

## **6.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

This element identifies the economic characteristics and trends in the Town of West Point. The intent of this element is to identify opportunities as well as deficiencies in the Town's economic base in an effort to promote the stabilization, retention, and expansion of the Town's economy. The Town's economy, the manner in which residents support themselves and the services provided to residents, are critical to future development. Without a viable and competitive economy, residents will relocate to better circumstances in other locations. Assessing the current economy and setting direction for change are an important part of the planning process.

### **6.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION**

- ◆ The economic prosperity of the Town of West Point will continue to be reliant on its agricultural base, small tourism businesses, and outside income from residents, generated by employment in surrounding communities, investments and transfer of payments.

### **6.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

#### **Goal 1: Support the town's agricultural economy.**

- Objective 1:* Encourage the retention of prime farmland and family farms for viable agricultural use.
- Objective 2:* Implement land use policy and guidelines to prevent conflicts between farm and non-farm residents.
- Objective 3:* Support dairy/livestock operations that do not exceed the carrying capacity of the land.
- Objective 4:* Support grain operations that implement best management practices to protect surface and ground water quality.
- Objective 5:* Support agri-tourism as a viable part of an agricultural community.
- Objective 6:* Support value-added agricultural initiatives.
- Objective 7:* Work with surrounding municipalities to ensure agriculture-related commerce and industry continues to locate, grow, and remain viable there.

#### **Policies and Proposed Programs:**

- a) Discourage the rezoning of agricultural land to commercial and residential uses.
- b) Retain property assessments of farmland consistent with their intended use so long as the owner has no future interest in development (i.e. ownership by realtor groups).
- c) Encourage participation in farmland preservation programs.
- d) Encourage participation in the Managed Forest program.
- e) Discourage isolated commercial and industrial uses and conditional use permits in agricultural areas.
- f) Petition the county create agri-tourism zoning in the county.
- g) Support other forms of agriculture, such as truck farming, horticulture, community-supported agriculture and organic farming.
- h) Consider ways to promote agriculture in the town.
- i) Consider working with Villages of Prairie du Sac, Sauk City and City of Lodi to locate agriculture-related industry in their industrial parks.

- j) Support the use of a variety of funding sources to protect farmland from development such as purchase or transfer of development right programs and conservation easements.
- k) Develop land division policies that support the preservation of farmland.

**Goal 2: Support the town’s recreational and tourism industry.**

- Objective 1:* Explore options to sustain and possibly increase tourism and recreation businesses in the Town provided that these businesses don’t negatively impact the rural character of the Town, nor harm the Town’s outstanding natural resources.
- Objective 2:* Protect the scenic beauty, natural features, aquatic and wildlife habitat, to ensure that West Point will continue to be a desirable place to recreate and live.
- Objective 3:* Coordinate commercial activities of the recreation and tourism industry to be located in or near existing commercial recreational areas.
- Objective 4:* Support the link between recreation and agri-tourism in the town.

**Policies and Proposed Programs:**

- a) Enact policies that support lake-based recreation and low impact tourism in the town. Examples of recreation and tourism include bed and breakfasts, parks, cross country ski trails, snowmobiling, camping, biking trails, walking trails and/or nature sanctuaries, fishing, boating and golfing.
- b) Enact policies that protect the scenic environment character as an economic asset to the town and region.
- c) Utilize programs and tools which preserve and protect the natural areas of the town through state and federal government and private sources.
- d) Support the protection of Gibraltar Rock as a public park and state natural area.
- e) Support the town developing a natural area along the Wisconsin River.
- f) Support the continuation of the operation of the Merrimac Ferry and the landing as a public park.
- g) Support the roosting areas and habitat of the bald eagle.
- h) Support the completion of the Ice Age Trail through the town.
- i) Recognize the Crystal Lake area as an important commercial asset to the town.
- j) Recognize the Sunset Bay area as an important commercial asset to the town.
- k) Recognize the Lake Wisconsin Country Club area as an important commercial asset to the town.
- l) Recognize the Merrimac Ferry areas as an important recreational asset to the town.

**Goal 3: Develop and support a comprehensive approach to Commercial Activities in the town.**

- Objective 1:* Encourage the provision of goods and services that support the needs of the residents, such as restaurants, home repair, landscaping, etc.

- Objective 2:* Encourage the development of commercial activities that are environmentally friendly while bringing financial resources into the community.
- Objective 3:* Support commercial activities that allow home-based businesses which do not need conditional use permits
- Objective 4:* Develop designated commercial areas in the town near existing recreational commercial areas.
- Objective 5:* Encourage non-conforming commercial activities to locate in designated commercial areas.
- Objective 6:* Encourage non-retail commercial activities out of the lake retail areas.
- Objective 7:* Encourage the provision of goods and services that support the needs of the lake recreational community, such as boat repair, boat storage, canoe and kayak rental, restaurants, low impact lodging.
- Objective 8:* Encourage commercial activities and development that fit in with the rural and scenic character of the town.
- Objective 9:* Encourage clustering of commercial uses in compact areas to maximize consumer safety and convenience, improve traffic safety and enhance economic viability, where appropriate.
- Objective 10:* Discourage “strip” commercial areas along roads and highways.

Policies and Proposed Programs:

- a) Support initiatives to develop high-speed internet at low cost throughout the town.
- b) Support initiatives to provide cell phone service reception in all areas of the town.
- c) Designate an area near Crystal Lake as a desired commercial development area.
- d) Designate an area near Sunset Bay a desired commercial development area.
- e) Develop standards for new commercial development to promote building, signage and landscape design that compliments the rural character of the town.
- f) Develop a town sign ordinance that preserves the rural and scenic character of the town.

**Goal 4: Encourage industrial and manufacturing land uses to locate in surrounding municipalities through intergovernmental cooperation.**

- Objective 1:* Encourage industrial and manufacturing businesses to locate in surrounding municipalities where industrial parks, public sewers, public water, greater electrical power capacity, roads and larger workforce exist.

Policies and Proposed Programs:

- a) Develop intergovernmental agreements with the City of Lodi and the Villages of Prairie du Sac and Sauk City regarding our support for industrial and manufacturing economic activities to be located there and we will not compete with them for these types of activities.
- b) Encourage Columbia County to recognize benefits of not locating manufacturing and industrial activities in the town of West Point for the

protection of the existing economic base here – agriculture and recreation.

**Goal 5: Promote an inter-regional approach to economic activities in the area.**

- Objective 1:* Work with Columbia, Sauk and Dane County governments for a comprehensive planning approach to economic activities in town.
- Objective 2:* Work with state agencies to accentuate economic vitality of our agricultural and recreation based industries.
- Objective 3:* Work with state agencies to protect farmland and scenic and water resources.
- Objective 4:* Cooperate with surrounding municipalities regarding manufacturing and industrial development.
- Objective 5:* Cooperate with surrounding municipalities regarding protection of natural resources, such as Lake Wisconsin and Crystal Lake.

