

Northwest Ottawa County Primed for Growth

According to the 2017 West Michigan Lakeshore Business Intelligence Report the region is outperforming the Midwest region in business growth, sales and research and development. The report is an analysis of interviews conducted with 117 manufacturing companies within Ottawa, Muskegon and Allegan Counties and highlights business expansion plans, anticipated job growth, area strengths and barriers to business growth. While the broader West Michigan Lakeshore Region is seeing significant growth, Northwest Ottawa County which is commonly referred to as Grand Haven, Spring Lake and Ferrysburg is experiencing positive economic growth as well.

Two of the primary leading indicators of economic health of an area are linked to manufacturing sales and business growth. In Northwest Ottawa County 63% of the businesses interviewed reported increasing sales compared to 58% within the Midwest region. Approximately 50% of companies within Northwest Ottawa County reported they plan to expand within the next three years. This figure is about the same as the Midwest region; however, the estimated private investment for these expansions is expected to be just over \$77 million with approximately 225 new jobs being created. This data indicates a very positive sign for our region and represents only a portion of the manufacturing companies in this region.

Companies in Northwest Ottawa County believe the area is a great place to conduct business citing the quality of life, business climate and employee work ethic as key strengths of the community as a place to conduct business. Significant business growth has led to one of the primary barriers to growth reported by companies: inadequate supply of available skilled workers. A second barrier to growth identified by our companies is the lack of available, affordable land to expand their facilities. While these barriers are not a surprise to The Chamber, it affirms current efforts currently underway to address these issues by The Chamber and its partners at the local, State and Federal levels.

The opportunity to interview and analyze responses from our employers, and then to see how we compare to the Midwest makes us stronger and more attractive as a place for business. This report and its analysis provide invaluable information on our primary employers and how we can assist their future growth.

Click [here](#) to access a copy of the Business Intelligence Report. Should you wish to discuss the report findings with a member of The Chamber staff please contact Dana Kollewehr at dkollewehr@grandhavenchamber.org