

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

In March of 1998, the Town of Woodstock retained the services of an economic research consultant to assist in the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the Town's business climate. The study is part of a large scale planning effort to guide future economic development. Woodstock's Business Enhancement Plan analyzes the economic environment and business climate by looking at various aspects of the community. These include the physical environment, the economic and demographic conditions, and real estate and market overviews. This study, in its completion will be available for citizen review.

This chapter will examine current statistical data for the Town as a whole, then focus on the unique business nodes within the Town. Ultimately we will establish goals for the enhancement of these business nodes for the next twenty years. This chapter provides information on the employment in the Woodstock area, compares the Town with the economy of the County as a whole, and includes data showing the occupations and income levels of Woodstock's residents.

CURRENT STATISTICAL DATA

Approximately 258 businesses and industries are located in or around Woodstock. These firms are divided into several categories of products and services. When contrasted with employment figures for the entire county, Woodstock emerges as the center for government, services, and trade. Approximately 36 percent of the county government employment, 48 percent of the county's employment in services, and 36 percent of the county's employment in trade is located in or around Woodstock.

In Woodstock, the local economy consists of both the basic and support sectors. Manufacturing and the creation of goods and services to sell outside of the production area comprise the basic sector. Services, trade, construction, finance and real estate are examples of the supporting sector that concentrates on directly supplying local needs.

The largest of these categories in terms of average employment is Services, with about 30 percent of the total work force (see figure 5-1). Employment in this category includes such services and occupations as lawyers, doctors, hospitals, education, dry cleaners, and theaters. Shenandoah Memorial Hospital, Inc. is the single largest employer in this group, with a 1999 average employment of about 385. In addition, approximately 340 people are employed in the Woodstock area by the Shenandoah County School Board.

Wholesale and Retail Trade employs approximately 26 percent of the area workforce as of 1998. There are 74 businesses in this category, with a total employment of 1,040 persons. Government employees in Woodstock are numbered around 600, including County Offices, Town Government, and School Board. This constitutes about 15 percent of Woodstock's employment.

Manufacturing comprises 8 percent of the area's employment. There are 9 manufacturing firms in the Woodstock area, with a total employment of 317. The largest company is Wrangler of Vanity Fair Jeans, Inc., with a total employment of about 250.

The Town's economy is fairly diversified, with increasing emphasis on service type industries, included medical and legal specialties.

The number of persons employed in the Woodstock area in 1998 was 3,422. This figure includes only those employees who are covered by unemployment compensation. Other employment centers also exist within commuting distance from Woodstock. These include Harrisonburg, 41 miles to the south; Luray, 29 miles to the southeast; Strasburg, 12 miles to the north; and Winchester, 31 miles to the north. All but Luray are easily accessible along Interstate 81. Over 90% of Woodstock residents work within Shenandoah County, drive alone, and their work trip takes less than 20 minutes.

Figure 5-1
EMPLOYMENT IN WOODSTOCK, VIRGINIA - 1998

| | Total Firms | Total Employed | Percent |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Agriculture | 7 | 34 | 0.9 |
| Contract Construction | 18 | 106 | 2.7 |
| Manufacturing | 9 | 317 | 8 |
| Transportation, Communications & Utilities | 8 | 68 | 1.7 |
| Wholesale & Retail Trade | 74 | 1040 | 26 |
| Finance, Insurance & Real Estate | 28 | 157 | 4 |
| Services | 111 | 1456 | 36.7 |
| Government | 3 | 245 | 6.2 |
| Total | 258 | 3422 | 86.2 |

Source: Shenandoah County Director of Economic Development/ Adjusted VEC Data

So far, the above material has dealt with the employment opportunities offered by the businesses and industries located in or around Woodstock. Following are employment statistics of Shenandoah County on the numbers of employed persons by occupation (figure 5-2) and numbers of employed persons by industry (figure 5-3).

