

Introduction

The purpose of the Economic Development Chapter is to evaluate current economic conditions, develop a plan for future economic growth, and identify the tools and programs necessary to achieve desired goals. Based on resident comments received during the development of this plan (please refer to SWOT and Vision results in *Chapter 2: Issues & Opportunities*) economic development is a priority for the Town. Although some participants viewed large-scale residential and commercial development as potential threats to the rural character of the community, many felt that the plan must address opportunities for local employment and industry.

According to Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, the purpose of the Economic Development Chapter is to promote the stabilization, retention and expansion of the economic base, and quality employment opportunities. This chapter includes:

- Highlights of the labor force information from *Chapter 3: Community Profile*;
- An assessment of strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining business and industry;
- A list of organizations (and contact information) providing economic development programs at the county, regional, state and federal levels.

Economic Development Vision

In 2030, Bradford remains a rural, agricultural community that supports limited local businesses catering to residents and tourists. The Town relies primarily on agricultural lands to support its tax base. Commercial development, clustered in and around Avalon and Emerald Grove occurs in harmony with the Township's natural environment. Nearby cities, including Beloit, Delavan, and Janesville provide many of the employment, shopping, and entertainment opportunities for Bradford residents.

Of the 14 state comprehensive planning goals, those listed below relate specifically to planning for economic development in Bradford:

- Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
- Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.

Labor Force and Economic Base

Chapter 3: *Community Profile* Chapter provided a detailed analysis of Bradford's and Rock County's economy and labor force. Highlights from that chapter include:

- Local workers are mobile. Residents take advantage of convenient access to USH 14/STH 11 I-43 to commute to nearby employment centers.
- Income. Median household income in the Township has grown since the last Census.
- Occupational Types. While the Town of Bradford has a very diverse working population including professionals, sales people, construction workers and farmers, the Census reveals that the most popular occupations are in the manufacturing, education, agricultural, and retail trade sectors.

Current Business Inventory and Business Environment

The current inventory of businesses and commercial operations in Bradford is small and focused primarily on local and tourist-based services. To understand the business environment of a community, it is helpful to classify the local economy. In small towns there are generally five types of economies¹:

1. **Resource-Based Economy.** This type of economy is characterized by geographic isolation, as they are typically far away from larger cities / metro areas and have limited interstate access. These communities often have an aging population base and lack of opportunities for higher education and local employment.
2. **Industrial Economy.** This type of economy is characterized by dependence on yesterday's economic base. Often a community of this type has a single manufacturing or industrial operation that sustains the vast majority of residents.
3. **Metropolitanizing Economy.** These communities are experiencing a high amount of residential development which causes concern about decreasing land supplies, loss of community identity, maintaining small town character, and avoiding becoming a "bedroom community."
4. **Dependent Economy.** Usually an unincorporated area (i.e. township) outside of the suburban ring of development. The economic vitality of this community depends on the economic success of the larger adjacent/nearby community (i.e. La Crosse, Prairie du Chien). The primary challenge is handling local residential development pressure.
5. **Lifestyle Economy.** These communities include university towns, small communities with military bases, and tourist destinations. Residents enjoy their small community setting and

¹ Randall Gross, Embracing Change in Small Communities, APA National Conference, March 2005.

quality of living, but are concerned about their long-term dependency on a single economic source. In the case of Bradford, participants expressed concern about residential development in the form of second homes and time-shares for people who reside outside of the community.

Unlike many of Wisconsin's rural communities, the Town of Bradford does not fit neatly into one of the aforementioned categories. It has aspects of both *resource-based* and *dependent* economies. It is likely that, over the long-term, Bradford will transition to more of a dependent economy.

Costs and Benefits of Economic Development

The primary goal of the town of Bradford is to preserve agriculture as the dominant land use well into the future. Although the community is unlikely to aggressively seek economic development, Bradford has several positive attributes desirable to potential businesses:

- A location that has traffic flowing through it from north, south, and east centrally located between a number of larger urban areas.
- Properties with highway frontage on USH 14/STH 11.
- An attractive and safe community atmosphere that provides for a high quality of living.
- Quality school districts serving the area.
- Reasonable tax rates.
- Low crime rate.
- Good air and water quality.
- Access to recreational areas, open space, and water.

