

Economic Statistics in our Area----The Money Marathon- November 2012

As part of a project for community betterment, my good friend, Steve Holt, who runs the Small Business & Technology Development Center for Northwest Missouri State University, provided me with some very interesting economic statistics on our community. Here is a summary of the 20-page report.

Population:

As of 2010 data, the population within a 10 minute drive from Chillicothe was 9,777. Within 25 minutes the population was 15,858. Females made up 55.2% of the population. Males made up 44.8% of the population and the median age of the entire population was 40.8 years. Number of households was 3,963 within 10 miles and 6,339 with 25 miles.

Jobs:

54% of jobs are white collar jobs which compares to 61% nationally. 20% are service jobs and 25% are blue collar jobs compared to 21% nationally. As of 2010, the unemployment rate was 8.9% which compared favorably to the unemployment rate nationally at the time of 10.8%. (Our unemployment was less than nationally which is good.)

Education:

Only 3.8% of our population has a Masters or Doctorial Degree compared to 10.4% nationally. The percent that has a college degree is 9.7% compared to 17.7% nationally. An Associate Degree has been completed by 5.3% compared to 7.7% nationally. A high school degree is the highest degree of 46% of the population compared to 29.6% nationally, and 18% have not earned a high school degree compared to 14% nationally. (Our degree completion is below the national average, but I don't think that is unusual for a rural area.)

Income:

The median household income is \$39,591 compared to the national average of \$54,442. (That is a sizeable difference; but it includes areas that have higher incomes and higher costs of living also.) Likewise, per capita income is \$20,009 compared to \$26,739.

Housing Units:

We have 7,464 housing units within 25 miles. Of those units, 60 % are owner occupied; 24.6% are renter units, and 15.4% are vacant. The median home value is \$83,977 compared to the national average of \$157,913. (This is also a sizeable difference. One upside of this is that our housing did not fall as much as homes did nationally since homes never went as high in the first place.)

Business:

Within 10 miles, there are 634 businesses that employ 6,851 employees.

Retail Sales and the Pull Factor:

As of 2010, the retail sales within a 10 mile area were \$145,443,842 compared to a potential of \$75,668,004. (Read this a second time because this is a huge difference and is very positive.) Within a 25- minute drive, the sales were \$153,835,185, and the potential sales were \$122,869,756. (This difference is not as significant but still a very large difference.) This large “pull factor” means we are very good about pulling in more sales for our size than would be expected. I think that is a compliment to our merchants and businesses and also relates to our town being somewhat self contained based on our distance from other metropolitan areas. We are 90 miles from KC, 70 miles from St Joseph, and 120 miles from Columbia. This large pull factor is a real positive for our town. It means we are an important regional trade center.)

Summary:

Yes, we have lower average income and housing prices than nationally, but many small towns would be similar to us on this score. Our pull factor is a real plus and helps make Chillicothe a very good place to live. Small towns don't have all the sources of income of big towns, but they have some intangibles in quality of life that I don't believe can be matched by large cities (lower crime rates, shorter commutes, rural values and work ethic etc.). Chillicothe is a special place, and it is because of the people. Many towns are envious of Chillicothe. I know, because I have been asked to speak to groups in other towns about how we are able to do what we do (new hospital, stadium, aquatic center, the history of our YMCA and much more). Chillicothe is similar to other small towns in some ways, but is very special too in many other ways. I hope you think so too.

Remember every investor's situation is unique and it is important to review your specific situation with a financial professional.

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