**Policies and Proposed Programs:**

- a) Work with Columbia County Planning and Zoning Department to ensure coordinated effort on economic activities in the town.
- b) Work with Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department to maximize land and water conservation programming and activities that support agriculture and natural resources of the town.
- c) Work with Columbia County UW Extension to bring research-based educational programming to town initiatives.
- d) Work with state DOT planners to designate and develop safe bike trails and routes.
- e) Work with state DOT planners to ensure roads around economic activities maximize traffic safety and minimize traffic congestion.
- f) Work with Columbia County, Sauk County, USGS, WiDNR, UWEX and adjacent municipalities on Lake Wisconsin to develop comprehensive planning programs for Lake Wisconsin area.
- g) Work with Columbia County, Dane County, WiDNR, USGS, UWEX and adjacent municipalities on Crystal Lake to develop comprehensive planning programs for Crystal Lake area.

**Goal 6: Minimize the impact of economic activities on existing tax rates.**

- Objective 1:* Use state and federal programs to assist in achieving economic development goals to the fullest extent possible.
- Objective 2:* Develop a fiscal impact program for new businesses to assist town in establishing their local economic benefit and local economic cost prior to their establishment.
- Objective 3:* Institute a Town land division ordinance which supports the goals of the comprehensive plan and collects appropriate park fees or park land and fiscal impact fees from new land divisions.
- Objective 4:* Assure property assessments reflect commercial and business use, whether through permitted zoning or conditional use permit.

Policies and Proposed Programs:

- a) Institute user impact fees for additional town municipal services required by new businesses, including road maintenance and utilities.
- b) Develop criteria to fund public improvements related to new or expanded businesses.
- c) Work with Columbia County Planning and Zoning Department to develop an enforcement program to ensure compliance with existing conditional use permits.
- d) Strengthen the conditional use permitting process including conditions of use, length of permit, transferability, tax classification status and penalties for non-compliance.

6.3 EXISTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

6.3.1 Columbia County Economic Development Corporation

The Columbia County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) is a non-profit corporation established to coordinate economic development throughout Columbia County. The Corporation is staffed by a full-time economic development professional and an administrative assistant and governed by a Board of Directors. The Corporation is funded by participating municipalities on a per capita basis and by Columbia County. Each participating community has one representative and one alternate on the board of directors and communities with over 4,000 people have two representatives. Columbia County also has two representatives on the Board. The Corporation is funded through contributions from participating communities on a per capita basis. The Columbia County Board of Supervisors then matches the funds received from the participating communities. CCECD is an intake center for the Wisconsin Entrepreneur's Network (WEN) to assist business entrepreneurs and inventors.

6.3.2 Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)

◆ Columbia County Revolving Loan Fund

The Columbia County Revolving Loan Fund program provides loans to businesses in Columbia County for proposed projects that create jobs, help businesses maintain or expand existing operations, and advance the County's economic development goals. The revolving loan fund encourages businesses and industries to invest in their own growth by providing direct business loans on a companion basis with other financing sources, thereby allowing businesses to "leverage" funds for a large economic impact. The revolving loan fund is meant as an important secondary role to private financing options.

Revolving Loan Funds are available to any business or industry located in Columbia County, including start-up businesses, and to any business moving to Columbia County. The funds can be used for any of the following purposes:

- Acquisition of land, buildings, and equipment
- Building renovation, rehabilitation, or equipment installation
- Payment of assessments for public utilities
- Working capital for inventory and direct labor

In Columbia County, the Revolving Loan Fund is administered in the County's Accounting Office.

#### ◆ Columbia County Economic Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund

The Columbia County Economic Development Corporation acquired a \$99,150 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for use as a revolving loan fund. The goals of the fund are similar to the Columbia County RLF. This RLF provides funds for the gap that is unfulfilled by the Columbia County program. The minimum an applicant can apply for under the County's RLF is \$25,000. The Columbia County Economic Development Corporation's RLF provides loans below the \$25,000 limit in the County fund.

#### 6.3.3 Community Profiles

The Town of West Point is not currently a member of CCEDC and so does not have a community profile maintained by the development corporation. However, the town could develop and maintain its own profile through the Location One Information System (LOIS) operated by Forward WI. This is the standard community profile being promoted throughout the state.

#### 6.3.4 Land and Building Inventory

The Columbia County Economic Development Corporation maintains a land and building inventory for each participating municipality in the County. The inventory lists the available buildings and building sites for business and industry. The inventory is available through the Columbia County Economic Development Corporation.

#### 6.3.5 Technical College Programs and Universities

Madison Area Technical Collage (MATC) has a campus located in the City of Portage, Madison, Reedsburg and provides a number of employment training opportunities for County residents. MATC's activities are closely related to economic development because the school trains technicians needed by employers to maintain and grow their businesses. MATC works closely with the K-12 school systems to provided career planning to students. MATC is also an intake center for the WEN network to assist entrepreneurs and inventors. University of Wisconsin in Baraboo and Madison.

#### 6.3.6 Wisconsin Department of Tourism

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism administers numerous grants, programs, and marketing campaigns to promote tourism in the State which benefit tourism in Columbia County.

#### 6.3.7 Columbia County Tourism Committee

The Columbia County Tourism Committee (CCTC) was formed in 1999. Members of the committee represent area tourism-related organizations and are appointed by the Columbia County Board. Each member has responsibility for certain areas of the county. With assistance of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, the committee has participated in a Tourism Assessment process. The assessment process analyzed current marketing and promotional programs and suggested opportunities to develop a stronger tourism marketing campaign for Columbia County.

The CCTC was also awarded a \$20,000 Tourism Diversification Planning Grant to develop a Tourism Plan for the county. Columbia County and the Columbia County Economic Development Corporation jointly provided the 25 percent match for the grant. As a result of the plan, the CCTC has decided to pursue the development of a Columbia County Visitors Bureau.

### 6.3.8 Wisconsin Agricultural Development Zone Program

An agricultural development zone has been established in south-central Wisconsin encompassing five counties including Columbia County. Agricultural related businesses are eligible for tax credits that can be applied against their state income tax liability. The credits are based upon the number of new jobs created, the wage level, and the benefit package that you offer. Businesses may also be eligible for a 3% capital investment credit for real and personal property and a credit equal to 50% of your eligible environmental remediation costs.

### 6.3.9 Wisconsin Department of Commerce

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce (WDOC) has several grant programs and services available to communities or businesses within communities. The federally funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program can be used for housing, economic development, and public facility improvements. WDOC also offers many more business assistance and financing programs as well as economic development news and statistics.

### 6.3.10 Community Development Block Grant for Economic Development (CDBG-ED)

The CDBG-ED program was designed to assist businesses that will invest private funds and create jobs as they expand or relocate to Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Department of Commerce awards the funds to a general-purpose unit of government (community) which then loans the funds to a business. When the business repays the loan, the community may retain the funds to capitalize a local revolving loan fund. This fund can then be utilized to finance additional economic development projects within the community. For more information contact the Wisconsin Department of Commerce.

