

Where Should You Locate Your Business?

Many business's relying on customers coming through the door will find its choice of location to be one of the most important factors influencing business success. Choosing a location involves studying the demographics of the market area associated with the location, factoring in the location of competing businesses, evaluating the characteristics of the location, and comparing costs.

Location Decisions

Will you buy a building? Rent a space? Lease an existing establishment? Many different factors may influence your location decision.

- Proximity to your market.
- Accessibility to your customers.
- Sources of inventory and materials.
- Appropriate labor forces.
- Sources of technical, managerial and financial assistance.

Business Incubators

Incubators can play a nurturing role in helping young businesses survive and grow during the start-up period when they are most financially vulnerable. Business incubators are rental facilities for developing businesses with affordable space and shared tenant services.

Through a business incubator, tenants may begin and expand their business operations while minimizing administrative costs by sharing the costs of services such as:

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|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Photocopying | VCR Monitor & Recorder |
| Fax | Transmission/Receiving |
| Mail | Loading Docks |
| UPS Shipping & Receiving | Forklifts |
| Internet Access | Customer Parking |
| Conference Rooms | Chamber Membership Discounts |
| Business Library | |
| Receptionist | |

Some incubators will have eligibility requirements or target certain business types while others will be open to any type of business.

Industrial Parks

Wisconsin has over 53,000 acres in 485 industrial parks located throughout the state. These parks are linked to an extensive international transportation system including rail, air, truck, and ship. Wisconsin's industrial parks feature infrastructure improvements such as roads, public sanitary sewer, water supply, power, and communications. Each park can also accommodate a wide range of industrial and technical activities.

Home-Based Business

If you plan to run your business out of your home, be sure to check on the local zoning regulations to be sure that what you plan to do is allowed.

If your local community has a home-owners' association, be sure that you won't violate any rules about activities permitted in your neighborhood. Discuss your plans with neighbors, especially if your activities will involve more traffic on your street from clients coming and going or noise from machinery in your shop.

The Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing regulates many different types of professions, some which may operate out of your home. For more information, visit: www.drl.state.wi.us/Regulation/applicant_information/applicant_information.html.

Home-Based Business Association of Wisconsin, Inc. HBBA is a group of home-based business owners with resources to assist, educate, and provide support to new and existing entrepreneurs. Based in Brown county, HBBA is dedicated to assisting and promoting home-based businesses in Northeast Wisconsin and hopes to establish chapters statewide. Contact Connie Koerth at membership@hbba-wi.org, 920-864-7708 or visit www.hbba-wi.org.

For Location Information and Assistance

The Wisconsin Building and Sites Database contains hundreds of available building and sites across the state, with new properties added daily at www.siteswi.com.

Local Economic Development Organizations - www.commerce.state.wi.us/MT/MT-CountyLEDO.html

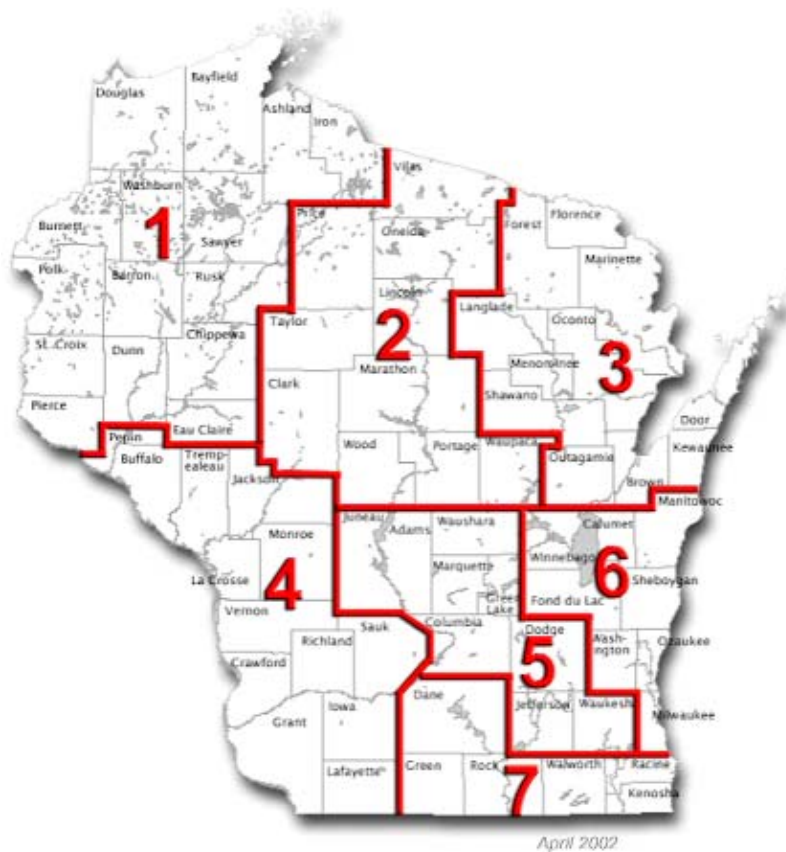
Regional Planning Contacts - www.commerce.state.wi.us/MT/MT-RPC-map.html

WI Chambers of Commerce - www.wmc.org/WIResources/superpage.cfm?category=6

Utility Companies - Many utility companies offer site location assistance for companies within their service area. They maintain data on available buildings and industrial sites and may provide economic profiles of various communities. To find the gas or electric utility company servicing your area: <http://psc.wi.gov/gas/general/document/gasmap.pdf> or <http://psc.wi.gov/electric/document/servterr.pdf>.

UW-Extension County Natural Resource and Development Agents – Located throughout the state, extension agents help Wisconsin communities deal with their own unique challenges such as resource constraints, business development, growth management, environmental protection, and the quality of life. Find your county's resources at <http://cf.uwex.edu/ces/cty>.

Wisconsin Department of Commerce - Area Development Managers assist business expansions, promote business retention, and help local development organizations in their respective territories. Area development managers (ADM's) use their knowledge of federal, state, and regional resources to provide a variety of information to expanding or relocating firms. They also mobilize resources to help struggling businesses. Local economic development practitioners can turn to area development managers for assistance with long-term marketing and planning strategies.



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