While the Town of Bradford enjoys the advantages identified above, there are several challenges that must be addressed should the community decide to attract new business and industry, including:

- Residents can easily drive to nearby cities to purchase services and products.
- Similarly, many residents travel outside of the Town to work and find shopping, dining and entertainment choices.
- Competition from nearby development centers limits the market area for businesses in Bradford.
- Limited police and fire protection.
- Opposition to development from Town residents who perceive business uses as a threat to the Town's rural character and quality of living.
- No water and sewer.

Local Economic Development Desires

Each community has a different vision for future economic development. Bradford, like many rural townships, has emphasized the preservation of its agricultural land base and natural

environment. The Town does not desire an expansion of the current business inventory. New businesses, when they develop, shall be focused upon servicing local resident needs and providing support for agricultural operations.

The Town of Bradford Smart Growth Community Survey asked residents to describe current job opportunities in the community:

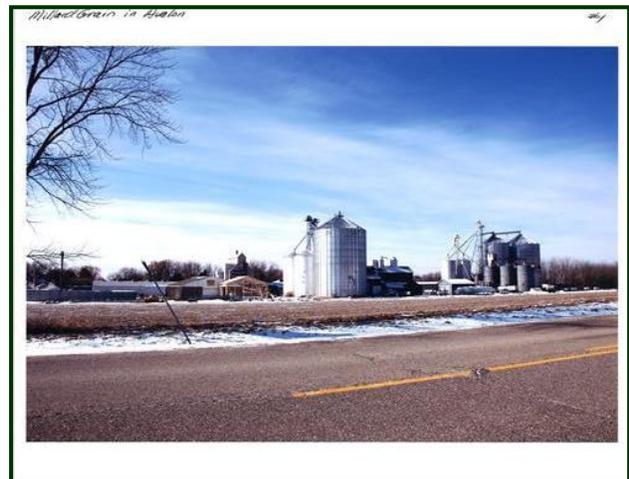
- 19% say Bradford faces serious job shortages.
- 18% say Bradford faces minor job shortages.
- 12% felt Bradford has a good supply of job opportunities.
- 51% had no opinion.

Economic Development Opportunities

This section highlights some of the economic development opportunities available and desirable to Bradford. Supporting goals, objectives and policies are provided at the end of the chapter to help Bradford capitalize on its most desired economic opportunities.

AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A depressed farm economy in Wisconsin and growing pressure from nonfarm development has led to increasing conflicts over the use of agricultural lands. Central to this conflict is the demand for rural housing and recreational land, which has resulted in accelerated rates of farmland conversion to nonfarm uses. In fact, nonfarm growth pressures led to Wisconsin passing the Comprehensive Planning Law in 1999 to encourage communities to write and use comprehensive plans to guide land use decisions. Bradford, unlike many rural Towns in Wisconsin, has a vibrant agricultural community with an ample supply of young, progressive, and innovative farmers. Competition by local farmers for rentable agricultural land is strong.



STRATEGIES TO PRESERVE AGRICULTURE

The *Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources* chapter highlighted several strategies for sustaining agriculture in the Town over the next 20 years and beyond. Given the importance of agriculture to the local economy, this section offers some additional opportunities available to local farmers.

- Sell products directly to customers at a centralized farmer's market. Possible locations for a new farmers market within Bradford are identified on the Future Land Use Map later in this plan.
- Develop a historical and/or niche farm tour to showcase local farm operations and farm products.

- Consider conversion to organic farming for farmers struggling to compete. Strong organic and specialty farm markets are proving very profitable. Since 1990, the organic food industry has grown 20% or more each year and now constitutes an almost \$8 billion industry. An opportunity exists to capitalize on this growing market.

AGRICULTURE / NATURE RELATED TOURISM

Two potential agricultural tourist markets exist in Bradford:

- Eco-Tourism. The Town's rural location and proximity to Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago provide opportunities to bring nature enthusiasts to the area that could spend money in the community at local restaurants, the farmers market, and other businesses. (Please refer to *Chapter 5: Transportation* for more information on bike / trail route opportunities in Bradford.)
- Agri-Tourism. Opportunities exist to offer tourist activities related to area agriculture, including: farmer-for-a-day experiences, rural bed & breakfasts, roadside stands, horse boarding and trail riding, pick-your-own produce operations, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, etc.