### 6.3.11 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.

### 6.3.12 WDNR – Brownfields Grant Program

Brownfields are abandoned, idle or underused commercial or industrial properties, where the expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination. Brownfields vary in size, location, age, and past use -- they can be anything from a five-hundred acre automobile assembly plant to a small, abandoned corner gas station. In Wisconsin, there are an estimated 10,000 brownfields, of which 1,500 are believed to be tax delinquent. These properties present public health, economic, environmental and social challenges to the rural and urban communities in which they are located.

Since June of 1998, the Brownfields Grant Program has awarded a total of \$36.9 million that resulted in grants being awarded to 89 projects across Wisconsin. These projects will have a significant impact for communities, both economically and environmentally including:

- The return of 1,090 acres of abandoned or under-used environmentally contaminated sites into clean, viable properties.
- An increase of over \$607 million in taxable property values.
- The creation of over 4,000 new jobs.

### 6.3.13 Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) and the Tax Incremental District (TID)

Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) is an economic development tool that helps promote economic development by using property tax revenue to fund site improvements to attract new business or eliminate blight. TIF allows a municipality to invest in infrastructure and other improvements and pay for these investments by capturing property tax revenue from newly developed property. An area is identified (the tax incremental district, or TID) as appropriate for a certain type of development, and projects are identified to encourage and facilitate the desired development. As property values in the TID rise, the portion of the property tax paid on the new private development is used by the municipality to pay for the projects. After the costs of the project are paid off, the TID is closed and the value of all new development is distributed among all taxing entities.

In Wisconsin, cities, villages, and towns can utilize TIF and create TIDs. In Columbia County, the Cities of Columbus and Portage as well as the Villages of Arlington, Fall River, Friesland, Pardeeville, Poynette, Randolph, and Rio are among the communities that currently utilize TIF or have utilized TIF in the past. No towns have utilized TIF at this time.



## 6.4 ECONOMY

### 6.4.1 Personal Income

Personal income levels can provide insight into the status of the economy in a community. The sections below examine per capita income and household income within the Town of West Point.

#### 6.4.1.1 *Per Capita Income*

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue shows the Town of West Point's per capita adjusted gross income overall is considerably above that of the County. The per capita adjusted gross income in the Town of West Point was below the average for the County during five of the 11 years between 1990 and 2001 but exceeded the County during the last six years. Over the 11 year period, the Town's per capita adjusted gross income has grown more rapidly than the County exceeding the County by 27 percent. The Town of West Point's per capita adjusted gross income increased \$10,515 or 94.72 percent compared to Columbia County's increase of \$7,784 or 67.64 percent during the same time period. Table 6-1 compares the per capita adjusted gross income of the Town of West Point with Columbia County.

TABLE 6-1  
**Per Capita Adjusted Gross Income**  
**Town of West Point and Columbia County, 1990-2001**

Year	Town of West Point		Columbia County
	Income	% of County	
1990	\$11,101	96.46%	\$11,508
1991	\$10,693	89.72%	\$11,918
1992	\$11,356	91.76%	\$12,376
1993	\$12,605	96.27%	\$13,093
1994	\$13,490	95.42%	\$14,138
1995	\$14,995	100.85%	\$14,868
1996	\$16,095	105.94%	\$15,193
1997	\$17,676	108.13%	\$16,347
1998	\$18,943	108.91%	\$17,394
1999	\$23,184	120.78%	\$19,195
2000	\$20,287	101.07%	\$20,072
2001	\$21,616	112.05%	\$19,292
<b>Change 1990 to 2001:</b>	\$10,515	135.08%	\$7,784

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

The per capita income in the Town of West Point is shown to have increased in real numbers most years since 1990 with the exceptions of 1991 and 2000. This increase in income is the result of either smaller numbers of children in the Town in relation to the number of working adults or from actual increases in income earned by the working portion of the population. Population information discussed earlier in this element indicated that the number of children in the Town was increasing. Therefore, it is more likely that the increases in per capita adjusted gross income are the result of actual increases in the income of working adults in the Town. Rising income levels can increase housing values, encourage business expansion and new businesses, and encourage the more affluent to move to the Town of West Point.

### 6.4.1.2 Household Income

Median household income in the Town of West Point exceeded the County in 1999. Over 45 percent of the households in the Town had incomes of \$30,000 to \$74,999, compared to 52 percent for the County. However, Town of West Point significantly exceeded the County in households with incomes between \$75,000 and \$199,000 with 27 percent of the Town's households in this category compared to 17 percent for the County. Table 6-2 compares household income in Town of West Point with the County.

**TABLE 6-2**  
**Household Income, Town of West Point and Columbia County, 1999**

Household Income	Town of West Point		Columbia County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$10,000	28	4.26%	1,189	5.82%
\$10,000 to \$29,999	120	18.26%	4,847	23.74%
\$30,000 to \$49,999	148	22.53%	5,347	26.19%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	152	23.14%	5,327	26.09%
\$75,000 to \$124,999	132	20.09%	2,976	14.58%
\$125,000 to \$199,999	46	7.00%	475	2.33%
\$200,000 or more	31	4.72%	253	1.24%
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>20,414</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>1999 Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$55,781</b>		<b>\$45,064</b>	

Source: U.S. Census

### 6.4.2 Labor Force and Employment Status

An examination of the labor force and employment status of a community can provide insight into the economy of a community as well as provide guidance on the types of economic development strategies that might work within that community. The sections below examine the civilian labor force, unemployment rates, travel time to work, place of employment, and commuting patterns.

#### 6.4.2.1 Civilian Labor Force

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development defines the labor force as those individuals who are either working or looking for work. This definition does not include individuals who have made a choice not to work such as retirees, homemakers, and students. Furthermore, the definition of labor force does not include military personnel, institutional residents, or discouraged job seekers. The following compares the labor force of Columbia County, including the Town of West Point, to the State of Wisconsin. In Columbia County, the labor force has increased by 1,709 persons, or 5.7 percent over the period between 2000 and 2004. In comparison, the State of Wisconsin's labor force increased by 78,929 persons, or 2.6 percent during the same period, indicating that the County's labor force is growing at a faster rate than the State. However, the number of unemployed persons in the labor force has also increased during the five-year period. In Columbia County, the number of unemployed has increased by 378 persons, a 35.2 percent increase. For the State of Wisconsin, the number of unemployed has increased by 50,966 persons, a 50.5 percent increase. Table 6-3 compares the civilian labor force statistics for Columbia County and the State of Wisconsin.

