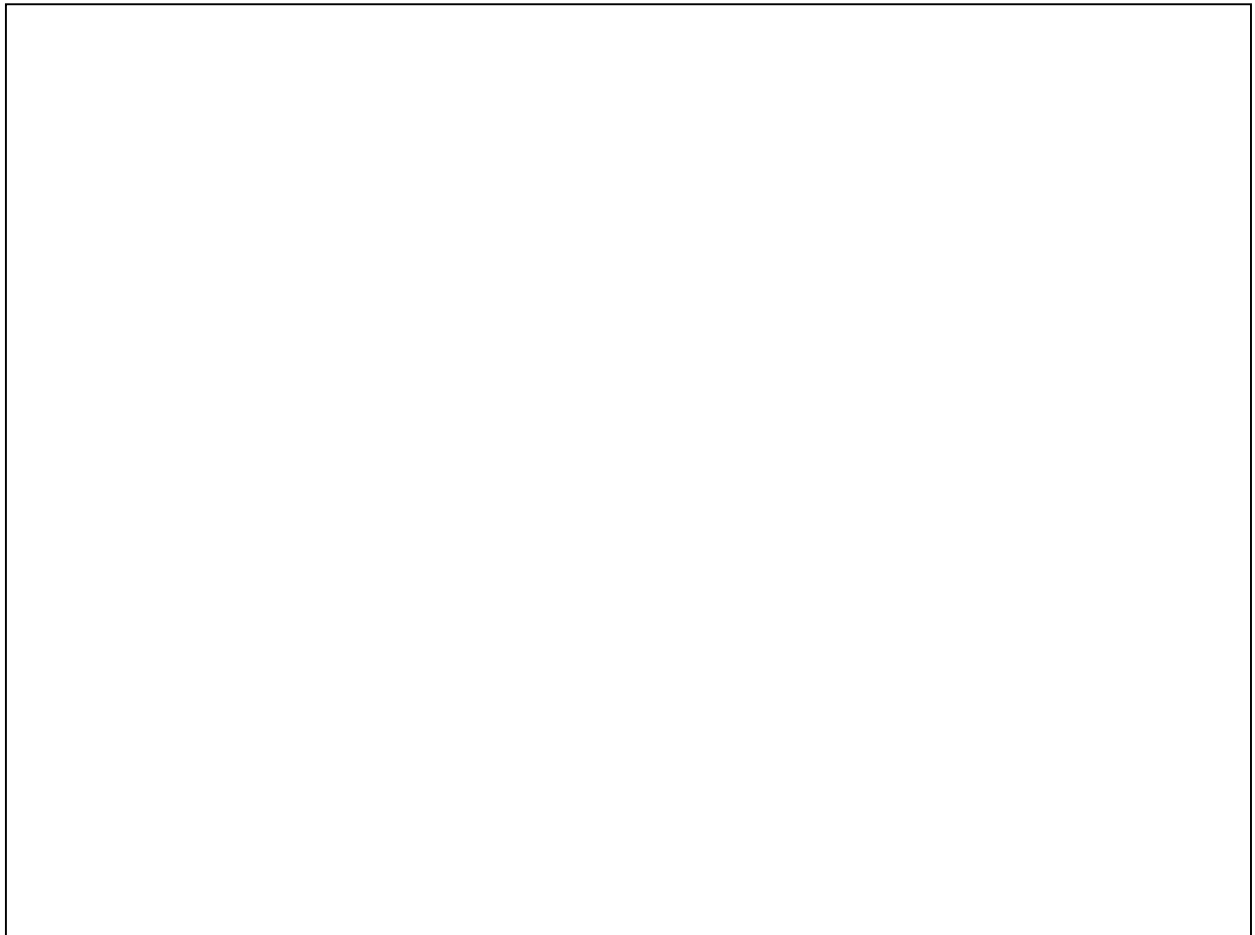


Element 1: Issues & Opportunities

Background information on the local government unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the local government unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local government unit over a 20-year planning period. Background information shall include population, household and employment forecasts that the local unit of government uses in developing its comprehensive plan, and demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local governmental unit.

[Photo to be inserted here]



Element 1: Issues & Opportunities

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Element 1: Issues & Opportunities

Introduction

Historical Background

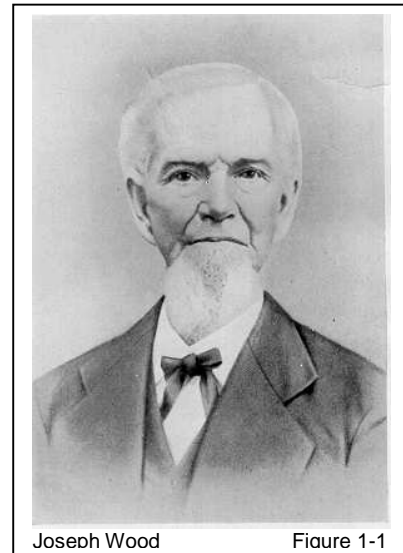
The first settler in Wood County was Daniel Whitney of Green Bay, who obtained a permit from the Winnebago in 1827 to make shingles on the Wisconsin River. In 1831, he obtained a permit from the War Department to erect a sawmill and cut timber on the Wisconsin River. The sawmill was built at a place known as Whitney's Rapids, near Pointe Bass, now the present location of the Domtar Industries paper mill in Nekoosa. A second sawmill was constructed by a Mr. Grignon and Mr. Merrill at a location known as Grignon's Rapids.

In 1848, Indian title to the land along the Wisconsin River was completely extinguished and settlers began to stream into upper Wisconsin. The Stevens Point land office was opened in 1853 and did a flourishing business, selling 1.4 million acres in the district's first three years. The Stevens Point district was a strip 30-miles wide on each side of the Wisconsin River from Wisconsin Dells upstream approximately 170 miles. Much of the land purchased by settlers was purchased for agriculture as well as for lumbering.

