
Chapter Nine: Economic Development

The economic condition of a community, particularly the composition of its economic base, closely relates to its potential for economic expansion or improvement. This chapter of the *Plan* contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs to promote the retention and stabilization of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in Cottage Grove. This chapter includes an assessment of new businesses and industries that are desired in the Village, an assessment of the Village's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting, retaining, and growing new businesses and industries, and an inventory of contaminated environmental sites.

There are a variety of factors that contribute to the overall economic health of a community, many of which extend far beyond the boundaries of the community. This chapter was prepared with a regional perspective that considers the Village as part of a broader regional economic system.

A. Existing Economic Development Framework

Labor Force

As of 2000, the Village of Cottage Grove had 2,753 persons in its labor force. This labor force is largely employed in what are typically referred to as "white collar" occupations. In 2000, Census data showed that 82 percent of its employees (1,820) worked in professional, technical, or service-related positions. This compares with 83 percent of the labor force in Dane County and 75 percent of the statewide labor force in the same positions. The higher percentage for Dane County can be partially attributed to the presence of Wisconsin's capital and major university.

The critical economic challenges facing the Village, and the planning area as a whole, relate to keeping the cost of living reasonable, while keeping pace with substantial development and the demands it places on community facilities and services. Attention should continue to be given to attempts to retain and diversify the service and employment base of the Village, and to generally focus economic development efforts on small- and mid-sized companies and sites. The Village has had good success with this over the period from 2000—2009. Income statistics in Figure 11.1 from the year 2000 suggested that the Village would benefit from additional good paying jobs, but this is not unique to the Village.

Income Data

Economic characteristics for Cottage Grove generally reflect those for Dane County (see Figure 9.1). The reported median household income (in 1999) in the Village was \$66,628 compared with \$49,223 for the County. This represents a household income in the Village that is 35 percent more than the County average, which is greater than the difference in housing costs. Also, the Village's household income was nearly \$23,000 more than reported for the State average. The 2000 census shows only 3.8 percent of Cottage Grove's population living below the poverty level, compared with 9.4 percent for Dane County and 8.7 percent for the State. This data suggests that residents of the Village are doing quite well overall and in comparison to the County and State.

Figure 9.1: Economic Characteristics (2000)

	Village of Cottage Grove	Town of Cottage Grove	Town of Blooming Grove	Town of Sun Prairie	City of Monona	Dane County	State of Wisconsin
Median HH Income	\$66,628	\$71,007	\$56,328	\$60,938	\$48,034	\$49,223	\$43,791
Per Capita Income	\$25,777	\$26,602	\$24,263	\$24,954	\$26,072	\$24,985	\$21,271
% Individuals Below Poverty Level	3.8	2.4	2.9	1.5	5.7	9.4	8.7

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2000

Commuting Patterns

Cottage Grove is located about 15 minutes from downtown Madison; home of the State Capitol, University of Wisconsin—Madison, and several other large employment hubs in the metro area. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, Cottage Grove residents spent an average of 21 minutes commuting to work, indicating that a significant number of workers traveled outside of the Village for employment. Most commuting is likely to the Madison Metro area or Sun Prairie. Given its convenient location on Interstate 94, the Village is roughly 60 minutes to Milwaukee and 40 minutes to Waukesha. Roughly 4 percent of workers working outside of the home traveled over 45 minutes to their jobs, while nearly 8 percent traveled less than ten minutes to work. About 89 percent of workers drove to work alone, 9 percent carpooled, and 2 percent took public transportation or walked to work.

Economic Base Analysis

As discussed in the previous section, many residents commute outside of Cottage Grove for employment. However, the Village has an existing and growing base of employment for residents, as well as workers who reside outside of the Village who commute into Cottage Grove for work. Top employers within the Village of Cottage Grove include the following listed in Figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2: Economic Characteristics (2009)

Rank		Rank	Employer Name
1	Monona Grove Public School	14	Natural Resources Consulting
2	A.T.C.	15	Integrated Security Solutions, Inc.
3	Hydrite Chemical Company	16	Door Creek Pharmacy
4	Landmark Services Cooperative	17	Arby's
5	R.G. Huston Co. Inc.	18	Paul Davis Restoration of Lakeland
6	J.K. Hackl Transportation Services	19	Ingersoll Rand Climate Control Hold
7	The Men LLC	20	S & L Underground Trucking Inc.
8	Piggly Wiggly	21	America's Best Flowers
9	Matrix Fitness Systems Corp	22	Door Creek Golf Course
10	McDonald's	23	DLW LLC
11	Badger Inventory Service Inc.	24	Learning Ladder Preschool/Childcare
12	Village of Cottage Grove	25	Jim Halverson, LLC
13	Johnson Health Tech NA LLC		

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Cottage Grove Economic Development Infrastructure

Among the Village's local community assets are its easy access to I-94 and placement between the State's largest metropolitan areas, Madison and Milwaukee. This access has sprouted the recent Cottage Grove Commerce Park at the north end of the Village just south of the I-94 and CTH N interchange. This growing business park is currently home to Johnson Health Tech, PFS Corporation, Natural Resources Consulting, supporting commercial and service centers, and Kids Safari daycare. The Cottage Grove Business Park, located at the southern end of the Village, runs parallel to the C & NW Railroad.



Environmentally Contaminated Sites and Brownfield Redevelopment Opportunities

New state statutes require a comprehensive plan to evaluate and promote environmentally contaminated sites for commercial and industrial uses in the community. The WisDNR, through its Environmental Remediation and Redevelopment Program, maintains a list of contaminated sites, or brownfields, in the state. WisDNR defines brownfields as “abandoned or under-utilized commercial or industrial properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination.” Examples of brownfields can be anything from a large abandoned industrial site to a small corner gas station. Properties listed in the WisDNR database are self-reported, and do not represent a comprehensive listing of possible brownfields in a community. Other state and federal databases may provide more comprehensive lists for the Village.

According to the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS), as of February 2009 there were seven contaminated sites in the Village of Cottage Grove that were either in need of clean up or where clean up was already underway. Of the seven incidents shown, two are classified as LUSTs, or leaking underground storage tanks. These tanks are, or were, known to be contaminating the soil and/or groundwater with petroleum. Five sites in the Village are classified as environmental report (ERP). These sites are often times older and have been releasing contaminants to the soil, groundwater, or air over a long period or time. The ERP locations are typical brownfield sites. Many of the properties on the BRRTS list will need special attention for successful redevelopment to occur.

The locations of these environmentally contaminated sites were considered when making the land use recommendations in this *Plan*. The Village encourages remediation and redevelopment of these sites for economic development where appropriate.

B. Local Economic Development Organizations and Programs

In addition to the Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Corporation, the Village promotes business retention and economic development in the community through the following programs:

- **Tax Incremental Financing Districts:** The Village uses Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts to create incentives for industrial development. TIF provides for up-front public expenditures for land and infrastructure for industrial development. The resulting development pays for such initial expenditures over time through dedicated property tax revenues. At the time this *Plan* was updated in 2009, the Village operated three TIF districts: TID 5 in the Commerce Park business park area, TID 6 in the Village's planned downtown area, and TID 7 on the south side of the Village.