

6. Economic Development

This element of the planning process identifies the economic characteristics and resources of Clark County. Assessment of these characteristics or resources provides insight into the historical and current economic situation of the county, thereby providing direction to achieve economic goals and potential.

6.1 Labor Force and Employment Status

Civilian Labor Force

The labor force, by definition, includes those who are either working or looking for work, but does not include individuals who have made a choice to not work: retirees, homemakers, and students; nor does it include institutional residents, military personnel, or discouraged job seekers, according to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development definition.

Labor force participation increases and contracts with changes in labor market conditions. For example, each spring the Clark County labor force expands as seasonal workers enter the labor market either to begin a job or to start looking for work. Table 6-1 displays the civilian labor force estimates for Clark County and Wisconsin from 1997 to 2002.

Table 6-1: Civilian Labor Force Estimates, Clark County, 1997-2002

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	% Change 1997-02
Clark County							
Labor Force	16,707	16,707	15,506	15,877	16,164	15,701	-6.0
Employment	15,629	15,739	14,741	14,964	14,951	14,550	-6.9
Unemployment	1,078	968	765	913	1,213	1,151	6.8
Rate	6.5	5.8	4.9	5.8	7.5	7.3	
Wisconsin							
Labor Force	2,948,673	2,951,967	2,889,812	2,968,102	3,028,154	3,027,589	2.7
Employment	2,840,345	2,852,556	2,801,777	2,862,683	2,891,294	2,860,916	0.7
Unemployment	108,328	99,411	88,035	105,419	136,860	166,673	53.9
Rate	3.7	3.4	3.0	3.6	4.5	5.5	

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Workforce Information, 1997-2002.

From 1997 – 2002, Clark County experienced a consistently higher unemployment rate than the State of Wisconsin. For the last two years, the unemployment rate in Clark County has been significantly higher than in other recent years. This trend was also found to be true for the State of Wisconsin.

Educational Attainment

Table 6-2 displays the education attainment level of residents in Clark County and Wisconsin that were age 25 and older in 2000. The educational attainment level of persons within a community is often an indicator of the overall income, job availability, and well-being of the community. Lower educational attainment levels can also be a hindrance to attracting certain types of businesses, typically those that require high technical skills and upper management types of positions.

Table 6-2: Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 & Over, Clark County and Wisconsin, 2000

Attainment Level	Clark County		Wisconsin	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
Less than 9th grade	2,694	12.8%	186,125	5.4%
9th grade to 12th grade, no diploma	2,475	11.8%	332,292	9.6%
High school graduate, includes equivalency	8,951	42.6%	1,201,813	34.6%
Some college, no degree	3,396	16.2%	715,664	20.6%
Associate degree	1,308	6.2%	260,711	7.5%
Bachelor's degree	1,561	7.4%	530,268	15.3%
Graduate or professional degree	606	2.9%	249,005	7.2%
Total Persons 25 and over	20,991	100.0%	3,475,878	100.0%

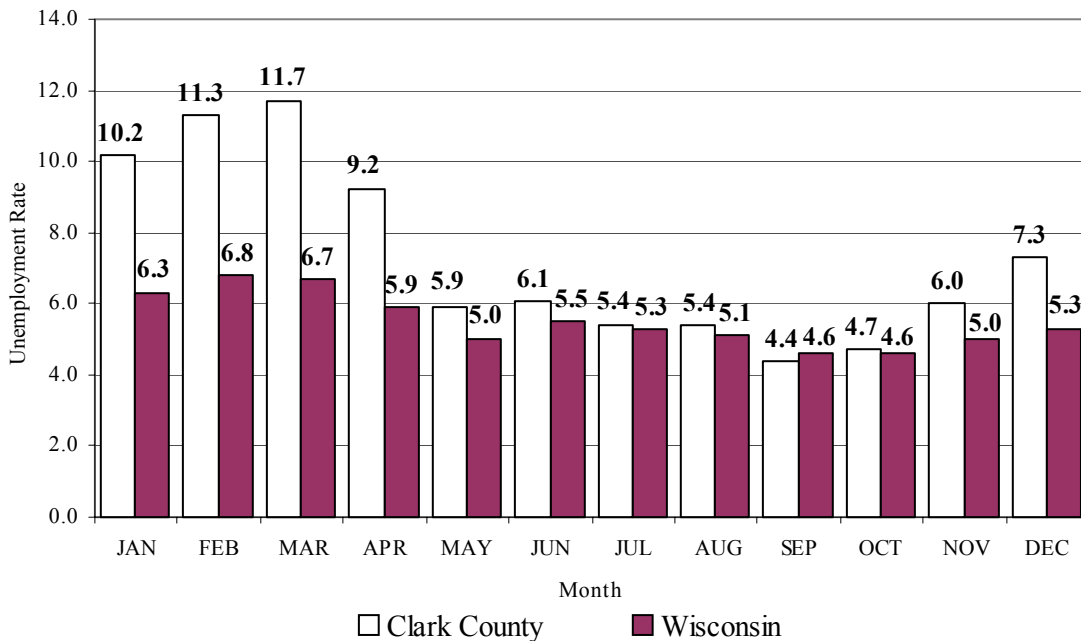
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000. Only includes persons age 25 & over.

In 2000, approximately 75% of residents in Clark County age 25 and over received their high school diploma and/or had further education. For the State of Wisconsin as a whole this figure increases to 85%. Approximately 10% of Clark County residents had a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 22% for Wisconsin as a whole.

Unemployment Rates

The number of unemployed in the county includes not only those who are receiving unemployment benefits, but also any resident who actively looked for a job and did not find one. Unemployment rates throughout 2002 are illustrated in Figure 6-1.

Figure 6-1: Monthly Unemployment Rates, Clark County and Wisconsin, 2002



Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2002.

For most of 2002, Clark County had a higher unemployment rate than the State of Wisconsin. One reason for this is that the Clark County economy has a large segment of construction employment. When there are long winters, wet springs, or other seasonal factors, construction work is delayed, affecting the unemployment rate. In addition, the nation and state entered into an economic downturn likely impacted by the September 11, 2001 national disaster. Post 9-11 conditions caused many businesses and corporations to take a conservative approach in 2002 which likely impacted unemployment rates.

Income

The household income within an area can offer some additional insight regarding the local economy, types of jobs in the area, further understanding of commuting patterns, and the general economic base. Table 6-3 displays the 1999 household incomes for Clark County and its communities as reported by the 2000 Census.

According to the 2000 Census, the median household income in the county was \$34,577. This figure is significantly lower than the \$43,791 state figure.

