

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(f)

Economic Development

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion, of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in the local governmental unit, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the local governmental unit. The element shall access categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the local governmental unit's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries, and shall designate an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries. The element shall also evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The element shall identify county, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the local governmental unit.

INTRODUCTION

The success and/or failure of economic development efforts within any community are a function of a variety of factors that exist locally, regionally, nationally and globally. Sawyer County is not immune to those factors. Before an economic development plan can be developed, prevailing influences that may aid or hinder economic development efforts must be identified. Community assets, liabilities and trends must also be identified. With that in mind, specific data pertinent to Sawyer County, Northwest Wisconsin Region, the State of Wisconsin and the United States is examined within this section to determine the current economic status of the County and where it can realistically expect to change.

**Table 6-1: Sawyer County Labor Force Profile
Overview of Labor Characteristics**

	Sawyer County	Wisconsin
Civilian Labor Force	7,709	2,869,236
Unemployment Rate	6.6%	4.7%
Labor Participation Rate	60.3%	69.1%
Education Beyond High School (25 & over)	44.7%	50.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher (25 & over)	16.5%	22.4%
Per Capita Income	\$17,634	\$21,271
Median Household Income	\$32,287	\$43,791
Poverty Rate	12.7%	8.7%
Median Age	42.1	36.0

Source: U.S. Census 2000 (DP-3, SFP1, 2, & 3)

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) defines the labor force as anyone 16 year old or older that are employed or unemployed but seeking a job. Over half (60.3%) of the population of Sawyer County are in the labor force.

Sawyer County Labor Force Employment Status

The DWD is responsible for collecting labor statistics at the county, metropolitan statistical area and large city levels. DWD does not compile figures for communities with populations less than 25,000.

The information summarized in the following table shows that the size of the labor force in Sawyer County has expanded from the 1990 to the 2000 U.S. Census with a gain of 1,788 jobs, which represents a 23.2 percent in the county's labor force for that period.

From 1996 to 2008 unemployment rates within Sawyer County ranged from a low of 5.2 percent to a high of 7.0 percent. Sawyer County's average unemployment rate during the same period exceeded the unemployment rate for the ten county northwest region of the state. According to the Wisconsin of Workforce Development the historic unemployment rate for Sawyer County (6.0%) exceeds the statewide average (4.8%) by 25 percent. The September 2009 unemployment rate for Sawyer County was 7.1 percent and the statewide average was 8.3 percent while the national average was at 9.8 percent. There may be several reasons for Sawyer County's unemployment rate being less than the national, statewide and the northwest region of Wisconsin averages during 2009. One reason is attributable to effective economic development efforts by agencies like Sawyer County Development Corporation to recruit high-quality employers, such as Great Lakes Renewable Energy, Northern Bridges and Cemstone Corporation. Another reason is the success in retaining existing employers such as U-Roast-Em, Inc. Sawyer County has recovered from recessions somewhat more quickly than many other counties in Wisconsin. However, according to the non-partisan Consensus Economic Forecasting Commission the economic recession will continue into 2011. Therefore, it's unlikely that Sawyer County's better than expected performance in terms of unemployment is attributable to a leading edge recovery from the recession. Table 6-2 below reflects the unemployment for the county since 1996.

Year	Sawyer County	NW Wisconsin Region	Wisconsin
1996	6.6%	5.9%	3.5%
1997	6.8%	6.1%	3.7%
1998	6.2%	5.8%	3.7%
1999	5.2%	5.1%	3.0%
2000	6.6%	4.9%	3.0%
2001	5.6%	6.3%	4.4%
2002	6.2%	6.7%	5.3%
2003	7.0%	6.3%	4.9%
2004	6.1%	5.8%	4.2%
2005	6.0%	5.6%	4.8%
2006	6.2%	5.7%	4.8%
2007	6.4%	7.7%	4.7%
2008	6.7%	7.7%	4.7%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Current Population

According to statistics from the 2000 U.S. Census, the total population of Sawyer County is 16,196. Included within the total population of Sawyer County are approximately 2,559 tribal members who live upon the LCO reservation. Tribal members comprise approximately 15 percent of Sawyer County's population.

While the U.S. Census is generally accepted to provide a reasonable estimate of racial and ethnic distribution, the LCO Tribe has maintained that the U.S. Census does not accurately reflect tribal populations within Sawyer County.

