

Economic Development

Major Finding

- ❑ The incomes of village residents and the value of homes are generally higher than surrounding communities, the county, and state. This is an indication that residents have money to spend, but the lack of a local business community has been unable to tap into that income.

Recommendation

- ❑ A number of small businesses now operate in the village. Those businesses should be encouraged to expand or remodel locally, and the Village should consider doing whatever is necessary to make expansion possible.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal #1

- ❑ Develop a marketing campaign that identifies the advantages of doing business in St. Cloud.

Objectives

1. Form a citizen's committee that is charged with putting together an attractive brochure that highlights the positive aspects of establishing a business in St. Cloud.
2. In marketing materials, emphasize the favorable income levels and housing values of village residents.
3. Work with local developers to market vacant lots that are on the market in appropriate locations shown on the Land Use Plan.
4. Establish a Village website as a marketing tool, and make it available to local businesses through the sale of links. There should be a link on the County site to this Village site.

Goal #2

- ❑ Strive to diversify, support, and attract businesses to St. Cloud, especially to the downtown.

Objectives

1. Focus attention on downtown renovation, redevelopment, and the location of building space for "incubator" activities where entrepreneurs could develop businesses.
2. Work with local lending institutions to make available reasonable loans to entrepreneurs who desire to start a new business.
3. Investigate working with the Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation to recruit desired businesses to the downtown area.
4. Meet with local businesses on a periodic basis to acknowledge their importance to the community, and determine if there is anything the community could do to meet their needs from a public service standpoint, or to find a site within the community for them to expand.

5. Review existing Village ordinances and standards to determine if changes are needed to support the economic development goals and objectives in this plan.
6. Work with the building owners to improve the appearance of the downtown area.

Goal #3

- ❑ Consider establishing a hiking/biking/snowmobile trail on the abandoned railroad grade.

Objectives

1. Actively seek federal, state, and county funding to obtain and establish the trail.
2. Promote the development of businesses specifically geared toward users of the trail.
3. Develop signage that directs bikers to off-trail businesses in the downtown area.
4. Design and build a kiosk next to the trail that identifies community events and businesses in the downtown area.

Policies

1. The Village will work with developers to identify funding and expedite the approval processes.
2. The Village will make an effort to understand and pursue financial aid that the Village could obtain from state and federal sources.

Background Information

Analysis of Economic Base

- ❑ The predominant employment base in the village is the service industry.
- ❑ Other than this group of employers, the village has a number of smaller businesses, some employing local people. There are some businesses that are family owned and operate as a home occupation.
- ❑ Table 10 on the following page lists business and industrial companies, their address, and their product or service.

**Table 10
Village of St. Cloud Major Employers**

Employer	Street	Product/Service
Feldner Chevrolet	1201 Main St	Vehicle sales and service
Hometown Bank	1200 Main St.	Banking services
D. R. Kohlman, Inc.	1117 Church St.	Heating, ventilating, air conditioning
St. Cloud School (CPES)	920 Main St	Parochial education
Idlewile Inn	1306 Main St.	Food and drink
Cabaret Supper Club	1401 Main St.	Food and drink, rental hall
Fat Boy Bar and Grill	1025 Main St	Food and drink
Salchert's Meat Market	1305 Main St.	Meat sales

Employer	Street	Product/Service
Butz Mart	1313 Main St.	Gasoline and convenience store
Shear Sensations	1402 Main St.	Beauty Parlor
Feldner Construction	132 Clark St.	Construction
Steffes Builders	810 Church St.	Construction
Sippel Funeral Home	1311 Thorp St.	Funerals

<http://www.manta.com/>, Martenson & Eisele, Inc, and Village of St. Cloud

Types of New Businesses Desired

Village of St. Cloud

- ❑ There has been an expression that the businesses most desired would be those that provide essentials (limiting need for expensive trips for only a few items).