Table 6-3: Household Income, Clark County, 2000

Municipality	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$14,999	\$15,000 - \$24,999	\$25,000 - \$34,999	\$35,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$74,999	\$75,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$150,000 or more	Median Income
T. Beaver	18	3	49	29	46	68	17	7	10	\$41,458
T. Butler	6	2	8	0	0	6	2	0	2	\$21,250
T. Colby	11	23	39	36	77	52	31	14	1	\$41,310
T. Dewhurst	14	14	31	23	23	28	11	4	4	\$31,250
T. Eaton	17	26	42	17	59	40	10	7	2	\$37,000
T. Foster	3	7	12	10	9	6	0	0	0	\$28,750
T. Fremont	30	28	65	59	98	65	12	6	3	\$35,167
T. Grant	29	21	35	62	78	53	17	12	4	\$36,518
T. Green Grove	28	10	31	35	53	47	12	3	13	\$37,667
T. Hendren	25	19	38	32	32	42	4	2	2	\$27,353
T. Hewett	4	4	21	20	22	30	13	4	2	\$46,111
T. Hixon	26	14	27	41	50	53	8	4	4	\$36,375
T. Hoard	15	18	28	27	37	37	7	4	4	\$35,250
T. Levis	20	7	51	34	40	31	0	5	5	\$30,521
T. Longwood	9	27	55	50	38	46	8	9	0	\$30,000
T. Loyal	24	9	32	21	36	49	25	12	3	\$45,417
T. Lynn	29	28	44	36	46	50	12	8	6	\$32,396
T. Mayville	19	9	32	56	55	83	16	15	6	\$42,813
T. Mead	8	11	27	16	20	24	4	3	0	\$31,875
T. Mentor	12	22	29	36	32	51	16	6	3	\$36,125
T. Pine Valley	31	22	69	75	78	101	30	20	7	\$37,813
T. Reseburg	15	15	49	29	37	30	16	20	4	\$34,750
T. Seif	6	14	24	26	10	12	10	0	0	\$28,333
T. Sherman	9	24	38	27	48	70	26	13	0	\$42,344
T. Sherwood	4	10	9	14	17	15	2	7	0	\$36,250
T. Thorp	26	14	23	46	63	50	14	8	9	\$39,063
T. Unity	22	20	30	14	81	54	10	7	2	\$41,154
T. Warner	8	11	37	28	59	31	2	10	2	\$37,273
T. Washburn	6	6	25	22	38	18	2	0	3	\$36,250
T. Weston	18	13	37	35	41	56	20	4	0	\$40,833
T. Withee	30	16	36	58	58	34	12	13	10	\$33,839
T. Worden	9	23	21	39	50	37	7	9	2	\$37,321
T. York	27	17	42	35	47	67	20	10	5	\$38,500
V. Curtiss	8	6	15	13	16	9	2	0	0	\$29,250
V. Dorchester*	36	32	44	64	55	85	22	9	2	\$34,750
V. Granton	28	8	28	27	25	37	4	2	0	\$30,288
V. Unity*	17	7	26	44	12	35	6	2	3	\$31,458
V. Withee	18	15	45	41	32	34	14	3	3	\$29,625
C. Abbotsford*	92	72	95	123	173	191	43	20	8	\$36,949
C. Colby*	70	37	103	105	131	117	40	6	9	\$34,318
C. Greenwood	53	56	49	96	80	104	18	6	6	\$32,917
C. Loyal	65	67	101	85	83	96	32	5	11	\$30,647
C. Neillsville	159	115	213	157	189	188	69	36	15	\$29,969
C. Owen	67	42	80	57	72	78	14	2	2	\$27,368
C. Thorp	110	69	120	120	140	95	32	15	4	\$29,102
Clark County	1,222	998	1,990	1,917	2,377	2,409	679	346	171	\$34,577
State of Wisconsin	148,964	121,366	264,897	276,033	377,749	474,299	226,374	133,719	62,903	\$43,791

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

*Includes portion in Marathon County.

Travel Time to Work

For most of the general population, the location of their home is dependent upon the location of their work. Knowing the amount of time people are willing to travel to work can serve as an indication for the future location of housing and/or economic development.

Table 6-4 displays the travel time to work for Clark County, its municipalities, and the state in 2000. The majority of Clark County residents, 25.8%, had a commute of less than ten minutes to work. Approximately 24% had a commute of 10 to 19 minutes and a significant number of residents, 13.7%, worked at home.

Table 6-4: Travel Time to Work, Clark County, 2000

Municipality	Less than 5 minutes 10 minutes	10 to 19 minutes	20 to 29 minutes	30 to 39 minutes	40 to 59 minutes	60 or more minutes	Worked at home
T. Beaver	48	67	66	66	33	7	98
T. Butler	4	6	10	1	2	0	4
T. Colby	107	121	37	55	26	0	107
T. Dewhurst	9	46	43	11	9	15	5
T. Eaton	90	96	36	35	23	9	76
T. Foster	10	5	10	7	4	5	6
T. Fremont	61	123	187	56	13	36	100
T. Grant	53	163	53	52	35	32	41
T. Green Grove	50	81	44	16	38	9	88
T. Hendren	25	44	46	30	39	15	50
T. Hewett	16	104	4	12	19	9	11
T. Hixon	52	80	43	24	16	14	74
T. Hoard	23	63	43	28	12	18	69
T. Levis	17	89	27	28	28	0	45
T. Longwood	57	48	43	14	31	17	84
T. Loyal	87	64	61	53	9	7	92
T. Lynn	39	39	106	44	5	19	67
T. Mayville	118	165	58	11	16	11	81
T. Mead	0	44	40	14	19	8	27
T. Mentor	30	37	101	42	11	53	12
T. Pine Valley	165	207	27	52	50	27	23
T. Reseburg	80	61	38	25	23	36	107
T. Seif	16	30	18	6	6	14	32
T. Sherman	78	107	97	51	6	10	56
T. Sherwood	13	5	21	24	21	4	15
T. Thorp	102	99	34	32	24	12	91
T. Unity	68	79	106	46	15	0	69
T. Warner	49	56	33	20	25	21	69
T. Washburn	13	52	23	34	16	5	15
T. Weston	53	116	29	39	24	21	59
T. Withee	101	86	27	22	12	19	113
T. Worden	63	95	20	16	32	15	55
T. York	75	104	63	71	23	22	92
V. Curtiss	23	34	20	3	4	0	2
V. Dorchester	105	151	85	20	38	20	19
V. Granton	32	37	44	48	8	8	4
V. Unity	9	20	17	8	2	4	2
V. Withee	83	58	33	12	7	2	6
C. Abbotsford	297	157	70	65	49	23	21
C. Colby	206	144	74	79	20	14	14
C. Greenwood	216	108	63	43	48	24	19
C. Loyal	189	111	140	104	26	21	34
C. Neillsville	628	234	75	94	69	26	40
C. Owen	193	49	70	40	26	20	31
C. Thorp	303	114	79	42	71	34	25
Clark County	4,056	3,799	2,364	1,595	1,033	686	2,150
State of Wisconsin	533,891	917,206	531,628	307,835	181,568	113,181	105,395

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

Table 6-5 displays the travel time to work for Clark County and Wisconsin residents for 2000.