Future Population and Labor Supply

According to the data the overwhelming trend in the county is towards an aging population that will soon outnumber the younger population. This trend may indicate a future shift in the types and quantity of services that will be demanded as the population ages. This shift in demographics presents challenges as well as opportunities for economic development.

Two examples, which provide future challenges and opportunities, are:

- The potential for labor shortages due to retirements and lack of replacement workers, especially in occupations that require primarily younger employees.
- The aging population will demand changes in the types of services and products.

Sawyer County's aging population trend can provide unanticipated economic development opportunities for the county. These trends have already begun to positively impact economic development within Sawyer County. In response to the county's aging population, the retail merchandiser and health care provider Walgreen's opened a facility in Sawyer County in 2008. Marshfield Clinic will open a branch clinic in Hayward in 2010 and Hayward Memorial Hospital broke ground on a new Assisted Living Facility in 2009. Northern Bridges with its nearly 40 jobs located its corporate headquarters and a satellite facility in Sawyer County in 2009, which will provide health care management services to senior citizens and disabled individuals. These new medical field businesses will help to address the needs of residents that live throughout the County and offer employment opportunities.

Sawyer County Median Household Income: Changes in the Future?

The median household income (MHI) for Sawyer County for a family of four is more than the poverty line, but less than 85 percent of the State median household income. The growth in Sawyer County's Median Household Income is detailed in Table 6-3.

Table 6-3: Sawyer County Median Household Income

	1990	% Change	2000	% Change	2007
Sawyer County	\$18,094	178.44%	\$32,287	13.4%	\$37,291
State of Wisconsin	\$29,442	149.35%	\$43,971	13.1%	\$50,578

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

A 2007 survey of people who owned second homes in Sawyer County revealed that the MHI might be about to shift upward. The survey, conducted by UW-River Falls and Sawyer County Development Corporation, indicated that Sawyer County's second homeowners are very well educated and earn relatively high incomes (\$100,000+/year) when compared with current year-round county residents. Second homeowners spend approximately \$17,500 per year for purchases in Sawyer County, resulting in a total estimated impact on the county economy of \$29.8 - \$32.5 million per year. It remains to be seen if the spending habits for the second homeowners change if they become year round residents. Of particular importance to economic development planning is that nearly 30 percent of the respondents indicated that they planned to move to Sawyer County. If second homeowners move to Sawyer County, it is anticipated that the influx of additional well-educated, relatively affluent year-round residents will have a significant, positive impact on economic development. These new residents are expected to become active in the county, bringing with them their education, higher incomes, expertise and varied life experiences in areas including planning, politics, development and business.

**The survey was sent to 1,265 seasonal households who owned a second home in Sawyer County. 631 people, about 50 percent (a significant percentage) responded to the survey.*

**Table 6-4: Sawyer County Economic Base
Employed Residents by Industry Sector (16 years and over)**

	Census 2000	Percentage
All Industries	7,199	100
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting, and mining	287	4.0
Construction	729	10.1
Manufacturing	847	11.8
Wholesale Trade	127	1.8
Retail Trade	938	13.0
Transportation & Warehousing, and Utilities	270	3.8
Information	90	1.3
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	323	4.5
Professional, scientific, management, admin., and waste mgmt.	393	5.5
Educational, health, and social services	1,245	17.3
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service	1,209	16.8
Other Services (except public administration)	338	4.7
Public administration	403	5.6

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 6-4 reflects the number of residents within Sawyer County by industry sector. A total of 7,199 residents were employed according to the 2000 U.S. Census. “Education, Health and Social Services” represent the largest sector of employment followed closely by the “Arts, entertainment, recreation accommodation and food service” category.

Forestry related occupations are imbedded throughout the economy of Sawyer County as evidenced by Table 6.5 showing Louisiana Pacific, Trussworks, and Arclin as three of the ten largest employers in Sawyer County as evidenced in Table 6-5.

Table 6-5: Sawyer County’s Largest Employers		
Employer	# of Employees	Industry Type
Lac Courte Oreilles Casino	350+	Gaming & Gambling
LCO Tribal Government	300 - 350	Tribal Government
Sawyer County Government	251 - 299	General Government
Hayward Public Schools	200 - 250	Education
Hayward Memorial Hospital	200 - 250	Health Care Services
Louisiana Pacific	150 - 199	Lumber Products
MarketPlace Foods – Hayward	100 - 149	Grocery Store
Trussworks	50 - 75	Roof/Floor Trusses
Valley Health Care Center	50 - 75	Health/Nursing Care
Arclin Corporation	50 - 75	Paper Treatment
Wal-Mart	200-249	Discount Department Store

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

All of the above listed employers have operated within Sawyer County since 1990 with the exception of Northern Bridges, which headquartered in Sawyer County in 2008 and Wal-Mart.

