue to support the marketing efforts of Chamber Main-Street to make the city's downtown a destination point.
2. **Appearance of Entryways:** Continue to improve the overall appearance and attractiveness of the major entryways into the city.
3. **Site Plan and Conditional Use Standards:** Adopt and administer site plan and conditional use standards to assure attractive commercial and industrial buildings, safe and efficient ingress and egress from future sites, and the expansion of existing uses.
4. **Downtown Parking:** Work with downtown businesses and the Chamber Main-Street to create a better parking environment, change the perspective that there is not a shortage of parking, and add directional signage to available parking lots in the downtown area.

Goal #2

- ❑ Meet the needs of existing industrial companies, and promote industrial development that provides employment opportunities for residents, is compatible with adjoining land uses, and is environmentally sound.

Objectives

1. **Vision Business Park:** As the market is better understood, the City of Sheboygan Falls will invest in public infrastructure in Vision Business Park to maintain a constant inventory of industrial sites.
2. **Rail Service:** Strive to secure rail service to decrease the shipping costs of local industry.
3. **Marketing:** Aggressively market the City's Business Park land for potential industries that can generate jobs and add tax base.
4. **Communication:** Periodically meet with major manufacturers to determine changing needs for public services or determine whether any services are lacking.

Background Information

Analysis of Economic Base

See Appendix 2 for list of businesses in Sheboygan Falls

- ❑ The City's existing industrial parks are occupied by a relatively diverse industrial and business base.
- ❑ City manufacturing companies need to continually re-invest in their infrastructure and re-tool to meet changing market conditions.

Types of New Businesses Desired

City of Sheboygan Falls Preferences

- ❑ To serve existing residences, the City of Sheboygan Falls favors businesses and office uses that meet the needs of its residents. All types of businesses and personal services (particularly medical) are preferred. The location of businesses in the City of Sheboygan Falls would save residents travel time.

Ability to Retain and Attract Business

Location

- ❑ The geographic location of a community is one of the most important factors in determining the ability of a local government to attract or retain business. The City of Sheboygan Falls is on the western fringe of the Sheboygan Metropolitan area and has a full interchange at the intersection with the STH 23 Expressway (projected to become a freeway in the future).

Infrastructure

- ❑ STH 23 is an east-west arterial that connects to Interstate 43, a major north-south arterial two miles east of Sheboygan Falls. Other state and county highways also provide good access to industrial sites scattered throughout the city.
- ❑ The City of Sheboygan Falls and local utilities offer a full range of services, including sanitary sewer and water supply, and natural gas, electric, and communications services.

Regulatory Issues

- ❑ The City of Sheboygan Falls seeks to strike a balance between the needs of business expansion in the community and buffering the negative aspects of businesses that abut residential neighborhoods.
- ❑ Zoning and building codes help to ensure that the health, safety, and welfare of the community are protected and maintained. The City is not aware of any regulatory issues negatively affecting businesses.

Sites for New or Expanding Businesses

- ❑ Sheboygan Falls created a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District to develop Vision Business Park. The first phase of this business park involves 72 acres, of which 55 are developable. The first lots exist along CTH “TT” and CTH “C,” where sewer and water laterals are available.
- ❑ As demand for lots grows, the City will build an interior road system and extend utilities with the use of TIF dollars.
- ❑ In the future, the City may have the ability to extend the park further west to facilitate more development.
- ❑ The Sheboygan County Airport is near the City of Sheboygan Falls Business Park.
- ❑ The City of Sheboygan Falls is in competition with a number of other communities with business parks, as shown on Table 10.

Table 10: Sheboygan County Industrial/Business Parks

Name	Location	Total Acres	Available
Sheboygan Business Center	Sheboygan, I-43 @ STH 28	337	78
Sheboygan Falls Vision Park	Sheboygan Falls, CTH “TT” & “C”	72	70
Plymouth Industrial Park	Plymouth, STH 57	190	190
Town of Sheboygan Business Center	Town of Sheboygan, I-43	22	0
Wilson Business Park	Town of Wilson, I-43	80	80
Village of Kohler Industrial Site (Kohler Co.)	Kohler, I-43	140	120
Village of Cedar Grove Business Park	Cedar Grove, I-43	25	12
Random Lake Industrial Park	Random Lake, STH 57	53	19
Oostburg Business Parks (North & South)	Oostburg, I-43	117	80
Total		1,036	589

Source: Bay-Lake Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Technical Memorandum #1: Existing Conditions Report 25 WisDOT Project ID 1440-19-00

Weaknesses for Attracting/Retaining Businesses

- ❑ Sheboygan County is located within a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ozone non-attainment zone. New manufacturing businesses or expanded facilities are required to meet certain emission reduction standards. Reductions can come from additional controls, adoption of pollution prevention techniques, substitute materials, or shutdowns.
- ❑ Offset credits can be granted to businesses that achieve or surpass EPA guidelines. Businesses can purchase credits if standard levels are exceeded. Credits can also be sold if companies reduce their emissions.
- ❑ For certain industries, the local workforce may not have adequate skills. This can be overcome to some extent by working with the local technical college to institute specialized training.