Ability to Retain and Attract Business

Location

- ❑ Average income in the village is generally higher than in surrounding communities, the county, and state. This is an indication that residents have money to spend, but the lack of local business has meant that the community has been unable to tap into that income. The Village should consider conducting a survey among the residents to determine what types of businesses or professional services they would like to see in the village, and whether they would support such businesses or professional services if they did come.
- ❑ 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. St. Cloud is between the “spheres of influence” of Fond du Lac and Sheboygan, and is surrounded by farming area.
- ❑ Subdivision development over the past twenty years has been fairly modest. New commercial development has not often occurred in the village, mainly because there are no major highways that carry large amounts of traffic, and the population base is just not large enough to justify investment.

Infrastructure

- ❑ Generally speaking, St. Cloud’s existing road network is in good condition.
- ❑ The village has an adequate public sewer and water system for additional business and industrial uses. The sanitary sewer system, in particular, is less subject to infiltration of storm-water than in most other communities, so the system retains more capacity for growth.

Regulatory Issues

- ❑ Zoning and building codes help to ensure that the health, safety, and welfare of the community are protected and maintained. Currently, the Village is not aware of any regulatory issues negatively affecting businesses.

Sites for New or Expanding Businesses

- ❑ The Village of St. Cloud has not actively promoted business development. Commercial or industrial development has occurred based on supply and demand.

- ❑ The Land Use Plan is showing future industrial areas on the northeast side of the village to encourage the location of expanding or new companies.

Financial Programs

- ❑ There are a number of financial programs that may be available for those who want to start up a business in St. Cloud, and to businesses interested in building in, expanding, or relocating to the village. These programs are described below.

Use of Brownfield Sites

- ❑ St. Cloud has sites that could become brownfields. See the following link for more information on potential contamination sites.
<http://dnrm.wisconsin.gov/imf/imf.jsp?site=brts2>
- ❑ The Wisconsin Department of Commerce 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.”
- ❑ If more information is desired concerning the Wisconsin’s Brownfield’s program, see: www.commerce.state.wi.us/CD/CD-bfi.html

County, Regional, and State Programs

County Programs

Fond du Lac County Economic Corporation

- ❑ The Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation is a county-wide private/public partnership whose mission is to improve the economic well being of the businesses, communities, and residents of the county. The Fond du Lac County Economic Corporation provides community services that include consultation, community preparedness, attraction assistance and education to encourage new businesses to locate in communities that are members of the corporation.
- ❑ The Village of St. Cloud is not currently an “investor” (member) in the Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation. Anyone can contact this organization by going to the organization’s web page, which is <http://www.fcedc.com/about.html>. The internet link provides member communities with information on:
 - **Economic Development Assistance and Training:** From establishing community goals to developing inventory of community services/infrastructure.
 - **Economic Strategic Planning:** Assistance in establishing a vision and goal setting as well as following a process. Assistance in putting the community in a competitive position.
 - **Marketing Assistance:** Assistance in developing or implementing a marketing plan to attract business. Assistance in the design and administration of business assistance and incentive programs.
 - **Assessing Economic Impact:** Determine how a project will affect the municipal budget or how it will improve the infrastructure without increasing taxes or utility rates.
 - **Development Finance:** Information about grants for infrastructure, local revolving loan funds, and the pros and cons of tax increment financing.

The approximate annual expense for the Village of participating in this program would be \$800. This is something that should be actively considered.

State Programs

Wisconsin Department of Commerce

- ❑ The Wisconsin Department of Commerce offers a number of programs in support of economic development. Programs provide direct assistance to a business, fund business through the local community, or provide direct assistance to a community. Information on these programs is available at www.commerce.state.wi.us/MT
- ❑ 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.

Wisconsin Small Business Development Center

- ❑ 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. The nearest SBDC office is located at UW-Oshkosh in the Center for Community Partnerships. Information on the programs and services offered by the SBDC may be found at: www.wisconsinsbdc.org.

Regional Programs

New North

- ❑ 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/>

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

- ❑ The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) covering the ten counties in its region. The most recent update was completed in 2006.
- ❑ More information on the CEDS is available at <http://www.eastcentralrpc.org/>