TABLE 6-3  
**Civilian Labor Force Annual Averages**  
**Columbia County and Wisconsin, 2000 - 2004**

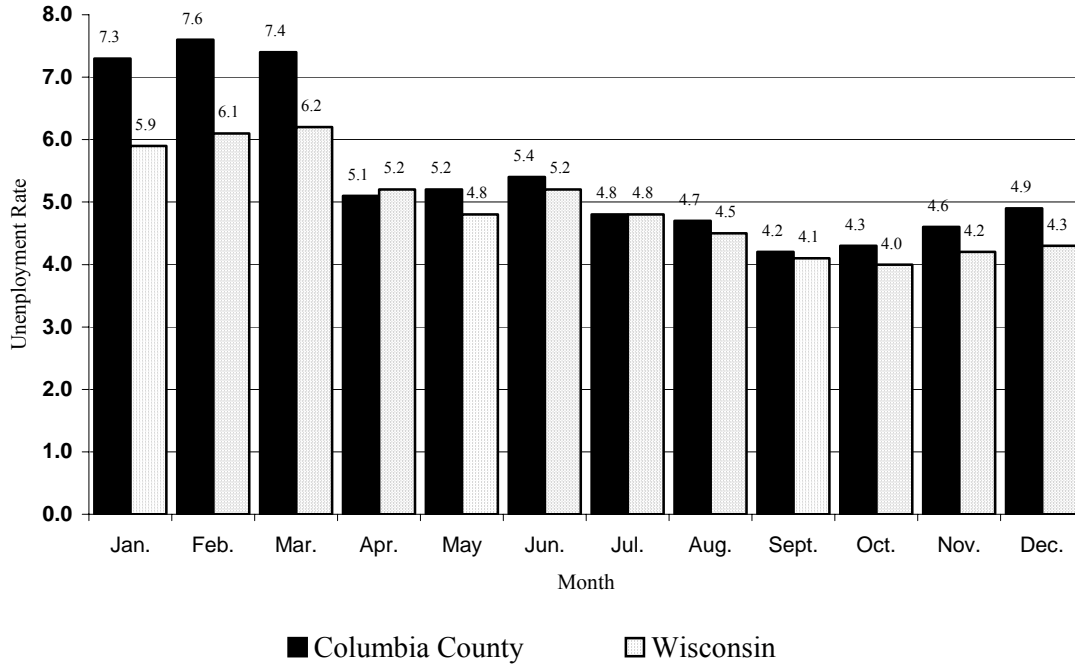
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	# Change 2000-04	% Change 2000- 04
<b>Columbia County</b>							
Labor Force	29,900	30,740	30,900	31,275	31,609	1,709	5.7%
Employment	28,827	29,410	29,316	29,543	30,158	1,331	4.6%
Unemployment	1,073	1,330	1,584	1,732	1,451	378	35.2%
Unemployment Rate	3.6	4.3	5.1	5.5	4.6	1.0	27.8%
<b>Wisconsin</b>							
Labor Force	2,992,250	3,032,130	3,037,928	3,068,739	3,071,179	78,929	2.6%
Employment	2,891,238	2,898,949	2,877,047	2,896,670	2,919,201	27,963	1.0%
Unemployment	101,012	133,181	160,881	172,069	151,978	50,966	50.5%
Unemployment Rate	3.4	4.4	5.3	5.6	4.9	1.5	44.1%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2000-2004

#### 6.4.2.2 *Unemployment Rates*

Monthly unemployment rates for 2004 in Columbia County, including the Town of West Point, closely mirror those of the State of Wisconsin. However, unemployment in the County is somewhat higher in the winter months due to a number of seasonal jobs in tourism, agriculture, and construction. Figure 6-1 illustrates the monthly unemployment rates for Columbia County and the State of Wisconsin for 2004. The number of unemployed includes those receiving unemployment benefits as well as those who actively looked for a job and did not find one.

FIGURE 6-1  
**Monthly Unemployment Rates**  
**Columbia County and Wisconsin, 2004**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2004

### 6.4.2.3 Travel Time to Work

The location of person’s job is often a major determining factor in the location of that person’s home. Understanding the amount of time people are willing to travel to work can provide insight into the suitable locations for future housing and employment centers. However, some people are willing to travel greater distances to live in a particular location. Therefore, travel time to work is also an indication of what residents are willing to sacrifice for location.

Table 6-4 illustrates the travel time to work for residents of the Town of West Point and Columbia County. In the Town of West Point, the largest percentage of residents, 13.6 percent, travel 10 to 14 minutes to work. This travel time is similar to the County as a whole, where the largest percentage of residents, 17.7 percent, traveled 10 to 14 minutes to work. A total of 35 Town residents, 3.8 percent, reported traveling over an hour to work while 68 Town residents, 7.3 percent, worked from home.

TABLE 6-4  
**Travel Time To Work, Town of West Point and Columbia County, 2000**

Travel Time	Town of West Point		Columbia County	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Less than 5 minutes	35	3.8%	1,799	5.0%
5 to 9 minutes	115	12.4%	4,162	14.8%
10 to 14 minutes	126	13.6%	3,178	17.7%
15 to 19 minutes	98	10.5%	2,633	16.4%
20 to 24 minutes	51	5.5%	2,590	13.8%
25 to 29 minutes	35	3.8%	1,524	5.9%
30 to 34 minutes	124	13.3%	3,018	9.2%
35 to 39 minutes	78	8.4%	1,193	2.2%
40 to 44 minutes	47	5.1%	1,259	2.3%
45 to 59 minutes	117	12.6%	2,623	4.5%
60 to 89 minutes	23	2.5%	1,063	2.5%
90 or more minutes	12	1.3%	480	1.7%
Worked at home	68	7.3%	1,469	3.9%
<b>Total:</b>	929	100.0%	26,991	100.0%

Source: US Census

#### 6.4.2.4 Place of Employment

Examining the place of employment for the Town of West Point's residents provides insight into the employment opportunities available within the Town. Due to the Town's location and easy access to major population and economic centers many residents are leaving the area for work. In the Town of West Point, 72.4 percent of the workers over age 16 worked outside the County. In comparison, 47 percent of workers in the County as a whole work outside the County. This trend reflects the fact that better paying job opportunities exist outside the Town and that the Town's employment base does not provide enough jobs with adequate salaries for all residents who choose to live in the Town. The trend of having a large percentage of residents working outside the Town is expected to continue. Table 6-5 illustrates the place of employment for residents of the Town of West Point and Columbia County.