FIGURE 5-2

EMPLOYED PERSONS 16 YEARS AND OVER BY OCCUPATION

| | Woodstock | Shen. Co. |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Total Employed 16 years and over | 1,406 | 15,622 |
| Managerial and Professional Specialty | | |
| Executive, Administrative, Managerial | 161 | 1,164 |
| Professional Specialty | 180 | 1,295 |
| Technical, Sales, Administrative Support: | | |
| Technicians and Related Support | 22 | 455 |
| Sales | 104 | 1,316 |
| Administrative Support including Clerical | 220 | 2,007 |
| Service: | | |
| Private Household | - | 31 |
| Protective Service | 49 | 225 |
| Service, Except Protective and Household | 160 | 1,653 |
| Farming, Forestry, and Fishing | 45 | 774 |
| Precision Production, Craft, and Repair | 193 | 2,781 |
| Operators, Fabricators, and Laborers: | | |
| Machine Operators, Assemblers, Inspectors | 137 | 2,091 |
| Transportation and material Moving | 78 | 853 |
| Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers, Laborers | 57 | 997 |

Source: 1990 Census, Key Characteristics, Lord Fairfax Planning District Commission, December 1993

Services (except for household or protective services), and professional specialties are the top two occupations held by Woodstock residents.

Details of the type of industry that the Town's residents are employed by are also available for the 1990 Census. The largest number of employees work in the various types of service industries, followed by manufacturing, and then wholesale and retail trade.

Figure 5-3
EMPLOYED PERSONS 16 AND OVER BY INDUSTRY

| | <u>WOODSTOCK</u> | <u>SHENANDOAH CO.</u> |
|---|------------------|-----------------------|
| Employed Persons 16 years and over | 1,406 | 15,622 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries | 43 | 802 |
| Mining | - | 64 |
| Construction | 125 | 1,922 |
| Manufacturing: | | |
| Nondurable Goods | 217 | 2,777 |
| Durable goods | 116 | 1,489 |
| Transportation | 44 | 483 |
| Communication, Other Public Utilities | 12 | 379 |
| Wholesale Trade | 26 | 564 |
| Retail Trade | 175 | 2,277 |
| Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate | 132 | 635 |
| Business and Repair Services | 97 | 623 |
| Personal Services | 38 | 423 |
| Entertainment and Recreation Services | 16 | 77 |
| Professional and Related Services: | | |
| Health Services | 157 | 1,078 |
| Educational Services | 68 | 951 |
| Other Professional and Related Services | 57 | 630 |
| Public Administration | 83 | 448 |

Source: 1990 Census, Key Characteristics, Loud Fairfax Planning District Commission, December 1993.

There is a high correlation between the largest employers shown in the data available from the Virginia Employment Commission and the types of employment shown by the Census data for Woodstock's residents. This indicates that many workers are employed locally. Given the size of the Town's workforce, over 2,000 of the jobs in and around Woodstock are held by people living outside of the corporate limits.

Over 90% of residents work within Shenandoah County, drive alone, and their work trip takes less than 20 minutes.

Figure 5-4
WORKERS 16 YEARS AND OVER BY PLACE OF WORK

| | <u>Woodstock</u> | <u>Shenandoah Co.</u> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Workers 16 years and over | | 15,407 |
| Worked in State of Residence: | | |
| In County of Residence | | 11,014 |
| Outside County of Residence | | 3,932 |

Worked Outside of State

461

Source: 1990 Census, Key Characteristics, Lord Fairfax Planning District Commission, December 1993.

According to the 1990 Census, the median family income (that figure at which there are an equal number of families above and below) for Woodstock is \$31,623 and \$31,273 for Shenandoah County. The median family income for the Lord Fairfax Planning District was \$29,275 and for Virginia was \$33,328. The median income for a family in Town is \$31,623. Specific income levels are shown in Figure 5-5.