Sawyer County’s Current Industry Group Employment

According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development’s 2004 Sawyer County Workforce Profile, roughly 50 percent of all county manufacturing jobs are in the wood products sub-sector. Great Lakes Renewable Energy, Inc. opened a new wood fuel pellet manufacturing plant in 2008 adding to the percentage of jobs in the manufacturing and agriculture subsectors. The plant employs 21 full-time employees year-round and supports 12 year-round, full-time foresters. Others such as Louisiana-Pacific, Johnson Timber and Midwest Forest Products also contribute significantly to the overall wood products sector.

Jobs – Sawyer County Employer Categories

The jobs within Sawyer County are derived within the following categories: Private wage or salary jobs account for 73 percent of all employment positions in the county. Government is responsible for 16 percent of all jobs in the county and Self-employed individuals who have not incorporated their businesses account for 11 percent of the county’s jobs. http://www.city-data.com/county/Sawyer_County-WI.html#ixzz0WLjlqoFJ

Travel to Employment

Sawyer County residents have an average travel time to their places of employment of 18 minutes (Table 6-6). Most Sawyer County employees travel to the Town of Hayward or the City of Hayward for employment.

Table 6-6: Commuting to Work in Sawyer County		
Workers 16 years and over	6,979	100.0
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	5,143	73.7
Car, truck, or van – carpoled	843	12.1
Public transportation (including taxicab)	37	0.5
Walked	431	6.2
Other means	96	1.4
Worked at home	429	6.1
Mean travel time to work	18.4 minutes	-

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development 2008

Sawyer County employers attract 1,230 people from other counties for employment of which 86 percent travel to the town or city of Hayward for employment. Conversely, 1,130 Sawyer County residents travel out of the county for employment. That means one in six people who live within Sawyer County travel out of the county to their places of employment. Nearly one-third travel to Washburn County and another third travel to Barron and Rusk counties. The most popular destinations for employment of Sawyer County residents who commute for employment are (in order) Rice Lake, Birchwood and Ladysmith. Sawyer County residents who travel out of county for employment are included in labor force estimates for Sawyer County.

TOURISM: THE BACKBONE OF SAWYER COUNTY EMPLOYMENT

Tourism and lodging in Sawyer County has had a significant economic impact and is responsible for much of the growth within Sawyer County. The impact that tourism and lodging has on future economic development is often overlooked. The owners of second homes within Sawyer County became interested in the area when they vacationed at a local family operated resort. Sawyer County Development Corporation's second homeowner survey documented the economic impact that they have had, and will continue to have, within Sawyer County as summarized in the Median Household Income section.

The lodging industry is not without challenges. Rising property taxes and increased expenses have taken a toll on many of the resorts. Many of the resorts have opted to sell their rental cottages that were once rented on a weekly basis throughout the summer to new guests each week. Faced with the financial challenges many resort owners determined that the parts of the resorts were more valuable when sold off piece-by-piece than the resort as a whole. The cottages that were sold off from the resorts of yesteryear are now owned by people who use them just a few weeks each summer. The economic impact of the lost weekly turn-over from the large number of resorts "going-condo" has been felt in many restaurants, gas stations, bait and tackle shops, taverns, and other tourist-related businesses.

Since the early 1990's there has been a growing trend toward shorter stays of duration for visiting tourists. While the shorter stays have proven to be a challenge to the traditional resorts which feature weekly cabin rentals, the change has provided opportunities for hoteliers. In response to the decrease in the length of tourist stays, hotels have been built in Sawyer County, such as: the Country Inn and Suites, the Flat Creek Eatery and Suites, Comfort Inn, AmericInn, Lac Courte Hotel, just to

name a few. The hotels are primarily centered in the town and city of Hayward and businesses within Hayward have benefited from this shift in tourist visitation duration.