Table 6-5: Travel Time to Work, Clark County and Wisconsin, 2000

	Clark County		Wisconsin	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
Less than 5 minutes	1,574	10.0	135,194	5.0
5 to 9 minutes	2,482	15.8	398,697	14.8
10 to 14 minutes	2,098	13.4	476,569	17.7
15 to 19 minutes	1,701	10.8	440,637	16.4
20 to 24 minutes	1,598	10.2	372,180	13.8
25 to 29 minutes	766	4.9	159,448	5.9
30 to 34 minutes	1,309	8.3	248,714	9.2
35 to 39 minutes	286	1.8	59,121	2.2
40 to 44 minutes	340	2.2	61,540	2.3
45 to 59 minutes	693	4.4	120,028	4.5
60 to 89 minutes	386	2.5	68,071	2.5
90 or more minutes	300	1.9	45,110	1.7
Worked at home	2,150	13.7	105,395	3.9
Total	15,683	100.0	2,690,704	100.0

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

In 2000, the majority of residents of Clark County had a 5 to 9 minute travel time to work. For Wisconsin, the majority of individuals had a 10 to 14 minute travel time to work. One significant difference between Clark County and Wisconsin is that Clark County has a much greater percentage of individuals who work at home which is likely tied to family farm operations.

Labor Market Conditions

The University of Wisconsin-Extension conducted a study of labor market conditions in Clark County in the winter of 2001-2002. The purpose of the resulting study, *Labor Market Conditions in Clark County*, was to examine the existing and anticipated supply of and demand for labor in the county. Primary findings from the study include:

- ◆ Employers in Clark County experience little difficulty recruiting qualified workers.
- ◆ Some employers report difficulty hiring skilled workers, especially managers and educators.
- ◆ Employers tend to rate the importance of “soft skills”, such as integrity, honesty, attendance, punctuality, and motivation, much higher than some of the “hard skills”.
- ◆ The data on the supply of labor suggest that few part-time workers are looking for full-time work, and relatively few of the full-time workers are looking for jobs.

- ◆ A significant number of commuters would be willing to work locally if they could find a job with comparable wages and benefits.
- ◆ Average wage increases over the last several years in Clark County have lagged behind other areas.
- ◆ The aging of the labor force may have a significant influence on the labor supply in the region.

According to the Clark County Economic Development Corporation, the following are the major private employers in Clark County as of May, 2003.

1. Abbyland Foods, Inc., pork and beef processing, located in Abbotsford and Curtiss (375 employees)
2. *Fleetguard Nelson – Muffler, mufflers, located in Neillsville (260 employees)
3. Weather Shield Manufacturing, vinyl windows and doors, located in Greenwood (250 employees)
4. Fleetguard Nelson – Air cleaners and filters, located in Neillsville (200 employees)
5. Grassland Dairy Products, Inc., butter, butter oil and buttermilk, located in Greenwood (175 employees)
6. Liberty Homes, Inc., manufactured homes, located in Dorchester (150 employees)
7. Lynn Dairy, cheese, dried whey, and protein, located in Granton (120 employees)
8. Leeson Electric, electric motors, located in Neillsville (125 employees)
9. Kerry, Inc., food ingredients, located in Owen (110 employees)
10. Northwest Hardwoods, millwork and kiln dried lumber, located in Dorchester (100 employees)

*Announced plant closure for June 2004.



Abbyland Foods is Clark County's largest employer



Weather Shield window manufacturer – City of Greenwood.

6.2 Economic Base Analysis

Employment by Industrial Sector

The employment by industry within an area illustrates the structure of the economy. Historically, the State of Wisconsin has had a high concentration of employment in manufacturing and agricultural sectors of the economy. Recent state and national trends indicate a decreasing concentration of employment in the manufacturing sector while employment within the services sector is increasing. This trend is partly attributed to the aging of the population.

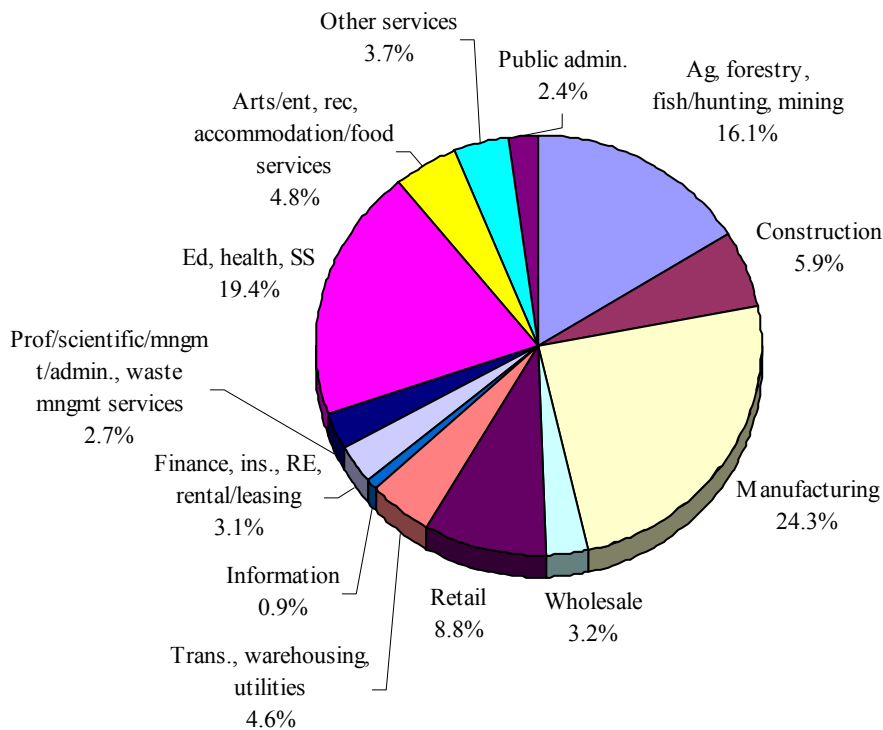
Table 6-6 displays the number and percent of employed persons by industry group in Clark County and the State of Wisconsin for 2000. The greatest percentage of employment for the county was in the manufacturing sector (24.3%), followed by educational, health, and social services (19.4%). These two economic sectors also employed the greatest number of persons in Wisconsin. Clark County is particularly unlike the state in regard to the agriculture, forestry, fishing, etc. economic sector. Clark County had 16.1% of total employment within this sector while the State of Wisconsin only had 2.8%. Figure 6-2 also displays employment by percentage for Clark County in 2000.