TABLE 6-5  
**Place of Employment for Workers Age 16 and Over**  
**Town of West Point and Columbia County, 2000**

Place of Work	Town of West Point		Columbia County	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Worked in state of residence:	921	99.1%	26,862	99.5%
Worked in county of residence	248	26.7%	14,163	52.5%
Worked outside county of residence	673	72.4%	12,699	47.0%
Worked outside state of residence	8	0.9%	129	0.5%
<b>Total:</b>	929	100.0%	26,991	100.0%

Source: US Census

#### 6.4.2.5 Commuting Patterns

Table 6-6 illustrates the commuting patterns for Columbia County including the Town of West Point as reported by the 2000 US Census. Approximately 5,750 more workers travel out of the County for work than those that commute into the County for work. The largest number of commuters travel to Dane County (8,929), followed by Sauk County (1,692), and Dodge County (1,001). For those commuters that come to Columbia County for work the majority commute from Dane County (1,581), followed by Marquette County (1,398), and Dodge County (1,115)

TABLE 6-6  
**Commuting Patterns, Columbia County, 2000**

<b>County</b>	<b>Live in Columbia County, Work In:</b>	<b>Travel to Columbia County from:</b>	<b>Net Commute</b>
Dane Co. WI	8,929	1,581	(7,348)
Sauk Co. WI	1,692	1,013	(679)
Dodge Co. WI	1,001	1,115	114
Marquette Co. WI	243	1,398	1,155
Jefferson Co. WI	211	53	(158)
Green Lake Co. WI	79	198	119
Waukesha Co. WI	70	38	(32)
Juneau Co. WI	66	255	189
Adams Co. WI	60	748	688
Fond du Lac Co. WI	53	65	12
Milwaukee Co. WI	46	19	(27)
Rock Co. WI	35	72	37
Columbia Co. WI	14,163	14,163	0
Elsewhere	343	523	180
<b>Total:</b>	<b>26,991</b>	<b>21,241</b>	<b>(5,750)</b>

Source: US Census, 2000

### 6.4.3 Analysis of Economic Base

An examination of the economic base of a community also can provide insight into the economy of a community. The sections below examine employment by industry group, employment by occupation, wages by industry division, principal employers, Agricultural Industry Analysis, Recreation and Tourism Industry Analysis, Economic Base and Location Quotient Analysis, and Industrial Parks.

#### 6.4.3.1 *Employment by Industry Group*

Employment by industry group provides insight into the structure of the Town's economy. Table 6-7 illustrates the number and percent of employed persons by industry group for the Town of West Point and Columbia County. Historically, the Town and the County have had high concentrations of employment in manufacturing and agriculture. Recent trends have shown a decrease in these areas with increases in employment in service industries. In the Town of West Point, the largest percentage of employment is in education and health, 20.8 percent, followed by retail trade, 12.5 percent, and construction, 12.0 percent. Employment by industry group in the Town of West Point varies somewhat from Columbia County as a whole. The Town of West Point has somewhat stronger concentrations of employment in agriculture and mining, construction, insurance, real estate, finance, rental & leasing, and education and health. The Town also had somewhat lower concentrations of employment in manufacturing and public administration.

TABLE 6-7  
**Employment of Industry Group**  
**Town of West Point and Columbia County, 2000**

Industry Group	Town of West Point		Columbia County	
	Number Employed	Percent of Total	Number Employed	Percent of Total
Agriculture & Mining	59	6.3%	1,282	4.69%
Construction	113	12.0%	2,268	8.30%
Manufacturing	110	11.7%	5,834	21.35%
Wholesale Trade	28	3.0%	985	3.60%
Retail Trade	117	12.5%	3,083	11.28%
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	35	3.7%	1,350	4.94%
Information	21	2.2%	553	2.02%
Insurance, Real Estate, Finance, Rental & Leasing	71	7.6%	1,469	5.38%
Professional, Management, Administrative, & Scientific	75	8.0%	1,510	5.53%
Education & Health	195	20.8%	4,730	17.31%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	69	7.4%	1,866	6.83%
Other Services	22	2.3%	911	3.33%
Public Administration	23	2.5%	1,483	5.43%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>27,324</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: U.S. Census

### 6.4.3.2 *Employment by Occupation*

Employment by Occupation provides insight into the types of occupations that are held by Town residents. Examining what Town residents do for a living can help reveal some of the factors that influence income and overall employment in the Town. Table 6-8 illustrates the number and percent of employed persons by occupation in the Town of West Point and Columbia County for the year 2000. In the Town of West Point, the occupation category with the largest number and percentage of employment was executives, professionals, and managers accounting for 340 persons, or 36.2 percent of total employment. The occupation with the second largest number and percentage of employment in the Town was sales and office occupations accounting for 225 persons, or 24.0 percent of total employment. The percent of employment in each occupation category in the Town of West Point was very similar to those of the County as a whole with the County's two largest categories also being executives, professionals, and managers and sales and office occupations with percentages of 28.2 and 24.9 respectively.

TABLE 6-8  
**Town of West Point and Columbia County**  
**Employment by Occupation, 2000**

Occupation	Town of West Point		Columbia County	
	Number Employed	Percent of Total	Number Employed	Percent of Total
Executives, Professionals, & Managers	340	36.2%	7,698	28.2%
Service Occupations	116	12.4%	3,647	13.4%
Sales & Office Occupations	225	24.0%	6,802	24.9%
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	9	1.0%	314	1.2%
Construction, Extraction, & Maintenance	139	14.8%	3,177	11.6%
Production & Transportation	109	11.6%	5,686	20.8%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>27,324</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: U.S. Census

### 6.4.3.3 *Wages by Industry Division*

The wages paid by a particular industry in a particular area offers insight into the economy of that area. For example, an area with higher wages in a particular industry, when compared to neighboring communities, can be an indication of strength in that particular economic sector. Higher wages also act to attract commuters and new residents to an area. However, higher than average wages coupled with a dependency on a particular industry can lead to a local recession if there is a downturn in that industry. Lower than average wages can indicate a lower quality of life in the area or a lack of highly qualified labor. Table 6-9 illustrates the annual average wage by industry division for Columbia County, including the Town of West Point, and the State of Wisconsin.



TABLE 6-9  
**Annual Average Wage By Industry Division**  
**Columbia County and Wisconsin, 2004**

Industry Division	Columbia County Annual Average Wage	Wisconsin Annual Average Wage	Percent of State Average	1-year Change in Percent of State Average	5-year Change in Percent of State Average
All Industries	\$28,409	\$34,749	81.8%	0.90%	2.20%
Ag, Natural Resources, & Mining	\$26,169	\$27,399	95.5%	(7.70%)	(4.00%)
Construction	\$35,664	\$41,258	86.4%	0.70%	5.10%
Manufacturing	\$39,002	\$44,145	88.3%	1.60%	3.70%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	\$25,828	\$30,088	85.8%	1.70%	6.50%
Information	\$23,552	\$41,759	56.4%	(3.20%)	6.90%
Financial Activities	\$26,744	\$45,103	59.3%	2.50%	(2.10%)
Professional & Business Services	\$27,029	\$39,580	68.3%	1.60%	0.90%
Education & Health Services	\$28,883	\$36,408	79.3%	1.50%	0.90%
Leisure & Hospitality	\$9,639	\$12,295	78.4%	1.00%	0.00%
Services	\$19,636	\$20,207	97.2%	0.90%	1.70%
Public Administration	\$30,619	\$36,347	84.2%	(2.30%)	(7.10%)
Total Government	\$29,835	\$36,933	80.8%	0.20%	(3.60%)

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Information - Labor Market Information

The manufacturing and construction industries had the highest annual average wages in Columbia County in 2004. Services and Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Mining had average annual wages closest to the State of Wisconsin with these two industries being 97.2 and 95.5 percent of the State average respectively. None of the industry groups exceeded the State's annual average wage. The greatest disparity in wages between Columbia County and the State was in the information industry division where the County average annual wage was only 56.4 percent of the State.