1996	\$ 72,301,000
2000	134,654,292
2004	133,241,796
2006	147,007,537
2007	143,356,546
2008	143,780,000

Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism

Tourism accounted for 3,370 full-time employment (FTE's) positions within Sawyer County in 2007. In 2006 tourism accounted for 3,456 FTE's. Tourism added \$6,783,000 in taxes collected in 2007. www.industry.travelwisconsin.com

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Due to uncertain fuel prices and efforts to develop alternative fuel sources Sawyer County is well positioned to capitalize on the quest to develop alternative fuel sources that are reliable and efficient. The recent ground-breaking within the Town of Hayward for the Great Lakes Renewable Energy (GLRE) manufacturing plant that produces wood fuel pellets, which heat residential and commercial buildings, may be the first indicator of future manufacturing trends within Sawyer County. Cellulose derived ethanol may provide another opportunity for Sawyer County economic development as manufacturing processes develop greater efficiencies and economies-to-scale (ie: cost efficient manufacturing). If cellulose-derived ethanol attains cost-efficiency as national economists predict, then it can be anticipated that Sawyer County will participate in a significant manner in the growth of that industry much as it has with wooden fuel pellets. Considering much of the current "waste" of logging operations can be utilized to provide an inexpensive and readily available supply of raw materials for cellulose-derived ethanol Sawyer County seems well positioned should economies to scale be realized. The types of "waste" utilized in the manufacturing process, includes leaves from cut timber, grass and organic clippings. There has been some debate over the effects of such manufacturing operations on the ecology of forests, animal life and the environment. Before any permits for operations could be issued, public hearings would be conducted by agencies, such as the WDNR, for input regarding the merits and environmental impact of such a business.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Sawyer County's median age of 43.1 ranks tenth highest among Wisconsin's counties. In just a couple of years the number of residents aged 65 years will exceed those aged 18 years. Those aged 18 years are a proxy for new entrants to the labor force searching for full-time jobs, while those aged 65 years represent workers leaving the workforce. In recent years workers have been retiring before they turn 65 and even if they do not completely retire they are less actively engaged in the labor force. If this trend continues, it will impact employment and economic opportunities within the county. New types of employers which provide goods and services to the elderly could cause additional upward pressures on wages.

Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities to Attract and Retain Businesses and Industry.

Opportunities to attract new businesses and industry are limited due to Sawyer County's rural location and limited infrastructure. However, Sawyer County has identifiable strengths which have proven to be attractive to new employers engaged in health care, wood products, technology based higher paying jobs including manufacturing that will enhance the quality of life without compromising the unique character of the area.

Sawyer County offers potential employers an educated and stable employment base and a quality of life and environmental beauty that most employers and employees find desirable. In addition, the stability of the workforce and population exceeds national averages with 62.2 percent of county residents living in their current residences for five years or more (per 2000 U.S. Census for the period of 1995-2000).

Sawyer County is faced with weaknesses that hinder economic development. Examples of such weaknesses are: lack of infrastructure, readily available cellular service and high speed internet. Other weaknesses are distance to market, lack of immediately available raw materials and a labor force population that is not specifically trained for key industries. However, there are three educational institutions within the county to train and educate potential workers Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College – Hayward, LCO Community College and the University of Wisconsin – Extension. Each of the educational institutions has the ability to design curriculum to meet the needs of specific employers.

Although without immediate access to a major interstate highway, Sawyer County is served by the Hayward Airport, which can accommodate airplanes up to the size of small passenger jets. This is a strength that has provided economic opportunities and growth for Sawyer County. The capacity of the airport could be enhanced with addition of the ALS system, which will enable flights to land and take off during inclement weather conditions.

Additionally, Sawyer County taxpayers stand committed to attracting additional employment to the County. 63.3 percent of the respondents to the Sawyer County Comprehensive Plan Survey supported County government granting financial incentives to attract and retain employers to Sawyer County. Furthermore, a total of 97 percent of the respondents to the survey thought the County should focus on retaining jobs, creating new economic development/job opportunities, or both.

Sawyer County has a large number of homeowners who utilize their Sawyer County homes as second residences. Many of these individuals who live elsewhere (primarily Minneapolis/St. Paul) spend weekends and short-term stays at their second homes in the county. If cellular service and high-speed internet were readily available throughout the county, it is anticipated that many of the second homeowners could relocate to the county because they would be able to operate home offices. This potential group of individuals would bolster job growth within the township and could significantly impact the local economy with their higher than average incomes.