**Table 6-6: Employment by Industrial Sector,
Clark County and Wisconsin, 2000**

Economic Division	Clark County		State of Wisconsin	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	2,561	16.1%	75,418	2.8%
Construction	942	5.9%	161,625	5.9%
Manufacturing	3,856	24.3%	606,845	22.2%
Wholesale trade	508	3.2%	87,979	3.2%
Retail trade	1,403	8.8%	317,881	11.6%
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	726	4.6%	123,657	4.5%
Information	149	0.9%	60,142	2.2%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	492	3.1%	168,060	6.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	425	2.7%	179,503	6.6%
Educational, health, and social services	3,078	19.4%	548,111	20.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	760	4.8%	198,528	7.3%
Other services (except public administration)	595	3.7%	111,028	4.1%
Public administration	374	2.4%	96,148	3.5%
Total	15,869	100.0%	2,734,925	100.0%

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

Figure 6-2: Employment by Industrial Sector, Clark County, 2000



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

Non-Farm Wage and Salary Employment

Employment by industry data that were provided by the U.S. Bureau of the Census in 1990 have most likely shifted to reflect the changes that have occurred within Clark County in the last 10 years. Non-farm wage and salary employment data measure the number of jobs within a county excluding family farming, military, and proprietors (see Table 6-7). These data are often referred to as ‘place of work’ data, indicating the number of jobs at the work site without consideration of where the jobholder lives.

**Table 6-7: Non-farm Wage and Salary Employment,
Clark County, 1995-2001**

Economic Sector	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	% Change
								1995-2001
Total	9,232	9,437	9,380	9,769	9,861	9,920	9,882	7.0
Goods Producing	2,868	2,989	3,079	3,196	3,476	3,630	3,604	25.7
Construction and Mining	253	320	395	424	472	478	532	110.3
Manufacturing	2,614	2,668	2,684	2,772	3,004	3,153	3,072	17.5
Durable	1,346	1,430	1,476	1,567	1,705	1,766	1,655	23.0
Nondurable	1,268	1,238	1,208	1,205	1,299	1,386	1,417	11.8
Service Producing	6,364	6,448	6,302	6,573	6,385	6,289	6,277	-1.4
Transportation, Communication, & Utilities	335	337	340	363	380	376	410	22.4
Total Trade	1,981	1,947	2,072	2,161	1,989	1,916	1,817	-8.3
Wholesale	617	663	697	711	621	593	539	-12.6
Retail	1,364	1,284	1,375	1,450	1,368	1,323	1,278	-6.3
Finance, Insurance, and Real estate	323	295	294	287	243	242	235	-27.2
Services and Misc.	1,692	1,805	1,574	1,692	1,686	1,631	1,704	0.7
Total Government	2,033	2,063	2,021	2,070	2,088	2,124	2,113	3.9

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information, Nonfarm Wage & Salary estimates. Please note totals may be different due to rounding.

From 1995 to 2001, the construction industry added 279 jobs, a 110.3% increase. Durable manufacturing also increased dramatically with 309 additional jobs for the period shown. Overall, the goods producing segments of the Clark County economy are growing at a much faster pace than the service producing segments of the economy.

Employment by Occupation

The previous section, employment by industry, described employment by the type of business or industry, or sector of commerce. What people do, or what their occupation is within those sectors, can also reveal factors that influence incomes and employment.

**Table 6-8: Employment by Occupation,
Clark County and Wisconsin, 2000**

Occupation	Clark County		State of Wisconsin	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Management, professional, and related occupations	4,463	28.1%	857,205	31.3%
Service occupations	2,318	14.6%	383,619	14.0%
Sales and office occupations	2,657	16.7%	690,360	25.2%
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations	726	4.6%	25,725	0.9%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	1,574	9.9%	237,086	8.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	4,131	26.0%	540,930	19.8%
Total	15,869	100.0%	2,734,925	100.0%

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

As indicated by Table 6-8, the category segment with the greatest percentage of employment in 2000 was management, professional, and related occupations, with 28.1% of total employment in Clark County. The State of Wisconsin also has the greatest percentage of employment within this occupation. The occupation with the second greatest total employment in Clark County was production, transportation, and material moving with 26% of total employment. The occupation with the second greatest total employment for Wisconsin was in sales and office occupations with 25.2% of total employment.

Wages

The wages that are provided by a particular industry in a particular area offer several insights. Higher wages within an industry, when compared to neighboring communities, can indicate a strong economic segment. That wage can also be used to attract commuters and new residents, which in effect will consume products in the area. A higher than average wage and a dependence on a particular industry can also lead to local recession if there should be a downturn within the industry. Lower than average wages can also indicate a lower quality of life in the area or a lack of highly qualified labor. Table 6-9 displays the annual average wages by economic division for Clark County.

Table 6-9: Wages, Clark County, 1999

Economic Division	Annual Average Wage	Percent of State Average
All Industries	\$22,085	74.6
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	\$17,730	82.5
Construction	\$27,939	76.0
Manufacturing	\$27,291	72.2
Transportation, communications, and other public utilities	\$22,166	64.2
Wholesale trade	\$24,094	63.3
Retail trade	\$12,190	80.9
Finance, insurance, and real estate	\$20,236	53.4
Services	\$16,642	63.9
Government	\$23,319	72.8

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, *Employment, Wages and Taxes Due Covered by Wisconsin's Unemployment Compensation Law, 1999*.

The construction and manufacturing industries offered the highest annual wages in Clark County in 1999. Agricultural, forestry, fisheries, and retail trade wages were the closest to the state averages. The greatest disparity in wages between Clark County and the state appeared in finance, insurance, and real estate. The county has no corporate offices with upper management, and higher salaries, in this industry.

Commuting Patterns

The county labor force includes all employed and unemployed residents who live in the county, even though they may travel out of the county for work. It is very important to recognize that workers are a valuable resource that should be retained within the county to the greatest extent

possible. Maintaining the strength of the workforce and products and services they provide will strengthen the overall county economy. Table 6-10 displays the commuting patterns for Clark County. According to the Clark County Economic Development Corporation, many commuters travel to Wausau, Medford, Chippewa Falls, and Black River Falls in Jackson County and the majority travel to Marshfield for employment. As indicated by Table 6-10, approximately 3,000 more people commute out of Clark County for work than come to the county for work.