#### 6.4.3.4 *Principal Employers*

Columbia County has a variety of major employers that provide job opportunities to residents in the Town of West Point. Table 6-10 illustrates the major employers in the County with at least 100 employees in 2004. Also included in the table are the number of employees working for County government and the school districts serving the County.

TABLE 6-10  
**Principal Employers, Columbia County, 2004**

<b>Employer Name</b>	<b>Nature of Business</b>	<b># of Employees</b>
<b>Private Sector</b>		
Divine Savior Healthcare	Hospital	610
Associated Milk Producers, Inc.	Dairy Products	425
Penda Corporation	Auto Parts Manufacturing	400
TriEnda, A Wilbert Company	Plastic Components	340
Walmart	Discount & Variety Retail	300
Cascade Mountain	Ski & Snowboard – Recreation	300
Columbia Correctional Institution	Prison	329
Capital Newspapers	Newspaper Publishing	274
Cardinal FG	Glass Products	250
CESA 5	Educational Service Agency	250
Saint Gobain	Plastic & Fiber Manufacturing	225
Columbus Community Hospital, Inc.	Hospital	220
Alkar Rapidpak, Inc.	Food Processing Equipment	200
American Packaging Corporation	Commercial Printing	200
Busse/Arrowhead/SJI	Packaging Machinery	200
Rayovac Corporation	Primary Batteries	200
J.W. Jung Seed Company	Retail Nursery	180
Fall River Foundry Group	Copper Foundry	175
Seneca Foods Corporation	Canned Fruits & Vegetables	160
Columbia Health Care Center	Skilled Nursing Care Facility	155
Goetz Companies, Inc.	Service Station	152
Enerpac-An Actuant Co.	Industrial Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing	150
Spartech Plastics	Plastic & Fiber Manufacturing	142
Continental Manor of Randolph	Skilled Nursing Care Facility	140
Alliant Energy – Columbia Generating	Electric Power Generation	138
Robbins Manufacturing, Inc.	Fabricated Metal Products	130
Columbus Nursing & Rehabilitation Center	Skilled Nursing Facility	125
Alsum Produce, Inc.	Fruit & Vegetable Distribution	110
Northwoods Inc. of Wisconsin	Administration of Social & Manpower Program	105
Sta-Care, Inc.	Wood Partitions	102
Adesa Corporation	Auction	100
Maysteel LLC	Sheet Metal Work	100
Pick'n Save South	Grocery Store	100
<b>Private Sector Total</b>		<b>7,637</b>
<b>Public Sector</b>		
Columbia County -		
Highway Department	Public Works	89
Sheriff Department	General Services and Public Safety	94
Health and Human Services	Social Services, Mental Health, Public Health and Aging	84
Courthouse and Solid Waste	General Services	136
Health Care Center	Skilled Nursing Home	157
		Subtotal:
		560
Columbus School District	Education	160
Cambria-Friesland School District	Education	72
Fall River School District	Education	78
Lodi School District	Education	237
Pardeeville Area School District	Education	120
Portage Community School District	Education	385
Poynette School District	Education	148
Randolph School District	Education	76
Rio Community School District	Education	68
Wisconsin Dells School District	Education	80
		Subtotal:
		1,424
<b>Public Sector Total</b>		<b>1,984</b>

Source: Columbia County Economic Development Corporation & Columbia County Planning and Zoning

#### 6.4.3.5 *Agricultural Industry Analysis*

The Columbia County UW Extension Office has provided the following information regarding the agricultural industry in the County including the Town of West Point.

Agriculture is an important economic force in Columbia County. It includes hundreds of family owned farms, related businesses and industries that provide equipment, services and other products farmers need to process, market and deliver food and fiber to consumers. The production, sales and processing of Columbia County's farm products generates employment, economic activity, income, and tax revenue. Columbia County agriculture is diverse. Its 1,526 farms include 211 dairy farms, over 400 beef, sheep and hog farms, plus everything from large cash grain operations of 500 to 1,000 acres to small, 5 to 10 acre fresh market vegetable producers. Columbia County farmers produce a variety of products. Grains, dairy, cattle and calves, poultry, eggs, and vegetables are the main commodities. Sand and muck soils associated with the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers support commercial vegetable and mint production. High quality prairie soils in the southern and northeastern parts of the county put it in the top 10 for corn and soybean production. Local farmers organized the United Wisconsin Grain Producers, Inc. to help build Wisconsin's fourth ethanol plant near Cambria.

Columbia County agriculture provides 5,312 jobs, 18 percent of Columbia County's total workforce of more than 28,850 people. The jobs provided by agriculture are diverse and include farm owners, on-farm employees, veterinarians, crop and livestock consultants, feed and fuel suppliers, food processors, farm machinery manufacturers and dealers, barn builders and agricultural lenders. Every new job in agriculture generates an additional 0.7 jobs in Columbia County. In addition, agriculture pays over \$17.0 million in taxes not including property taxes paid to local schools.

Columbia County agriculture generates more than \$666.4 million in economic activity, accounting for over 27 percent of Columbia County's total economic activity. Every dollar of sales from agricultural products generates an additional \$0.45 of economic activity in other parts of the Columbia County economy. Agriculture accounts for \$166.1 million, or 14.5 percent, of Columbia County's total income. This includes wages, salaries, benefits and profits of farmers and workers in agriculture-related businesses. Every dollar of agricultural income generates an additional \$1.07 of the county's total income.

Columbia County farmers own and manage the resources on 348,369 acres of land amounting to 70 percent of all land in the county. This includes pastures, cropland and tree farms. Farmers implement various conservation practices to protect environmental resources and provide habitat for wildlife. Farms in Columbia County are predominantly owned by individuals or families, with 88.3 percent of the farms owned by this group. Ownership of remaining farms consists of family partnerships owning 8.3 percent of the farms, family-owned corporations owning 2.6 percent of the farms, and non-family corporations owning 0.9% of the farms.

Dairy is the largest part of Columbia County's agriculture in terms of combined on-farm value and processing value. In 2000, Columbia County milk producers and the dairy industry contributed \$393.9 million to the county's economy. The on-farm production and sale of milk accounted for \$41.1 million in economic activity. The processing of milk into dairy products accounted for another \$352.8 million. Grain production is also important. In 2002, the market value of corn, soybeans and other grain crops was about \$40 million, roughly 38 percent of the total market value of all agricultural products sold in the county. There are over 106,000 acres of corn grown for grain and almost 48,000 acres of soybeans raised in Columbia County. About 25 percent of the corn is fed on farm to dairy cattle and livestock. Each dairy cow generates more than \$15,000 to \$17,000 of economic activity. Columbia County's on-farm milk production and dairy processing account for 1,956 jobs.