Additionally, many of the roads within the county are subject to "road bans" (weight limits) during the period of the annual spring thaw. Companies, which require over-the-road transport of raw materials and finished products, are not likely to locate facilities upon affected roads. There is however potential for some limited manufacturing along major highways and county highways, such as County Highway B and State Highway 63 which passes through the county. Sawyer County is also located within 30-miles of the Interstate 53 freeway system.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS: OPPORTUNITY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SAWYER COUNTY

The economic development of the County is constrained by the limited telecommunications amenities (such as cellular services and high speed internet). If cellular service and high speed internet were readily available throughout the County jobs creation and tax revenues could increase.

In many communities across the country, citizens who have access to cell service are discontinuing their traditional wired phone services, in favor of cellular service as their sole phone source in an effort to reduce expenses. With the use of the highly popular smart phone technology, such as the BlackBerry and I-Phone, only a clear cellular signal is needed to access the internet. With advances in cellular technology, business activities can be conducted almost anywhere there is cellular service.

Private companies are usually the owners of cellular towers and are responsible for site acquisition and tower placement. In some cases, it may be feasible for a municipality to own cellular towers to secure cell service for its residents. Many Towns within the County have identified the absence of cellular service and high-speed internet as an obstacle to economic development.

Issues, Opportunities, and Constraint

The availability of quality natural resources within Sawyer County offers a wide array of outdoor recreational opportunities that support the local tourism industry. The county owned forest system is a prime example. Sawyer County government owned forest lands take property off the tax rolls, but provide recreational opportunities and revenues to the county through the sale of forest stumpage. There has been some debate over the long-term economic impact of the removal of said lands from the tax rolls. Some taxpayers take the position that the county owned lands should be sold to lower taxes and provide badly needed revenues for county operations.

Because the local economy is primarily based on tourism the majority of jobs in Sawyer County are lower paying jobs in the service and retail trade sectors which accounts for the lower than statewide average Median Household Income (MHI) level. The lower wages from these jobs challenge households to afford basic needs, including housing, goods, and services. Sawyer County does not have an excess of workers to fill the available tourism jobs within the area. In an effort to attract employees, many employers are beginning to pay more for the same work than they paid in past years and some employers are utilizing work visa programs for foreign workers who are willing to earn less than American workers. There is clearly an upward pressure on the hourly rate of pay for lower wage jobs in Sawyer County as employers compete with each other to attract workers. Sawyer County employers may soon feel a tangible impact from the upward pressure on wages. However, these jobs typically lack costly fringe benefits.

While real estate prices in Sawyer County have appreciated handsomely over the last decade, recent trends brought about by problems attributable to the sub-prime national mortgage markets, have served to level-out real estate prices within the county. In response to the persistent demand for affordable housing in Sawyer County, several affordable housing developments have recently been completed and others are planned. Obviously, the supply of affordable housing is vital to economic development efforts within a community, because workers employed in lower-paying service and

retail jobs need affordable housing opportunities. However, while there are several affordable housing developments planned within Sawyer County, most have been delayed by the recent downturn in the national economy and the housing market in general. Sawyer County has seen its share of planned housing developments; however, the developments (in general) are not marketed to families in need of affordable housing opportunities.

Incentives

The future of economic development growth within Sawyer County is dependent upon: the growth and expansion of existing businesses; new business start-ups within the county; and, attracting new employers to the area from outside of Sawyer County. In today's competitive market to retain and attract businesses, many municipalities and counties have adopted incentive packages.

While there is often resistance to offering incentives to businesses to retain or attract employment, the practice has, nonetheless, become a fact of life in a competitive environment where communities develop strategies with the goal of creating opportunities to retain and create jobs. Economic development incentives have not been developed or adopted anywhere in Sawyer County to-date. In anticipation of potential future economic and industrial development opportunities it should be advisable for county officials to develop economic development policies, which are reflective of the results of the 2007 Sawyer County Comprehensive Plan Survey.

Business and Industrial Sites

Sawyer County has limited business and industrial sites set-aside. However, county zoning regulations and requirements can potentially influence the location and type of businesses within the county.

Economic Development Programs

Included below are a listing of several regional, state, and federal economic development related programs available to Sawyer County, surrounding communities, local economic development organizations, and/or local businesses. These programs are organized according to the agency that makes each of them available.

FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Federal Economic Development Programs

USDA-Rural Development Programs

USDA Rural Development: Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program

This program provides loan guarantees up to 80 percent for eligible projects. Maximum guarantees of up to \$10 million are available for each business. The program was established to improve, develop, or finance business, industry and employment, and to improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. For more information: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/b&i_gar.htm

USDA-Rural Development: Community Facility Loan (CFL) Program

The CFL program provides loan guarantees of up to 90 percent for eligible projects; however, unless extraordinary circumstances exist, typically the program will guarantee up to 80 percent. The program is designed to construct, enlarge, extend or otherwise improve public and community facilities that provide essential services in rural areas and town with populations of less than 50,000. For more information: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/cf/cp.htm>

USDA-Rural Development: Rural Economic Development Loan Program (REDL)

The Rural Economic Development Loan (REDL) Program has the purpose of fostering economic development and employment in rural areas. The REDL program typically involves loan funding which passes through a rural utility, such as an electric cooperative to the ultimate borrower. The funds can be use for construction of business incubators, start-up costs for economic development initiatives, job creation projects, and other reasonable expenses for projects, which will lead to jobs creation. For more information: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/redlg.htm>

U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)**EDA: Public Works and Development Facility Grant Program**

Under this program, grants are provided to help distressed communities or organizations which serve those communities with the goal of attracting new industry, encouraging business expansion, diversifying local economies and generating or retaining long-term, private sector jobs. For more information: <http://www.eda.gov/AboutEDA/Programs.xml>

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**SBA Loan Guarantee Programs**

The recent groundbreaking for the Great Lakes Renewable Energy manufacturing plant likely would not have occurred without the SBA loan guarantee that GLRE had received. The purpose of this program is to provide loan guarantees to lenders, which are unable to provide conventional financing to small businesses. For more information:

<http://www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/sbaloantopics/index.html>

State of Wisconsin Economic Development Programs**Wisconsin Department of Commerce (DOC)****WI DOC: Community-Base Economic Development Program (CBED)**

CBED provides funding assistance to local government and community-based organizations that undertake planning or development projects or that provides technical assistance services that are in support of business and community development. For more information:

<http://www.commerce.state.wi.us/cd/CD-index-about.html>

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)**Transportation Facilities for Economic Assistance and Development (TEA) Program**

The TEA program provides funds to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for transportation facility improvement projects that are necessary to help attract employers to Wisconsin, or to encourage businesses to remain and expand in the state. For more information:

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/tea.htm>

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)**Small Business Guarantee**

The program provides loan guarantees of up to 80 percent on new loans for upgrading or expanding an existing business. Although changes for the guarantee limits are reportedly in process, current maximum guarantees amount to \$200,000 on loans up to \$750,000 and \$80,000 on loans up to \$250,000 for working capital. The WHEDA Small Business Guarantee program is designed to assist in the acquisition or expansion of existing small businesses. For more information:

<http://www.wheda.com/root/WhedaProducts/SmallBusiness/Default.aspx?id=187>

Local and Regional Programs

Indianhead Community Action Agency (ICAA) Revolving Loan Fund

The Indianhead Community Action Agency (ICAA) Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) has the goal of creating and retaining employment opportunities in the ICAA nine county service area of northwest Wisconsin. For more information: <http://www.indianheadcaa.org/business.asp>

Sawyer County Development Corporation (SCDC)

SCDC Revolving Loan Fund

Sawyer County Development Corporation (SCDC) is a non-profit organization responsible for conducting and coordinating business and economic development efforts within Sawyer County. SCDC administers a Revolving Loan Fund which has the goal of providing capital for new and existing businesses in Sawyer County. Loans are made from the SCDC RLF at interest rates that range from 4 percent-6 percent. For more information: <http://www.scdc.us>

Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC)

Northwest Wisconsin Regional Economic Development Fund (NWREDF)

The Northwest Wisconsin Regional Economic Development Fund (NWREDF) administers the revolving loan program in partnership with local communities (including Sawyer County), Northwest Regional Planning Commission and the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. NWREDF provides low-cost financing of up to \$200,000, for eligible businesses seeking to either start or expand their operations in Northwest Wisconsin. Focus is placed on high technology businesses, manufacturing, timber, secondary wood products, and the tourism industry. For more information: <http://www.nwrpc.com/economic-development>

Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Fund (NWBDF)

The Northwest Wisconsin Business Development Corporation administers several revolving loan funds providing long-term fixed rate, low down payment and low interest financing to industries in northwestern Wisconsin. For more information: <http://www.nwrpc.com/economic-development>