Figure 5-5
1989 INCOME

| | <u>HOUSEHOLDS</u> | | <u>FAMILIES</u> | |
|------------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| | Shenandoah Co. | Woodstock | Shenandoah Co. | Woodstock |
| Households | 12,452 | 1,103 | 9,179 | 851 |
| Less than \$5,000 | 943 | 142 | 258 | 18 |
| \$5,000 to \$9,999 | 1,305 | 182 | 569 | 50 |
| \$10,000 to \$14,999 | 1,116 | 190 | 613 | 88 |
| \$15,000 to \$24,999 | 2,443 | 301 | 1,812 | 185 |
| \$25,000 to \$34,999 | 2,394 | 200 | 2,067 | 147 |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999 | 2,257 | 114 | 2,037 | 118 |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999 | 1,436 | 187 | 1,317 | 167 |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999 | 351 | 35 | 320 | 35 |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | 112 | 25 | 91 | 16 |
| \$150,000 or more | 95 | 27 | 95 | 27 |
| Median income | 26,527 | 20,426 | 31,273 | 31,623 |

Source: 1990 Census, Key Characteristics, Lord Fairfax Planning District Commission, December 1993.

BUSINESS NODES

Four unique nodes of business land uses have been identified in the Town. The Downtown, the North Area, the South Area, and the West Area. Below is a brief reference to these areas and general statements on goals and objectives.

Downtown

* centered on Main Street between Foundry Street and South Street and on Commerce Street between North Street and Spring Street

(north to Catholic Church, Shenandoah Valley Herald newspaper office, south to South Street, Hair Gallery, Coin Shop, Spring House and Spring Hollow Antiques)

Goals and Objectives

Promote tourism and visitor attraction potential through historic preservation and promotional events. Encourage retail and professional tenants. Reinforce potential as a dining district. Encourage establishing physical improvements and recruitment of new uses and businesses.

North Area

* centered on Main Street and North of the Woodstock Shopping Center

(Grubb Chevrolet, Sugar Shack, ice cream stand, Woodstock Trailer Park, Texaco HandiMart, Fitness Firm, H.N. Funkhouser fuel, Napa Auto Parts, Wetsel Brothers ... County Administration Campus, Woodstock Shopping Center ... Social Services, offices)

Goals and Objectives

Explore State Tourism Incentives to Create a Gateway to Woodstock: Link to Regional Tourism strategy. Consider financial incentives for a start-up/relocation of food-related uses for old Safeway space. Encourage the opportunity for additional residential and small-scale industrial development in this area.

South Area

* centered on Main Street and the Shenandoah Square Shopping Center

(extends north to Muhlenburg Ford, ... including Reservoir Road: west to the intersection with Susan Avenue: Church, Woodstock Volunteer Rescue Squad, east to Bowling Alley, south to Hoover Road)

Goals and Objectives

Encourage opportunities for additional empty-nester/retiree housing in attractive mixed density housing development. Encourage and market opportunities for additional National/Regional retail chain stores. Coordinate zoning and land use with West area development issues. The South Area includes the Shenandoah Memorial Hospital Campus: Hospital and Professional Building employees the largest number of employees in Town, with approximate figures (385 overall, 150 max shift, 105 Town residents)

Goals and Objectives

Encourage buildout of hospital properties with high-end nursing home establishment and possible wellness attractions. Encourage health related retail operations on this end of Main Street.

West Area

* centered on the I-81/ Route 42 interchange, from eastern most point of the intersection with Ox Road: Real Estate, Bank ... including Motel Drive, Ramada Inn, Comfort Inn, Wal*Mart, Woodstock Square

The West Area also includes the Public School Central Campus. The Shenandoah County School Board is the number one employer county-wide. The School Board Administration offices are located in the new County Administration Campus in the North Main Corridor.

Goals and Objectives

Encourage buildout of commercial retail development on vacant parcels adjacent to Wal Mart. Explore public incentives to promote Downtown Historic District on Route 42 and I-81.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

- Work closely with the Shenandoah County Director of Economic Development Director, sharing information.
- Hire a part time business enhancement coordinator for downtown business development.
- Have a committee for business recruitment, focusing on service uses downtown, restaurants in downtown, tourism enterprises, recreation, and the retirement market needs.
- Establish a program to retain and improve existing businesses through the creation of incentives to reinvest.

- Meet with existing businesses to determine their needs.
- Work with local banks to set up a no-interest or low-interest loan pool for building improvements.
- Monitor incentive programs offered or permitted by the State.