Use of Brownfield Sites

- ❑ It appears that industrial property owners have made a concerted effort to maintain and/or convert their structures to other uses. A good example is the Richardson mill (closed in 2007) which is currently being used for warehousing and other smaller industrial uses.
- ❑ Should any commercial or industrial buildings become abandoned in the future, they could be classified as brownfields and become eligible for “brownfield grants”.
- ❑ The Wisconsin Department of Commerce has not identified brownfield sites in the City of Sheboygan Falls at this time. The Department defines brownfields as, “abandoned, idle or underused industrial or commercial facilities or sites, the expansion or redevelopment of which is adversely affected by actual or perceived environmental contamination.”
- ❑ More information concerning Wisconsin’s Brownfields Program can be found at: www.commerce.state.wi.us/CD/CD-bfi.html

County, Regional, and State Programs

Sheboygan County Programs

- ❑ The Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce is located in Sheboygan. The Chamber offers citizens, businesses, industries, and other community stakeholders a wealth of information, services, and programs.
- ❑ The Chamber is designed to enhance the economic, social, and political environments of Sheboygan County.
- ❑ The Chamber promotes communities within the county, in all appropriate forums, meeting the challenge of future development in the county, and serving as a catalyst for the development of programs that represent the interest of the membership.
- ❑ More information regarding the programs and services the Chamber provides can be viewed at the following web site: <http://www.sheboygan.org/>
- ❑ Sheboygan County, through its participation in the Wisconsin Community Development Grant Program, has retained funds for the establishment of a Business Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). This fund is designed to create employment opportunities, encourage private investment, and provide a financing alternative for small start-up or expanding businesses in the county.
- ❑ The RLF program includes interest rates and loan maturities that are designed to encourage business development while providing for the recapitalization and growth of the RLF. Eligible activities include 1) acquisition of land, buildings, equipment, and fixed assets; 2) construction or reconstruction of buildings; 3) installation of fixed equipment; 4) working capital; and 5) buy-outs by purchase of assets. Eligible projects must also leverage private dollars, create jobs, and provide collateral. Loans are generally for amounts greater than \$25,000.

Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce

To aid in the marketing of all the business parks and available buildings and developable sites in Sheboygan County, the Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce authored a document known as the “Guiding Principles for Economic Development”. Many communities are in agreement with this document. It strives to “represent the standards that each participating local government will support and practice in the daily conduct of economic development.” The concept is to encourage communities to work together in attracting businesses to Sheboygan County, and allow potential clients to then decide what community in the county would best meet their needs for an economic development project site.

Regional Programs

- ❑ New North, Inc. is a consortium of business, economic development, chambers of commerce, workforce development, civic, non-profit, and education leaders in eighteen North-east Wisconsin counties. The consortium's efforts are directed toward the region being recognized as competitive for job growth while maintaining our superior quality of life.
- ❑ New North, Inc. represents a strong collaboration between the eighteen counties that have come together behind the common goals of job growth and economic viability for the region.
- ❑ The power of the New North region working together is far greater than one county or one business alone. Players gain more through regional cooperation than competing for resources and growth. In addition to working together to promote and help expand existing economic development efforts, New North, Inc. will concentrate on:
 - Fostering regional collaboration
 - Focusing on targeted growth opportunities
 - Supporting an entrepreneurial climate
 - Encouraging educational attainment
 - Encouraging and embracing diverse talents
 - Promoting the regional brand

More information on New North, Inc. is available at: <http://www.thenewnorth.com/>

State of Wisconsin Programs

The State of Wisconsin's Department of Commerce offers a number of programs in support of economic development. The programs are too numerous to list here. Some of the programs provide direct assistance to a business, others fund the business through the local community, and still other programs provide direct assistance to a community. Information on these programs is available at: www.commerce.state.wi.us/MT/MT-COM-2000.html or www.commerce.state.wi.us/MT/MT-COM-4200.html

The Department of Commerce has Area Development Managers located throughout the state to work with local communities and businesses in identifying the resources available from the state and other sources. Dennis Russell is the Area Development Manager for the City of Sheboygan Falls. He is located in Green Bay.

The Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides business management education programs at an affordable fee. Counseling to address individual business needs is available without cost to the small business client. SBDC offices are located at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Information on the programs and services offered by the SBDC may be found at www.wisconsinsbdc.org.

Forward Wisconsin is a state-level partnership between the public and private sectors whose mission is to market Wisconsin as a business location to firms interested in expanding in, or relocating to, Wisconsin. Information on the programs and services offered by Forward Wisconsin may be found at www.forwardwi.com/index2.html.