Locations for New Business Development

As has been discussed throughout this plan, the Town of Bradford does not seek an increase in economic development within the community. However, new businesses catering to local resident needs and supporting existing farming operations are desirable. The Future Land Use map will identify areas near Avalon and Emerald Grove suited for future economic development.

Economic Development Tools, Programs, and Partners

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP)

Through a Capital Improvements Program (CIP), communities are able to responsibly plan for future improvements. As is recommended in *Chapter 6: Utilities and Community Facilities*, Bradford should consider developing a CIP to help plan for community improvements that can support existing local businesses and desirable new business opportunities. A CIP may be used to plan for road maintenance, vehicles, parks and recreation facilities, and Town facility improvements, among others

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) allows communities to undertake a public project to stimulate beneficial development or redevelopment that would not otherwise occur. It is a mechanism for financing local economic development projects in underdeveloped and blighted areas. Taxes generated by the increased property values pay for land acquisition or needed public works.

Until recently, TIF has been an economic development tool available exclusively to cities and villages. However, the Wisconsin Law was changed to allow Towns to establish TIF districts to promote agricultural and forestry development. Towns are more restricted than cities and villages in the range of activities that may receive TIF benefit. The list of eligible activities for a Town TIF district includes²:

- Agriculture - animal and crop production and direct support activities.
- Tourism - camps, RV parks, campgrounds, dairy product stores and public golf courses.
- Forestry - including logging and direct support activities.
- Manufacturing - defined as animal slaughtering and processing, wood product manufacturing, paper manufacturing, or ethyl alcohol manufacturing.
- Residential development - limited to sleeping quarters within a TIF district for employees who work for employers engaged in an eligible TIF project (cannot include hotels, motels or traditional homes).
- Retail development - Related to the sale of products as a result of allowed agriculture, forestry or manufacturing activities.

The boundary of a TIF may be amended one time. A TIF district could potentially be used in Bradford to support the establishment of a regional farmers market, parks and trails associated with the Rock Prairie, and other opportunities. A Town TIF district can remain in existence until the earliest of the following:

- The Town has received aggregate incomes equal to the total project costs;
- 11 years after the last expenditure in the original plan is made;
- The Town Board dissolves the district by resolution (the Town is then liable for all costs); or,
- The Secretary of Revenue determines the tax increments have been used to pay ineligible costs.

How Does a TIF Work?

1. The community defines a TIF district area.
2. Tax assessments for the district are frozen at their current value.
3. The community prepares a plan for the TIF district called a "project plan" to describe costs to be incurred and the anticipated tax revenue to make up for the cost overtime.
4. The community, through its tax-increment finance authority, can acquire land and make capital improvements in the district (i.e. streets, lighting, landscaping, etc.) to make it more desirable to developers.
5. When development occurs, the value of the land in the district increases. This increased value is taxed, but for a period of time while the TIF district is in effect, the additional tax revenues go to the TIF.
6. This additional tax revenue is used to pay off the expenses incurred by the community in land acquisition and installation of capital improvements.

More information about establishing a TIF is available in Wis. Stats. Ch. 66.1105(5)(g).

² At least 75 percent of the area of a TIF in a Town must be used for one of the allowable activities.

STATE AGENCIES/PROGRAMS

- Wisconsin Department of Commerce – www.commerce.state.wi.us: This department is the state’s primary agency for delivery of integrated services to businesses.
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation – www.dot.state.wi.us: The Office of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Programs encourages firms owned by disadvantaged individuals to participate in all federal and state transportation facility contracts.
- Forward Wisconsin – www.forwardwi.com: Forward Wisconsin markets outside Wisconsin to attract new businesses, jobs, and increase state economic activity.
- Department of Workforce Development – www.dwd.state.wi.us: This department builds and strengthens Wisconsin’s workforce by providing job services, training and employment assistance, and helping employers find necessary workers.
- Wisconsin Small Business Development Centers – www.uwex.edu/sbdc: These centers help ensure the state’s economic health and stability. They offer formative business education, counseling, and technology training.
- Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program - <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/admission/requirements/freshman/wisyouthprog.asp>: helps businesses prepare future workers and are an integral part of the State Department of Workforce Development's workforce training strategy. Youth apprenticeship is a rigorous two-year elective program for high school juniors and seniors that combine academic and technical classroom instruction and on-the-job training from mentors.
- Dairy 2020 Initiative is a state, business, and education partnership that works to enhance the competitive edge of the Wisconsin dairy industry.
- Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation - www.wwbic.com: This statewide economic development organization offers quality business workshops and trainings, one-on-one business assistance, business incubation programs, a variety of micro loan programs and individual development accounts.

RURAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY GRANTS³

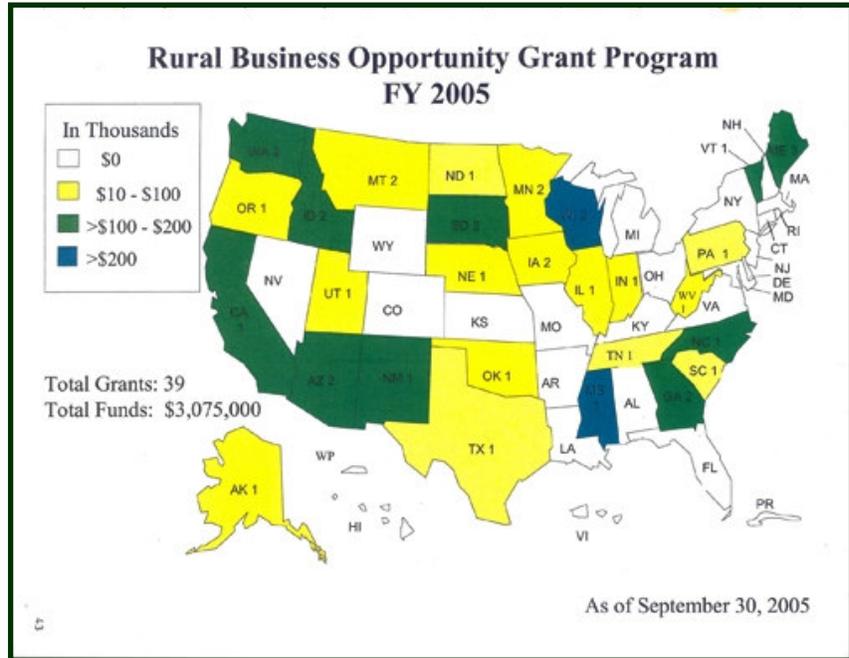
The Rural Business Grants program has made available \$1.5 million to help promote sustainable economic development in rural communities. The average grant size is expected to be no more than \$50,000. The grants make available money for economic planning, technical assistance for rural businesses, or training for rural entrepreneurs or economic development officials.

Eligible applicants include public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Indian tribes, or cooperatives with members that are primarily rural residents. Applicants must also possess “significant expertise” in the proposed activities as well as financial strength that will ensure the objectives of the proposed grant will be completed. The grant money must result in economic development of a rural area (any area other than a city or town with a population of greater than 50,000 and the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such a cities or towns). The project must include a method for determining the success/failure of the project and assessing its impact.

³ SOURCE: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 2006 at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbog.htm>

FEDERAL AGENCIES/PROGRAMS

- Department of Agriculture Rural Development Administration – www.rurdev.usda.gov
- US Small Business Administration – www.sba.gov: provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run and grow their businesses.
- US Department of Commerce – www.doc.gov
- US Department of Transportation – www.dot.gov



Economic Development Issues & Concerns

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To some, residential development is a growing source of taxable income. However, housing requires more services (and costs) than commercial and industrial development and far more than agricultural and open space uses. As a result, residential development is not an effective, long-term strategy to increase the local tax base.