Table 6-10: Commuting Patterns, Clark County, 2000

Area	Live in		Net Commute
	Clark County Work In:	Travel to Clark County From:	
Chippewa County	335	258	-77
Dunn County	22	20	-2
Eau Claire County	221	78	-143
Jackson County	302	110	-192
Lincoln County	34	15	-19
Marathon County	1,407	710	-697
Portage County	39	36	-3
Taylor County	598	582	-16
Trempealeau County	35	13	-22
Wood County	1,956	272	-1,684
Elsewhere	291	201	-90
Total	5,240	2,295	-2,945
Work in Clark County	10,443	10,443	0

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

Agriculture Industry Analysis

The agriculture industry and its related businesses within Clark County provide more than employment to the area. The agriculture industry within Clark County has been and will continue to be the primary economic base and way of life throughout the planning period and many years thereafter. Therefore, the agriculture industry is of vital importance to the overall economic state of Clark County.

According to the 1997 Census of Agriculture, the market value of agricultural products sold in Clark County had increased by 13% from 1992. Although this would typically indicate a strong farm economy, the non-farm sector of the economy has also been experiencing unprecedented growth. Other agriculture industry trends reported within the 1997 Census of Agriculture for Clark County include:

- ◆ Land in farms decreased 3% from 426,884 acres in 1992 to 413,901 acres in 1997.
- ◆ The average size of farms increased 4% from 212 acres in 1992 to 220 acres in 1997.



Corn harvest - Town of Fremont

- ◆ The number of full-time farms decreased 12% from 1,589 in 1992 to 1,394 farms in 1997.

According to the 1997 Census of Agriculture, the top five commodities based on value of sales in Clark County were as follows: 1) dairy products; 2) cattle and calves; 3) corn for grain; 4) hay, silage, field seeds, grass seeds; and 5) soybeans. According to the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service in 1999, the major crops within the county were as follows: 1) alfalfa, 38.2%; 2) corn, 33.0%; 3) other forages, 16.6%; 4) small grains, 6.6%; and 5) soybeans, 5.5%.

The 1997 Census of Agriculture reported that 74.0% of farm operators in Clark County reported farming as their principle occupation, a higher percentage than any other county in the state. The Census also reported that the average age of a farmer in the county was 49, which was the youngest reported age when compared to all other counties in the state.

In the City of Stanley, a \$27 million ethanol plant began operation in July of 2002. The plant should increase markets to local corn farmers. The plant processes a half-million bushels of corn each month and has a large storage facility indicating that corn purchasing will go on year round. The plant should maintain about 30 staff, but the overriding benefit to the area is the potential for increased corn prices.

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce (DOC) designated the Northcentral Wisconsin Region, consisting of Barron, Clark, Taylor, Rusk, Sawyer, and Price counties, as an Agricultural Development Zone. This multi-county region is focusing on the promotion, creation, recruitment, and expansion of agribusinesses within this area. The Zone will encourage agricultural business clustering. The cluster includes all the activities and/or operations involved in the growth, production, processing, manufacturing, distribution, wholesale, and retail sales of agricultural and food products.

The Agricultural Development Zone is designated for 10 years commencing January 1, 2003. Approximately \$1 million of tax benefits may be claimed in the zone for the duration. Certified agribusinesses can claim tax credits against their Wisconsin income tax. Capital investment credit for real and personal property tax is 3%. Job creation and retention credit of up to \$6,500 per job is available. Environmental remediation tax credits can be accessed for up to 50% of eligible expenses. Any unused tax credits can be carried forward for 15 years. Interested persons located in, or planning to locate within, the zone shall submit a DOC Prospect Data Sheet to the Clark County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) for determination of eligibility of the tax credits.

In most areas of the state the combination of a depressed farm economy, a strong non-farm sector, and increased urbanization has increased pressure on landowners to convert farmland to other uses, therefore affecting the economic future of agriculture. These trends have inflated land values and made it more difficult to enter farming or expand existing farms. Appreciated land



Russell Park Campground in the Town of Dewhurst is a popular tourist destination

values also enable older or existing farmers to realize larger financial gains when they sell their farmland assets.

Tourism

Tourism plays a vital role in the Clark County economy. Many businesses in the county depend on tourism and the jobs and the income that is generated contribute to the economic base of the area and the general quality of life. The following information was obtained from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism regarding the Clark County tourism industry for 2002.

- ◆ Clark County ranks 62nd in the state for traveler spending.
- ◆ Travelers spent an estimated \$31 million in Clark County in 2002.
- ◆ Summer is the biggest season and generated traveler expenditures amounting to \$15 million. Fall travelers spent \$8 million and winter/spring visitors spent \$8 million.
- ◆ It is estimated that employees earned \$19 million in wages generated from tourist spending, an increase of 7% from 2001.
- ◆ Traveler spending in 2002 supported 895 full-time equivalent jobs, compared to 852 in 2001.
- ◆ Local revenues (property taxes, sales taxes, lodging taxes, etc.) collected as a result of travelers amounted to an estimated \$2.4 million in 2002, an increase of 9% from 2001.
- ◆ Travelers generated \$2 million in state revenues (lodging, sales and meal taxes, etc.), an increase of 4% from 2001.



Economic Base Analysis

The future of Clark County requires an understanding of the economy as it relates to the Wisconsin and the United States economies. The Economic Base Analysis technique divides the economy into basic and non-basic sectors. The basic sector is made up of local businesses that are dependent on external factors. Manufacturing and local resource-oriented firms (like logging or mining) are usually considered to be basic sector firms because their success depends largely upon non-local factors, and they usually export their goods. The non-basic sector, in contrast, is composed of those firms that depend largely upon local business conditions. Economic Base Theory asserts that the means of strengthening and growing the local economy is to develop and enhance the basic sector.

There are nine economic divisions that are used for Economic Base Analysis. There are four goods producing sectors: agriculture, forestry, and fishing; mining; construction; and

manufacturing. There are five services-producing sectors: transportation and public utilities; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and services.