The production of landscape trees and plants as well as landscape and grounds maintenance are rapidly growing segments of Columbia County's agricultural industry. Greenhouses, tree farms, nurseries and other horticultural businesses add to the diversity of agriculture in the county. Horticulture generates \$5.4 million in county economic activity, providing 148 full-time jobs and many seasonal jobs.

#### *6.4.3.6 Recreation and Tourism Industry Analysis*

Tourism is an important component of the economy of Columbia County and the Town of West Point. Area attractions, recreational areas, restaurants, retail stores, traveler accommodations and seasonal homeowners play a vital role in strengthen the local economy and improving the quality of life for area residents as well as visitors to the area. The Wisconsin Department of Tourism has provided the following information regarding the tourism industry and traveler expenditures in Columbia County in 2004. Travelers are defined as Wisconsin residents and out-of-state visitors traveling for pleasure, business, or a combination of reasons.

- Columbia County ranks 19<sup>th</sup> in the state for traveler spending.
- Travelers spent an estimated \$151 million in Columbia County in 2004.
- Summer is the biggest season tourism in the County and generated traveler expenditures of almost \$66 million. Fall travelers spent \$32 million; Spring travelers spent \$30 million; Winter travelers spent \$23 million.
- Estimates indicate that employees in Columbia County earned over \$93 million in wages in 2004 generated from tourist spending, an increase of 4.7 percent from 2003.
- Travelers spending in 2004 supported 3,984 full-time equivalent jobs, compared to 3,904 in 2003.
- Local revenues (property taxes, sales taxes, lodging taxes, etc.) collected as a result of travelers amounted to over \$6 million, an increase of 11.2 percent from 2003.
- Travelers in Columbia County generated over \$19 million in state revenues (lodging, sales and meal taxes, etc.), an increase of 3.3 percent from 2003.
- In the Town of West Point visitors enjoy the scenic beauty, Gibraltar Rock, Lake WI, Colsac III, biking, hiking, snowmobile trails, Crystal Lake, Ice Age Trail, fishing, hunting and birding.

#### *6.4.3.7 Economic Base and Location Quotient Analysis*

In order to fully comprehend the economic future of Columbia County and the Town of West Point, it is necessary to understand how the County's economy relates not only to the State of Wisconsin's economy but to the United States economy as well. The Economic Base Analysis is a technique used to divide Columbia County's economy into basic and non-basic sectors. The basic sector is made up of local businesses that are dependant on external factors outside of the local economy for their success. For example, manufacturing and resource extracting firms (logging, mining) are often considered to be basic sector because the firm's success depends largely on non-local factors and they usually export their goods. In comparison, the non-basic sector is made up of firms that depend on local business conditions for their success such as firms in the service sector. Economic Base Theory states that the way to strengthen and grow the local economy is to develop and enhance of the basic sector portion of the local economy.

There are nine industry sectors used for Economic Base Analysis, four goods producing sectors and five service producing sectors. The four goods producing sectors are: agriculture, forestry, and fishing; mining; construction; and manufacturing. The five service producing sectors are: transportation and public utilities; wholesale trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and services.

The Location Quotient Analysis is a technique for comparing non-farm employment in the Columbia County economy to non-farm employment in the United States economy using the nine sectors listed in the Economic Base Analysis. Non-farm employment consists of all workers **not** engaged in the direct production of agricultural commodities, either livestock or crops, including sole proprietors, partners, or hired laborer. It should also be noted that government employment is not included in the analysis despite it being a major employer in Columbia County. Government is a non-profit entity that should not be expanded for economic purposes. Table 6-11 illustrates the Location Quotient Analysis for Non-Farm Employment in Columbia County in the years 1990 and 2000.

The Location Quotient Analysis technique identifies areas of specialization in the Columbia County economy. The Location Quotient is calculated in the following manner. Columbia County employment within a certain industry sector in a given year is divided by the Columbia County total employment in a given year. The total is then divided by the result of taking the United States employment in the same industry sector in a given year and dividing by the total United States employment for the given year. The results will be one of the following:

- **A Location Quotient (LQ) of less than 1.0** – local employment in the industry group is not meeting local demand for a given good or service and is considered non-basic.
- **A LQ equal to 1.0** – local employment in the industry group is exactly sufficient to meet the local demand for a given good or service. This employment is also considered non-basic because none of the goods or services are exported to non-local areas.
- **A LQ greater than 1.0** – local employment produces more goods and services than the local economy can use, therefore these goods and services are exported to non-local areas. This employment is considered a basic sector employment.

TABLE 6-11  
**Location Quotient Analysis for Non-Farm Employment**  
**Columbia County, 1990 and 2000**

Industry Sector	1990 Employment	% of Total	2000 Employment	% of Total	% Change 1990 - 2000	LQ 1990	LQ 2000
Ag, Forestry, Fishing**	212	0.9%	197*	0.7%	(7.1%)	0.8	0.5
Mining	58	0.2%	62*	0.2%	6.9%	0.3	0.5
Construction	1,300	5.4%	1,796	6.2%	38.2%	1.0	1.1
Manufacturing	4,442	18.3%	5,235	18.1%	17.9%	1.3	1.6
Transportation, Public Utilities	1,134	4.7%	1,187	4.1%	4.7%	1.0	0.8
Wholesale Trade	966	4.0%	980	3.4%	1.4%	0.8	0.7
Retail Trade	4,640	19.1%	5,388	18.6%	16.1%	1.2	1.1
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,061	4.4%	1,359	4.7%	28.1%	0.6	0.6
Services	5,081	21.0%	6,896	23.8%	35.7%	0.8	0.7
<b>Total Employment</b>	<b>24,231</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>28,954</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Accounts Data, 1990 and 2000 & Columbia County Planning and Zoning.

\* 2002 Data – 2000 Data suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information.

\*\* Non-farm employment in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry sector includes workers employed in areas such as soil preparation services, crop services, veterinary and other animal services, landscape and horticultural services, the operation of tree farms and forest nurseries, the operation of fish hatcheries and fish and game preserves, commercial hunting and trapping, and game propagation.

Three sectors within the 2000 Columbia County economy have Location Quotients greater than 1.0 and can therefore be considered basic sector employment: construction, manufacturing, and retail trade. These areas of the County's economy produce more goods and services than the County's economy can consume. Basic sector employment is important because it suggests that if a downturn in the local economy occurs, these sectors of the economy will not be strongly affected because they are dependant on non-local economies. Having strong basic sector employment and industry within the County strengthens the County's economy as well as the economies of the municipalities within the County.

The remaining six sectors of the County's economy have Location Quotients equal to or less than 1.0 and are therefore considered non-basic employment sectors. These areas of the County's economy do not meet local demand for goods and services and could be expanded. The sectors with Location Quotients close to 1.0 indicate that local demand for good and services from that industry is close to being met and may be met in the future.