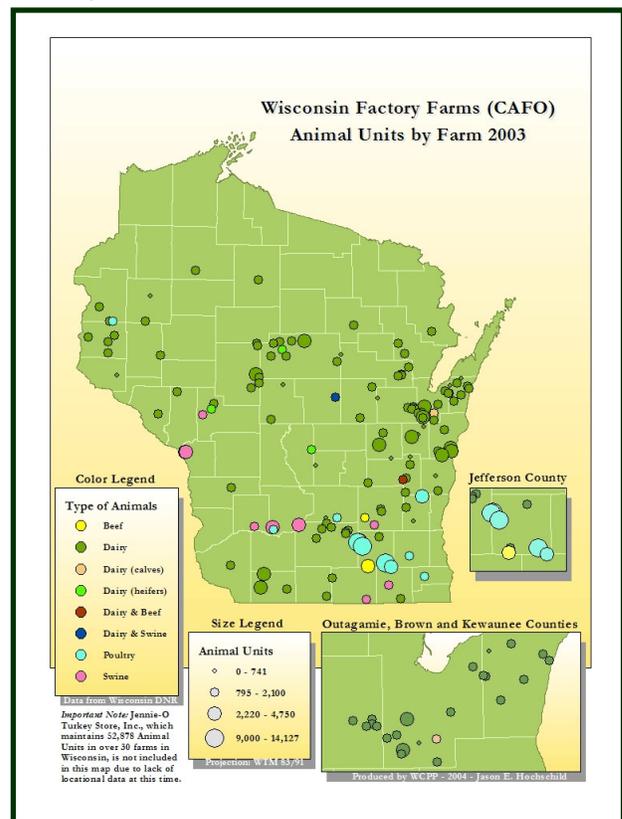
A number of community studies have been completed across the country that compare tax revenue generated by different land uses (i.e. commercial, industrial, single-family residential, multi-family residential, etc.) to the services they require. These assessments, known as *Cost of Community Services* (COCS) studies, have demonstrated that single-family residential development routinely increases public costs by a larger amount than it increases tax revenue. In contrast, commercial and industrial developments have a more positive balance relative to tax dollars paid and dollars expended on services; and, agricultural lands and open space fare even better.

Cost of Community Services in the Town of Dunn, Dane County

The premier example of such a study in Wisconsin was completed by the Town of Dunn, Dane County in 1994. Many subsequent studies have relied on the Town of Dunn as a model in their efforts⁴. The Dunn study revealed that for every \$1 in tax revenue collected by the Town, \$1.06 was required in local services. The ratios for commercial and industrial uses were far more favorable (i.e. for every \$1 in tax revenues collected significantly less than \$1 of service costs were required). The tax ratio was most favorable for farmland and natural areas that required generally around \$0.15 in services for each \$1 in taxes collected. As a result of this study, the Town of Dunn estimates that residential development costs taxpayers \$1,060 in services for every \$1,000 paid in property taxes. Farm and parkland only cost \$180 to service for the same \$1,000 in taxes paid.

Bradford supports the idea that new residential development, when it occurs, should pay a fair and proportionate share of its service costs and complete necessary studies to adequately gauge their impact on traffic and schools. To achieve this, impact fees (in accordance with Act 477⁵) can be used to require that new development pay a fair and equitable share of road improvement and park costs, among others. If new development stops or slows significantly, revenue generated from impact fees will decrease or disappear.

To make informed land use decisions, the Town must consider the full costs and benefits of new development. Just as an Environmental Impact Statement allows for an understanding of the effects of building projects on environmental resources, Property Tax Impact Statements help decision-makers to assess the full costs and benefits of new development. Property Tax



Source: CAFOs in Wisconsin and Risks to Human Health and the Environment, Midwest Environmental Advocates, 2004.

⁴ Additional Information about the Town of Dunn Community Services Study is available on-line at www.town.dunn.wi.us.

⁵ Passed May 30, 2006, Act 477 updates impact fee legislation. Counties can no longer collect impact fees, and municipalities can no longer use them for “other transportation uses” (allows roads, not the purchase of vehicles) or “other recreational uses” (allows money for parks, playgrounds, and land for athletic fields, not for improvements of these fields). Fees are to be collected from the builder or property owner within 14 days of the issuance of the building or occupancy permit, must be placed in separate accounts, and must be spent within 7 years or refunded.

Impact Statement estimate the additional costs of providing and servicing schools, roads, fire, police, water, sewer and other public services that will be required for each new development. With a Property Tax Impact Statement decision-makers will know up-front what the Town will be paying for and will be able to decide if a development is beneficial or detrimental to Bradford from a financial standpoint. These statements may be prepared by a developer, or the Town could possibly contract with an independent analyst, the cost of which would be paid by the developer.

CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS (CAFOs)

In order for a CAFO to be approved, it must be in accordance with State regulations (refer to *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources* for more information regarding ATCP 51).

