



MEMORANDUM

TO: Community and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Matt Rehbein, Economic Development Specialist

DATE: April 21, 2017

RE: Business/Industrial Park Land Prices

Staff completes an annual review of the selling price of land in the City's business/industrial parks to see how competitive Appleton is with surrounding communities. Currently, the selling price of land in the City of Appleton's Southpoint Commerce Park is \$40,000.00/Ac. and \$45,000.00/Ac. for lots fronting on Plank Road and Eisenhower Drive.

The City of Appleton sold the last of its remaining inventory in the Northeast Business Park in 2016. There are currently seven (7) lots that are privately held and not developed in the Northeast Business Park. Privately owned, undeveloped lots are flagged in the City's AS400 system, and notification is given on the Real Estate Inquiry Form to ensure the City's right to repurchase is triggered as appropriate.

In the Southpoint Commerce Park, there are 31 fully improved lots available, consisting of approximately 100 acres. There is an accepted offer to purchase on one lot (Lot 7) and a pending offer to purchase on Lot 8. Two lots were purchased by Encapsys in 2016, and a new headquarters building is currently under construction. The City has an additional 175 acres in Southpoint that are undeveloped. All available lots in the Southpoint Commerce Park are served by regional stormwater detention, and a wetland delineation was completed in 2016. The three businesses located in Southpoint currently are light manufacturing and distribution uses. See attached maps for the available lots in Southpoint.

In order to ascertain how competitive Appleton is with neighboring communities, staff prepared a Land Price Comparison (attached). Data was gathered from: direct contact with sellers, LoopNet, which is a commercial real estate listing and comparable data service, and the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. There are additional lots marketed as available for industrial in the Fox Cities, but many of those could also be commercial which commands a much higher price and are not good comparables. All referenced industrial lots are broken down into one of three categories:

- 1) Municipally owned lots available for sale.
- 2) Privately owned lots available for sale.
- 3) Recent sales comparison.

In determining the sale price of lots, staff considers several factors including the City's investment in creating the business park, cost to develop at these locations, competitive lot pricing, and uses of the property. It should also be noted that pricing is but one component of actual "cost". Infrastructure, access, availability of TIF financing and other incentives are all factored in.

Site selectors and businesses seeking new locations have shared with staff that the ability to respond quickly and creatively is crucial to landing deals. This has proved true in the Encapsys, Farrell Investment, and OnStage Audio transactions. Each company is going to have different priorities, ex: land price, infrastructure, TIF contributions, etc. It will be important for the City to be in a position to act quickly and decisively when transactions come forward to ensure we secure sales in the parks.

The industrial market for lease and purchase space has been tightening up over the past few years creating a scarcity of large industrial space. With interest rates remaining low, and a scarcity of large spaces available, we anticipate seeing an increase in new construction in the coming years. Hopefully, this will lead to increased sales activity.

Based on this analysis, staff would recommend the City maintain its current selling price of \$40,000 to \$45,000 for industrial park land. This puts Appleton in the middle range with regard to land prices.

Staff Recommendation:

The City of Appleton maintain its current selling prices for industrial park land as follows:

Southpoint Commerce Park

Lot 9 fronting Eisenhower Dr. - \$45,000/Ac.

Lots 14 fronting on Plank Rd. - \$45,000/Ac.

All interior lots - \$40,000/Ac.

Note: Land prices are for fully improved lots and include the cost of concrete pavement.