Location Quotient Analysis

The Location Quotient analysis technique compares the Clark County economy to the United States. This is calculated by taking the Clark County employment within a certain industry in a given year and dividing it by the Clark County total employment for that year. The total is then divided by the result of taking the United States employment in the same industry in the given year divided by the total United States employment for the given year. The result will be one of the following:

- ◆ If the Location Quotient (LQ) is **less than 1.0**, all employment is considered non-basic, therefore that industry is not meeting local demand for a given good or service.
- ◆ An LQ **equal** to 1.0 suggests that the local employment is exactly sufficient to meet the local demand for a given good or service. Therefore, all of this employment is also considered non-basic because none of these goods or services are exported to non-local areas.
- ◆ An LQ **greater than 1.0** suggests that local employment produces more goods and services than the local economy can use, therefore these goods and services are exported to non-local areas, which makes them basic sector employment.

Note that government is not included within the analysis, although it is a major employer in the county. Because government is a non-profit entity, it should not be expanded for economic purposes. Table 6-11 displays the employment for the United States and Table 6-12 displays the employment and resulting location quotients for Clark County.

Table 6-11: United States Employment Analysis, 1989 and 1999

Economic Division	1989 Employment	% of Total	1999 Employment	% of Total	% Change 1989-99
Ag/Forestry/Fishing	1,374,300	1.2	2,048,400	1.5	49.1
Mining	1,047,700	0.9	782,100	0.6	-25.4
Construction	7,293,500	6.4	9,254,000	6.7	26.9
Manufacturing	19,992,500	17.6	19,252,700	13.9	-3.7
Transportation/Public Utilities	6,361,600	5.6	7,970,300	5.8	25.3
Wholesale	6,704,300	5.9	7,464,700	5.4	11.3
Retail	22,687,600	20.0	26,910,000	19.5	18.6
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	10,663,400	9.4	12,978,700	9.4	21.7
Services	37,170,900	32.8	51,669,000	37.4	39.0
Total Employment of Industries	113,295,800	100.0	138,329,900	100.0	22.1

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Accounts Data, 1989-1999.

Table 6-12: Clark County Employment Analysis, 1989 and 1999

Economic Division	1989 Employment	% of Total	1999 Employment	% of Total	% Change 1989-99	LQ 1989	LQ 1999
Ag/Forestry/Fishing	252	2.9	264	2.5	4.8	2.4	1.7
Mining	28	0.3	(D)	NA	NA	0.4	NA
Construction	524	6.1	860	8.2	64.1	0.9	1.2
Manufacturing	1,975	23.0	3,064	29.2	55.1	1.3	2.1
Transportation/Public Utilities	539	6.3	694	6.6	28.8	1.1	1.1
Wholesale	641	7.5	719	6.8	12.2	1.3	1.3
Retail	1,910	22.3	2,052	19.5	7.4	1.1	1.0
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	500	5.8	(D)	NA	NA	0.6	NA
Services	2,210	25.8	2,858	27.2	29.3	0.8	0.7
Total Employment of Industries	8,579	100.0	10,511	100.0	22.5	1.0	1.0

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Accounts Data, 1989-1999. (D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.

Basic Employment

There are five areas within the 1999 Clark County economy which can be considered basic employment areas: agriculture, forestry, and fishing; construction; manufacturing; transportation and public utilities; and wholesale trade. These five areas produce more goods and services than the county economy can use. Also, when Location Quotients increase over time, this suggests that the Clark County economy is getting closer to reaching and exceeding local demand. Having basic employment is important because it suggests that if a downturn in the local economy occurs, these sectors will not be strongly affected because they're dependent more on non-local economies. Having strong basic sector employment and industry within the county will strengthen the county's economy as well as the economies of municipalities within the county.

Non-Basic Employment

The two remaining economic divisions, services and retail, are considered non-basic employment sectors. The services sector, which has a 1999 Location Quotient of less than one, suggests that this sector is not meeting local demand for services. On the other hand, the retail industry, which has a Location Quotient equal to 1.0, indicates that local demand is being met and services or goods are not being exported.

Overall, the Clark County economy of 1999 was very strong when compared to the U.S. due to several basic employment industries. A dependence on non-local economic conditions would indicate that a downturn in the national economy could cause declines within the Clark County economy, however a downturn in town, city, or neighboring economies would not cause decline of the Clark County economy. Diversity of the economic base is a very important feature of the Clark County economy which should be maintained for future economic health.

Environmentally Contaminated Sites for Commercial or Industrial Use

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) urge the clean up of environmentally contaminated commercial or industrial sites to utilize the lands for more productive uses. According to the WDNR, Clark County has a variety of sites that are in need of clean up or where clean up is still underway.

According to the WDNR's Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System there are three types of environmentally contaminated sites in Clark County. Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST), Environment Repair Program (ERP) sites, and spills. There are 48 LUST sites, 26 ERP sites, and 105 spill sites within the county. The majority of spill sites are from traffic accidents, however some involve underground leaks or ruptured pipes which have the potential to cause groundwater damage. Identified LUST sites include both public and privately owned locations. ERP sites may offer the greatest potential for future redevelopment since many are larger in size. These sites should be examined in greater detail to evaluate the potential for clean-up and redevelopment.

Industrial Parks

The following table represents the current available sites at business and industrial sites within the county. Water, sewer, and gas are currently available at all sites listed in Table 6-13. There are also a number of industrial and commercial buildings available within the county, for a current listing of available sites the Clark County Economic Development Corporation or West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission should be contacted.



Table 6-13: Business and Industrial Sites, Clark County, 2003

	Total Acres	Available Acres	Min. Parcel Size (acres)	Max. Parcel size (acres)	Zoning Code	Adjacent Acres Available	Distance to Major Hwy.
Abbotsford Industrial Park	51	15	2	12	Light Industrial	80	0.5
Colby Industrial Park	31	17	0.56	2.41	Industrial	Yes	0.5
Curtiss Industrial Park	76	40	No limit	No limit	Industrial	No	Adjacent
Dorchester Industrial Park #1	103.5	36	1	5	Commercial/Industrial	Yes	Adjacent
Dorchester Industrial Park #2	92	18	1	18	Commercial/Industrial	No	Adjacent
Greenwood Industrial Park	40	7	Negotiable	Negotiable	Industrial	No	0.5
Greenwood CECO Development Park	40	36	NA	36	Commercial/Industrial	Yes, 40+	0.5
Loyal Industrial Park	70	45	1	None	Industrial	No	0.5
Neillsville Industrial Park	67	21	1.5	10.5	Industrial	Yes, 30	0.5
Owen Industrial Park	11	10	0.5	None	Industrial	Yes	0.5
Thorp Industrial Park	59	49	2	NA	Industrial	No	0.5
Withee Industrial Park	35	8	1	4	Commercial/Industrial	Yes	0.5

Source: Clark County Economic Development Corporation, 2003.

Note that cost per acre figures are generally negotiable and some sites have incentive programs and financing options.