RESPECTING RURAL CHARACTER

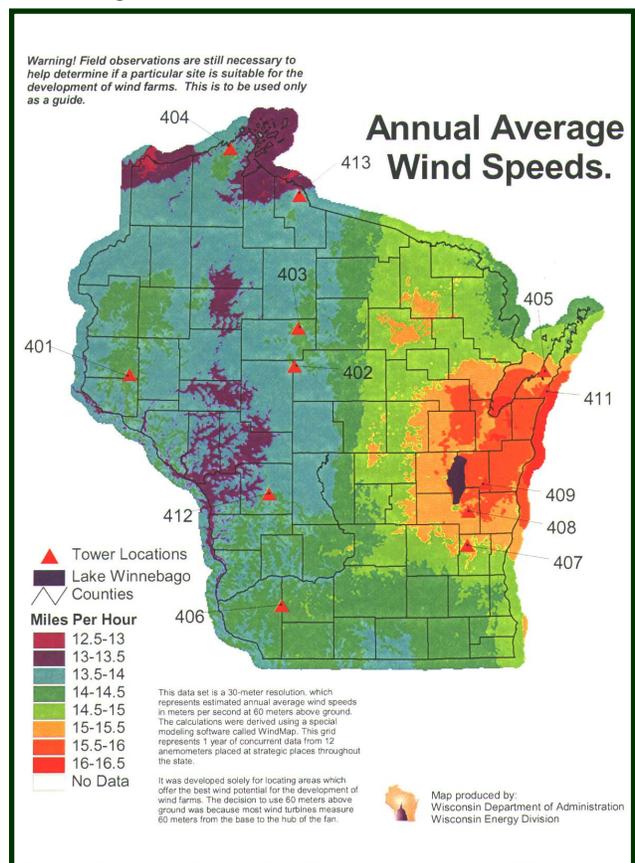
The visions in preceding chapters highlighted the need to preserve natural features, maintain farmland, and continue to offer a quality rural living environment. Accordingly, it is important that economic development respect these visions by being of a complimentary scale. Intensive industry (with potential pollution concerns) and large commercial establishments (i.e. big box stores, strip malls, etc.) are not consistent with this image.

While a limited number of new businesses may be established in Bradford, they must be appropriately located to minimize potential conflicts with residential areas. Furthermore, new business development must exist in harmony with the rural setting. To further protect the rural landscape from development, the Town may want to coordinate with Rock County to consider opportunities for purchase and transfer of development rights programs. These types of programs are discussed in detail in *Chapter 7: Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources*.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENERGY PRODUCTION

As the illustration at right shows, the Town of Bradford experiences sustained winds significant enough to support wind energy production. This situation provides the potential for wind turbines in the Town.

The siting of a wind turbine provides a



landowner direct economic gains. For this reason, wind towers can be particularly enticing to landowners who can benefit from the financial return and still continue to farm the land surrounding the turbine without the conflicts that arise when farmland is sold for residential uses (i.e. complaints about farm noise, odors, hours of operation, etc.). Moreover, having available local sustainable energy supplies is a positive economic factor that may influence some businesses to locate in the region.

Wind farms are not without their concerns, including: noise, visual impact, impacts on wildlife, and economic effects on land values for properties surrounding turbines or properties with views of turbines. For wind turbines to be effectively located in Bradford, areas should be selected that are agricultural in character with limited nearby residential development. Please refer to *Chapter 6: Utilities & Community Facilities* for additional information on wind-generated power.

Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Chapters

FUTURE LAND USE CHAPTER

Any new business development must be located in areas that the market will support. At the same time, new development should not create a nuisance for neighboring properties or natural resources. These criteria were carefully considered during the development of the Future Land Use Map.

TRANSPORTATION CHAPTER

Any new business development Bradford should be done in coordination with Rock County and WisDOT in order to ensure that traffic is appropriately planned and sited to minimize its impact on adjacent roadways. This may require periodic traffic studies to assess the affect of proposed developments. Pedestrian and bicycle access must also be considered.

HOUSING CHAPTER

Economic development in Bradford can bring visitors to the Town who may decide its rural, scenic, country-setting is an ideal location to live. Successful business development can also result in jobs that bring people to the community looking for places to live near their place of employment. Accordingly, areas for housing development, consistent with state growth projections, are provided on the Future Land Use Map.

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

To support economic development, infrastructure (sanitary service, transportation, electricity, communication, etc.) must be available to meet the needs of businesses. The *Utilities and Community Facilities* chapter discusses Bradford's existing and planned infrastructure to serve the needs of the community, including economic interests.

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The goals, objectives, and policies related to economic development in the Town of Bradford can be found in *Chapter 12: Implementation*.