#### 6.4.3.8 Industrial Parks

New industrial development generally occurs in urban areas to utilize the available utilities and transportation infrastructure available in these areas. As a result, industrial parks are found in all of the cities and villages in Columbia County with the exceptions of the Villages of Doylestown and Wycocena. In addition, many communities have other available industrial sites outside of industrial parks. The industrial parks closest to the Town of West Point are located in the City of Lodi and the Villages of Prairie du Sac and Sauk City in Sauk County. The Columbia County Economic Development Corporation maintains a listing of available industrial sites in the County. This list is described in more detail in the Economic Development Programs section of this element. Table 6-12 below contains a list of the industrial parks in Columbia County.

TABLE 6-12  
**Industrial Parks, Columbia County**

<b>Industrial Park</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Available Acres</b>
Arlington Prairie Industrial Park	Village of Arlington	210	165
Highland Industrial Subdivision	Village of Cambria	15.5	14
Columbus Industrial Park	City of Columbus	N/A	N/A
Fall River Industrial Park	Village of Fall River	95	20
Friesland Industrial Park	Village of Friesland	N/A	N/A
Lodi Industrial Park	City of Lodi	N/A	N/A
Pardeeville Industrial Park	Village of Pardeeville	163.5	0
Portage Industrial Park	City of Portage	650	66
Poynette Industrial Park	Village of Poynette	128	1.8
Randolph Industrial Park	Village of Randolph	43	23
Rio Industrial Park	Village of Rio	13.3	0
Wisconsin Dells Industrial Park	City of Wisconsin Dells	N/A	N/A

Source: Columbia County Economic Development Corp.

## 6.5 RETENTION AND ATTRACTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 6.5.1 Desired Types of Businesses and Industries

The economic framework of the Town of West Point is dependent on agriculture, lake-based recreation and residential services, income from residents working outside the town and transfer payments. The Town of West Point desires to retain this mix, which contributes to the scenic rural character of the town. The desired types of businesses include agricultural cropping and animal production, sustainable forestry, small value-added agricultural businesses, agri-tourism, lake-based recreation and residential services and home occupations. The Town supports and encourages the development of more intensive commercial development and industries in the nearby Cities of Lodi and Baraboo and the villages of Prairie du Sac and Sauk City.

- No rail facilities for business
- Annual load limits on roads
- Limited work force for Agricultural
- Multi School, Fire and Ambulance Districts
- Long response time for Law Enforcement Service

### 6.5.2 Strengths and Weaknesses for Attracting Economic Development

An evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the Town of West Point's ability to attract business and industry provides basic information to help plan for future economic development in the Town. Identified strengths should continue to be promoted to attract business and industry that can utilize these strengths. Identified weaknesses should be further analyzed to determine if improvements can be made. Business and industry displaying aspects similar to identified weaknesses should be discouraged.

#### The Town of West Point's Strengths In Attracting Desired Economic Development

- Family farm base and farming history
- Lake Wisconsin
- Woodlands
- Ice age trail
- Connection to badger ammo
- Gibraltar Rock
- Bedroom community
- Transportation for recreation and agricultural
- Scenery
- Soils and climate
- Eagle habitat
- Merrimac Ferry
- Crystal Lake
- Close to regional economic activity
- Access to interstate system via Hwy 60
- Hydro power/reliable electric
- Access to farm markets
- Regional – Good School Districts
- Diversity of Churches
- Hospital and Health Care Facilities

## The Town of West Point's Weaknesses In Attracting Desired New Business And Industry

- Competition for land between agriculture and other uses.
- Tax structure does not allow town to tax commercial.
- Limited utilities – sewer, water, telecommunications.

### 6.5.3 Designated Business and Industrial Sites

The Town of West Point wants to actively work with the surrounding municipalities to encourage business and economic development in their areas where the infrastructure exists to adequately handle such developments. Industrial development is not desired by the Town and should be located in these surrounding city and village industrial parks and communities according to their comprehensive plans. The Town of West Point would like to encourage existing industrial and conditional use areas in the town to locate in these surrounding municipalities also. The Town of West Point is most interested in supporting business growth in the surrounding areas which is of benefit to its residents, in the form of goods and services, or which supports its agricultural and recreational tourism base. Existing economic agricultural activities in the town should be supported to the extent possible without harmfully affecting the environment.

The Town of West Point is interested in designating three areas for limited commercial development. The areas already have commercial activities. These areas are: The Crystal Lake area, the Sunset Bay area, and to a lesser, more environmentally sensitive consideration, the Merrimac Ferry area. These areas could see more recreation-related and service commercial development as long as the fragile environment of the lakes was protected. The types of commercial development West Point thinks would be assets to the town include but are small scale lodging and camping, restaurants, recreation-related and resident services, such as landscaping, boat and lift repair, gasoline, small convenience stores, health and beauty, etc. Finally, the Town of West Point is interested in seeing many of the conditional-use commercial areas of the town located in these newly designated commercial areas rather than spread all over the town. The town is interested in working with Columbia County in reducing the frequency of the conditional use permit in the town and tightening up the enforcement of violations.

Nonmetallic mining operations within the Town should be limited to their existing footprint and not renewed. The Town is highly concerned with the environmental remediation of these operations. The Town is interested in protecting the vast majority of the land and lakefront in the town from business development and scattered commercial businesses along highways should be discouraged. Furthermore, if a proposed new business does not meet the requirements of this section, they should be located in a city or village nearby. New business development should never be located on productive agricultural lands.

### 6.5.4 Use of Environmentally Contaminated Sites

Environmentally contaminated sites are tracked and regulated by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). These agencies monitor and encourage the clean up and reuse of environmentally contaminated sites. The WDNR maintains a tracking system for contaminated sites called the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS). The BRRTS database contains 665 environmentally contaminated sites in Columbia County. The majority of these sites are located within cities and villages throughout the County, however several contaminated sites are located in unincorporated towns. Of the 656 contaminated sites in the County, 331 have been cleaned up and are considered closed. The remaining 334 sites are classified as open sites. A closed site has completed all requirements for clean up and has received a letter from the WDNR indicating the case has been closed. An open site is one in need of a clean up or one in which a clean up is underway.



The system tracks several types of contaminated sites, the most common of which are listed below.

- Spills – A Spill is a discharge of a hazardous substance.
- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) – A program that tracks petroleum contamination from underground storage tanks.
- Environmental Fund – A program to remediate waste sites with soil and/or groundwater contamination where most cases there are no clear responsible party is. The program will initiate remediation with state funds and if possible recover clean up costs if a responsible party can be identified.

Most of the 656 identified contaminated sites in the County have been cleaned up or require no further action. In fact, only 105 sites remain in need of clean up with most of these sites being leaking underground storage tanks. Some of these sites contain existing businesses and industries that will continue operations on the sites through the clean up process. Other sites where no business or industrial operations currently exist offer possible opportunities for future business and industry upon the clean up of the site. Timely clean up and reuse of contaminated sites throughout the County should be strongly encouraged.