Map 6-1 displays the location of the industrial parks in Clark County and also indicates those that utilize Tax Incremental Financing (TIF). TIF is a mechanism that can be utilized by cities and villages in Wisconsin to finance development and redevelopment projects. City and village governments may create a tax incremental district (TID) if 50% or more of the proposed district's area is "blighted," in need of rehabilitation or conservation work, or suitable for industrial sites. A tax increment is created as improvements are made and the value of the property increases. This increment is used to pay for the improvements which otherwise may not have occurred. As indicated by Map 6-1, there are 18 TIDs in Clark County.

This page intentionally left blank.

Map 6-1 Tax Increment Districts Clark County

This page intentionally left blank.

6.3 Employment Forecast and Economic Trends

2001-2003 Economic Impacts

During the period from 2001 to 2003 the United States, Wisconsin, Clark County, and local communities experienced an economic slowdown relative to job creation and other economic indicators. Many Americans feel the economic slowdown was attributed to the events of September 11, 2001, while others feel a more global economy is driving jobs outside of the United States. Regardless of the exact reason, Clark County experienced the impacts of this recent economic situation. These impacts can be summarized as follows.

Major Industrial and Business Closures

Fleetguard Nelson Muffler Plant – City of Neillsville

This facility is planning to close at the end of June 2004 resulting in a loss of employment for 280 people. The plant has been located in the Neillsville Industrial Park since the early 1950s. Fleetguard Nelson is one of Clark County's largest private employers and has been a leader in employee wages and benefits. A decision was made to move the facility to Waynesboro, GA. One of the reasons for the move is to be closer to customers who are primarily located in the southeastern U.S. The plant was also one of Fleetguard's oldest facilities. The Nelson East filter plant, also located in Neillsville, will not be affected by the closure. Some employees may find employment at the Fleetguard filter plant or at many of the Fleetguard facilities located in Wisconsin. An Economic Resource Team comprised of 30 members has been assembled by the Clark County Economic Development Corporation to address the impacts of the Fleetguard closure such as employment retraining and site marketing.

IGA Grocery – City of Loyal

The closure of this local grocery store in July of 2003 resulted in a loss of approximately 15 jobs. The facility is currently for sale. While the closure of this store may not have countywide economic significance it was a major economic loss to the local community. There are no other grocery stores located in the community. Local Amish residents used this store to purchase daily supplies. It is unknown at this time if the site will be used for a grocery store in the future.

Saputo Cheese – City of Thorp

Facility closed in winter of 2000, resulting in the loss of approximately 100 jobs.

Foremost Farms – City of Abbotsford

Closed in June of 2003. Loss of 32 jobs. Building is currently for sale.

Although Clark County has experienced the results of the economic slowdown, the county has seen some positive economic occurrences. These include the following.

Abbyland Pork Pack, Inc. – Village of Curtiss

The Village of Curtiss recently received a \$750,000 Community Development Block Grant – Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED) award. The village

will use the grant to upgrade its wastewater treatment facility to assist in the expansion of Abbyland Pork Pack, Inc. This award helps Abbyland expand its facility in Curtiss, create 105 full-time positions, retain 190 existing positions, and leverage up to \$1.1 million in additional investment.

Perrett Windows – Village of Dorchester

The Perrett Windows facility, located in the Dorchester Industrial Park, recently built on to its existing facility. Approximately 20 jobs were also added.

Grassland Dairy – Town of Eaton

Grassland Dairy is taking advantage of the County's designation as being within an Agriculture Development Zone. The Dairy is planning an approximate \$6.4 million expansion. The exact number of created jobs is unknown at this time.

Super 8 Motel – City of Neillsville

An announcement on the construction of a 40-room motel in the City of Neillsville was made in September 2003. The facility will be located along USH 10 on the city's south side. Construction of the motel is to begin next spring, with completion expected within four to six months. The facility will provide employment opportunities for area workers.

The assembly of the Clark County Economic Resource Team is viewed as a positive step in coordinating an economic adjustment and expansion strategy. The following strengths and weaknesses analysis should be utilized as the basis for the strategy to evolve.

Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis

A simple determination of the strengths and weaknesses of Clark County and its economy provides the basic planning steps for future economic development. Strengths should continue to be promoted and new development which fits well with these features should be encouraged. Weaknesses should be improved or further analyzed and new development which displays aspects similar to identified weaknesses should be discouraged. Strengths and weaknesses were developed by analyzing existing trends and examining economic development focus group results.

Economic Strengths of Clark County:

- ◆ Centrally located within the state.
- ◆ Part of Agriculture Development Zone.
- ◆ STH 29 and USH 10 corridors.
- ◆ Agriculture (infrastructure, desire to continue, existing industry).
- ◆ Nine businesses/industrial parks with utilities.
- ◆ Revolving loan fund programs.
- ◆ 12 unique incorporated cities and villages.
- ◆ Excellent schools.
- ◆ Health care center.
- ◆ Railroad availability.



*Highway commercial development-
City of Abbotsford*

- ◆ Diverse employers and economic base.
- ◆ County forest and other natural resources.
- ◆ Technical and financial resources, local, state, and federal.
- ◆ County economic development corporation with a web-site.
- ◆ High quality of life.
- ◆ Lower cost of living.
- ◆ Assembly of a Clark County Economic Resource Team.
- ◆ Creation of the United Communities of Clark County (UCCC) group.
- ◆ Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) Learning Center announcement.

Economic Weaknesses of Clark County:

- ◆ No four year university or technical college campus.
- ◆ No large population or retail center.
- ◆ No county marketing plan, no branding.
- ◆ Under-skilled workforce.
- ◆ Traditionally lower per capita incomes.
- ◆ Independent nature of government and private entities.
- ◆ Declining public school enrollments.
- ◆ Limited industrial space.
- ◆ No STH 29 corridor plan.
- ◆ Traditionally high unemployment rates.
- ◆ Poor condition of STH 73.
- ◆ Lack of affordable housing and a substandard housing stock.
- ◆ No long term economic plans locally or at the county level.
- ◆ Recent industrial closures.

Employment Forecast

An important feature of determining the economic health and future of Clark County and its communities is to determine the amounts and types of jobs currently available as well as make predictions for the future. Clark County, as represented throughout this element, has economic features unique to the county yet similarities to the region in which it is located. It should be noted however that the county not only has ties locally, but statewide and nationwide. Trends that occur in the United States affect the State of Wisconsin and eventually trickle down to the local level economies.



