

Economic Development

The Town of Round Lake’s rural and its environs exhibit a different kind of economic development model, one with businesses relying on the area’s Northwoods character, plentiful water resources, and acres of public (state and federal) forest resources.

Labor Force Profile

Table 6.1: General Characteristics of Round Lake			
Characteristics	Town of Round Lake	Sawyer County	Wisconsin
Civilian Labor Force	507	7,733	3,085,151
Unemployment Rate	3.5%	3.6%	3.1%
Labor Participation Rate	52.9%	57.6%	66.9%
Education Beyond High School (25 and over)	72.0%	56.7%	60.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher (25 and over)	34.7%	22.0%	29.0%
Per Capita Income	\$38,483	\$29,712	\$30,557
Median Household Income	\$64,091	\$43,565	\$56,759
Poverty Rate	2.3%	13.1%	8.1%
Median Age	59.2	49.7	39.2

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) -Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates. The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development defines labor force as all persons 16 years of age or over who are either employed or unemployed.

Economic Base

Table 6.2: Employed Residents by Industry Sector		
Industry	2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates	Percent
All Industries	473	100.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	10	2.1%
Construction	30	6.3%
Manufacturing	58	12.3%
Wholesale trade	4	0.8%
Retail trade	35	7.4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	12	2.5%
Information	14	3.0%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	45	9.5%
Professional, scientific, mgmt., administrative, waste mgmt.	44	9.3%
Educational, health and social services	126	26.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food service	51	10.8%
Other services (except public administration)	26	5.5%
Public administration	18	3.8%

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) - Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates

Table 6.3: Median Household Income	
Industry	Median Household Income
Town of Round Lake	\$64,091
Sawyer County	\$43,565
State of Wisconsin	\$56,759

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) -Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates

Economy and Largest Employers

According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, the sector of employment with the largest percentage of employment, in the Town of Round Lake, is primarily educational, health, and social services. The majority of tourism-based businesses within the Town of Round Lake are the resorts or tourist support business (restaurants), but the number of resorts has declined steadily since the late 1960’s as resorts continue to be subdivided and sold off.

Future Population and Labor Supply

The trend in the Town of Round Lake and Sawyer County is toward an aging population that will soon outnumber the younger population. This trend points to a potential shift in the types and quantity of services that will be demanded as the population ages. This shift in the age of the population presents challenges as well as opportunities for economic development including:

- 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.

Town of Round Lake Strengths

The Town of Round Lake has unique strengths, which could lead to job growth and retention. Strengths include:

- A high degree of environmental quality and beauty which most would agree make the Town of Round Lake a highly desirable place to work and live.
- Stability of the workforce and population exceeds national averages, with 25.9% of Round Lake residents living in their current residences for five years or more.
- Residents possess attained educational levels that exceed averages found within Northwest Wisconsin.
- Three educational institutions within Sawyer County are available to the Town of Round Lake residents to train and educate if an employer with a requirement for specific skills would locate to the area. They are Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC), Hayward LCO Community College, and University of Wisconsin – Extension.

The availability of quality natural resources within the Town of Round Lake offers a wide array of outdoor recreational opportunities that support the local tourism industry.

- Small-scale, family-owned businesses compatible with this 2019 Amendment and the Town of Round Lake 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the environment and the unique Northwoods character of the Town, are encouraged.
- There is potential for some limited manufacturing facilities along County Highway B, County Highway A, and State Highway 77 within the Town of Round Lake.
- Median Household Income (MHI) within the Town of Round Lake was nearly 13% higher than the statewide average and is 47% higher than that of Sawyer County.
- There are no known contaminated land sites. If any sites and problems are found, the Town will take a proactive role in resolving and working with local, state, and federal agencies.
- The Town of Round Lake and Sawyer County benefit from the Hayward Airport which accommodates planes up to the size of small passenger jets.

Town of Round Lake Weaknesses

However, the Town of Round Lake is faced with challenges that hinder economic development. Weaknesses include:

- Lack of infrastructure for robust cellular service and high-speed internet. If cellular service and high-speed internet were readily available in Round Lake, it is anticipated that some of the second homeowners of Round Lake would relocate to the Town because they would be able to operate home offices. This potential group of individuals would bolster job growth within the Town.
- Distance to market. The Hayward area, including the City of Hayward and Town of Hayward, serves as the primary retail, employment and service center for Sawyer County including the Town of Round Lake. Most Town of Round Lake residents, who are employed, work in Hayward and have an average travel time to their places of employment of 26 minutes. Nearly 72% of those employed drive to work alone and 13% carpool. 12.8% of Round Lake residents work from home.
- Lack of immediately available raw materials.
- Because many of the roads within the Town of Round Lake 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 throughout the Town.
- A majority of jobs in the Town of Round Lake are lower paying jobs in the service and retail trade sectors.
- The need of affordable housing opportunities.

Economic Development Programs

Several economic development programs are available to qualifying applicants from within the Town of Round Lake, surrounding communities, Sawyer County, local economic development organizations, and/or local businesses. They include but are not limited to:

Sawyer County Development Corporation - Provides assistance to businesses, Individuals and Families, Governments and Community organizations. <http://www.scdc.us/>

Sawyer County/Lac Courte Oreilles Economic Development Corporation - <http://sclcoedc.com/>.

The Sawyer County | Lac Courte Oreilles Economic Development Corporation Centers On:

- Encouraging New Business Ventures
- Supporting Existing Businesses to Grow for Long Term Stability
- Bolstering the Local Workforce: Skills, Knowledge, Infrastructure
- Recruit new businesses to the Sawyer County / Lac Courte Oreilles communities.
- Job creation and retention
- Workforce training
- Community development for improved living
- Housing development/availability

Wisconsin Procurement Institute - The Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI), a non-profit organization established in 1987 assists Wisconsin businesses in all of Wisconsin's 72 counties to create, develop and grow their Federal, State and Local Government sales, revenues, profits and jobs. <https://www.wispro.org/about-wpi/>

The Wisconsin Economic Development Institute - The Wisconsin Economic Development Institute, Inc. (WEDI) is a not-for-profit*, non-partisan foundation formed to conduct research and education designed to increase the effectiveness of economic development efforts. <https://www.wi-edi.org/index.html>

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) - Transportation Facilities for Economic Assistance and Development (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. <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/tea.html>

United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development - USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. <https://www.rd.usda.gov/wi>.

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