Suttner's Cheese Factory - Town of Mayville

In January of 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (WDWD) released a publication titled *Wisconsin Projections, 1998-2008*. This publication makes economic projections for the state regarding the labor force, industries, and occupations. Many of the forecasts made for the state will most likely occur at the community or at least the county level.

During the next several years, Wisconsin's population is projected to grow slower and older than the nation as a whole, therefore leading to lower participation rates in the workforce. Wisconsin is also having difficulty attracting international immigrants, domestic migrants, and retaining its own citizens. Wisconsin will continue to face challenges of filling job openings. The five industries that are projected to increase in the most jobs from 1998 to 2008 are business services, health services, educational services, social services, and miscellaneous retail stores. The top five occupations in Wisconsin with the greatest expected job openings from 1998 to 2008 are cashiers, retail salespersons, waiters and waitresses, general office clerks, and general manager/top executives. The five fastest growing occupations for the projected period in Wisconsin are desktop publishing specialists, computer support specialists, systems analysts, paralegals and legal assistants, and geologists, geophysicists, and oceanographers.

According to the Clark County Economic Development Director, the Clark County economy and employment base will most likely continue in the same direction they have been heading in the past. Agricultural and food kindred products processing/manufacturing will continue to be a major employment segment. These types of industries, which fit well and thrive in Clark County, will continue to be promoted.

6.4 Economic Development Trends and Outlook

The following trends are anticipated during the planning period within Clark County with regard to economic development:

- ◆ Efforts to attract businesses to occupy vacant facilities will increase.
- ◆ Retaining and attracting a highly skilled or highly educated workforce will continue to affect the economic base.
- ◆ Unemployment rates will continue to be slightly to moderately higher than the state unless the economy is more diversified and less based on seasonal employment.
- ◆ The types of businesses and industry attracted to the county will continue to be agriculturally based or related.
- ◆ Employment centers in Marathon and Wood County will continue to attract a significant number of Clark County commuters.
- ◆ Due to Clark County composition of employment in the agricultural, forestry, and manufacturing sectors, wage rates will continue to track below the state average.
- ◆ Part-time employment will continue to employ a significant amount of the workforce.

6.5 Economic Development Plans and Programs Currently in Use

The following economic programs are available and/or currently utilized in Clark County.

State Programs

USDA, Wisconsin Rural Development Programs

The Wisconsin Rural Development Program has many services that are available to rural communities and their residents. Some programs and services available include: community development programs, business and community programs, rural housing and utilities services, and community facility programs. For more information visit the Wisconsin Rural Development web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/wi/index.html>.

Tax Incremental Financing

TIF is a mechanism that can be utilized by cities and villages in Wisconsin to finance development and redevelopment projects. City and village governments may create a Tax Incremental District (TID) if 50% or more of the proposed district's area is "blighted," in need of rehabilitation or conservation work, or suitable for industrial sites. Once the TID has been created, a tax incremental base value is established for property within the district at the time it was created. The base value includes the equalized value of all taxable property and the value of municipally-owned property, as determined by the Department of Revenue. Generally, the base value remains constant until the project terminates. The tax increment equals the general property taxes levied on the value of the TID in excess of its base value (this is the value increment). For further information on Tax Incremental Financing, the Wisconsin Department of Revenue should be contacted or refer to the Wisconsin Statutes 66.1105.

Regional Programs

West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission conducts economic development and transportation planning and project development. The Commission is designated as an economic development district by the Economic Development Administration. It is required to undertake economic development planning and project identification for all seven counties of the region. Other services include development of local economic development strategies, industrial site analysis, economic development financing assistance and county and community economic profiles.

Agricultural Development Zone

Clark County is an official member of an Agricultural Development Zone. Being within the zone allows tax credits to expanding or relocating businesses within the county. The ADZ was created to assist in the development of regional economies tied to the state's agricultural and food processing industries. The Region includes Clark, Barron, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, and Taylor Counties.

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

A Small Business Development Center is located at UW-Eau Claire and provides services in cooperation with other nearby UW campuses and the county UW-Extension office. The SBDC

offers workshops, free information, advice, and counseling to small business owners and managers in Clark and several neighboring counties. For more information contact the UW-Eau Claire office at (715) 836-5811. Questions can also be sent via e-mail to ASK_SBDC@uwec.edu.

Indianhead Community Action Agency

The Indianhead CAA offers a Job and Business Development Program which provides assistance with business plan development, finance, bookkeeping, marketing, and all other of starting a business.

County Programs

Clark County University of Wisconsin-Extension

The Clark County UW-Extension primarily provides economic development support through agriculture research and education. The Extension provides valuable resources regarding finances and farm and animal management to local farmers within the county. The Extension office is located in Neillsville and can be contacted at (715) 743-5121.

Clark County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC)

The Clark County Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit agency serving Clark County and all municipalities, businesses, organizations, and residents within Clark County. The vision of the organization is to diversify, reinforce, and build the economic base of Clark County. For more information regarding the CCEDC contact the office at (715) 267-3205 or visit the web site at www.clark-cty-wi.org. The following is a list of programs and services offered by the CCEDC:

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)

The CCEDC secured its first grant to begin a Revolving Loan Fund Program in 1992. The second RLF program began in 1998 which the CCEDC administers for Clark County. The programs are intended to provide a financial resource for individuals wanting to start or expand a small business. As the loans are repaid, the principal and a portion of the interest are deposited in an account to be relent to other businesses.

Any person wishing to establish a new business or expand an existing business within Clark County may apply. Loans are subject to availability of funds. Loans are available for the following activities: 1) acquisition of land, buildings, and fixed equipment; 2) working capital and inventory; 3) site preparation and construction, reconstruction, or installation of buildings and fixed equipment; and 4) clearance and demolition, removal or rehabilitation of buildings, and improvements. For further eligibility and requirements contact the CCEDC.

Small Business Assistance

To assist individuals wanting to start or expand a small business, the CCEDC has assembled a small business information packet. It provides helpful suggestions and brochures from other small business resources. On a bi-monthly basis, a small business development counselor schedules appointments at the CCEDC office with individuals seeking more in depth assistance.

Technical Assistance

The corporation provides technical assistance to municipalities and area businesses in a number of different areas. This includes obtaining financing to build an industrial park, establishing a tax incremental financing district, comprehensive land use planning, securing investment capital to expand a business or purchase new equipment, redeveloping main streets, and marketing their community or business.

County Promotion/Tourism

The CCEDC serves as the county's tourism center. It is the only organization within the county that promotes all of Clark County and its many recreational activities, events, and inviting communities. This is done through the publication of a quarterly newsletter, a comprehensive web site, creation and distribution of tourism materials, and a toll free number, 1-888-CLARK-WI.