The first "church" was established by the Rev. J. S. Hurlbut, a Methodist missionary who held a meeting and preached his first sermon in a building in Centralia, now that part of Wisconsin Rapids on the west side of the river. In that same year, Rev. Hurlbut established the first school in Wood County.

It was held in a log house in Centralia and Rev. Hurlbut was the teacher. There was such a large interest in education that, in 1856, there was an attempt by a number of leading citizens to found a college and what was called "Grand Rapids University" was actually incorporated March 31, 1856. This was before the organization of Wood County, as the record states that it was to be "located in the Town of Grand Rapids, County of Portage."

In 1856, Wood County was detached from Portage County by legislation introduced by Joseph Wood, an early pioneer who lived in Grand Rapids. He suggested that the name of the new county be Greenwood County,



Joseph Wood

Figure 1-1

but his peers in the legislature insisted on the name of the county being "Wood" because of their personal esteem for him, because the name was short and it indicated the general character of the area. Joseph Wood was appointed the first County Judge by Governor Bashford. Wood also served one term as mayor of Grand Rapids, served on the county board for several terms, helped establish the first school, and served on the first school board. President Lincoln appointed Wood as the postmaster, a position he held for one term. Joseph Wood was in the mercantile and

lumber business for many years and eventually built and operated the Magnolia Hotel on the corner of Washington Avenue and Ninth Street in what is now Wisconsin Rapids.

When Wood County was created the Town of Grand Rapids was the only town in the county and, as such, the town board became the county board of supervisors until the first election could be held in November 1856. The first meeting of the county board was held on October 8, 1856 with its two members, H. W. Jackson and Eusebe Lavigne. Mr. Jackson was the chairman.

The first election was held in November, 1856 with the following offices being elected: County Judge – Joseph Wood; Sheriff – Benjamin Buck; District Attorney – Levi P. Powers; Surveyor – H. A. Temple; Clerk of Circuit Court – Lemuel Kromer; County Clerk – Levi. P. Powers; Treasurer – I. L. Mosher; and Register of Deeds – Lemuel Kromer. The first “courthouse” was in a rented space in Lavigne’s Hall (Magnolia House) at the corner of Washington Avenue and Ninth Street. The

first building erected for use as a courthouse was built in Grand Rapids on the east side of the river after a heated debate with Centralia, the settlement on the west side of the river. It was finally located near the river near where the old Grand Rapids brewery building stands. That building was used until 1861 when a brick building was built at the intersection of First, Baker and Market Streets. In 1956, the county offices were moved to the present courthouse, located on Market Street in Wisconsin Rapids.

When Wood County was formed, the Town of Grand Rapids had the same limits as the County. New towns were created from the beginning and continued on into the 1900s. They were: Rudolph, 1856; Saratoga, 1857; Seneca, 1857 (as Hemlock Town); Dexter, 1859; Lincoln, 1861; Sigel, 1863; Remington, 1869; Wood, 1874; Port Edwards, 1874; Auburndale, 1874; Marshfield, 1875; Rock, 1878; Richfield, 1881; Milladore, 1882; Sherry, 1885; Hansen, 1885 (as Vesper Town); Cary, 1901; Arpin, 1901; Hiles, 1901; Cranmoor, 1903; and Cameron, 1903.

The cities and villages of Wood County developed as the trade, service and industrial centers, providing the nucleus for growth in Wood County. The origin and development of these communities is a very important part of Wood County’s history. The four cities and their years of incorporation are: Wisconsin Rapids (county seat), 1900 (consolidation of Grand Rapids, 1869 and Centralia, 1874); Marshfield, 1883; Nekoosa, 1926; and Pittsville, 1887. The eight villages and their years of incorporation are: Arpin, 1978; Auburndale, 1881; Biron, 1910; Hewitt, 1973; Milladore, 1933; Port Edwards, 1902; Rudolph, 1960; and Vesper, 1948.

Planning & Zoning in Wood County



Although many planning and engineering studies have been completed in Wood County communities since the 1950s, “comprehensive” planning was first introduced in Wood County in the 1960s. It was then that communities in the Wisconsin Rapids urban area joined together to create the “South Wood County Area Comprehensive Plan.” A joint committee, the South Wood County Plan Implementation Committee, was established to implement the plan and that committee met on a regular basis until the late 1970s. Many recommendations of the plan were implemented over the dozen or so years that the committee met. It was also about that time that the city of Marshfield completed their first comprehensive plan (1964). That plan was updated in the 1990s.

A few of the towns and smaller cities and villages have done some planning in the past. Eleven of Wood County’s 22 towns are required to adopt a comprehensive plan by January 1, 2010 under Wisconsin’s current statutes. A number of those plans had been completed at the time this plan was being drafted.

The County Board of Supervisors authorized the creation of a comprehensive plan for the county under a federal program in the early 1970s. The plan was developed with a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the Urban Planning Assistance Program authorized by Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954. Known as the “701 Plan”, that series of documents was completed by the County’s Planning & Zoning Office in 1972. Components of that plan have been updated on an as-needed basis, specifically the Outdoor Recreation Plan and the existing land use inventory. Although the plan has never had a comprehensive update, the county has engaged in several topical studies, i.e., solid waste disposal, jail facilities plan, transportation issues and more. County planning staff has also

assisted many towns and small cities and villages with special planning studies, grant applications and zoning ordinances.

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (est. 1973) boundary includes Wood County. The RPC has included Wood County in their framework for development and, more recently, in the RPC’s comprehensive plan that was completed under the mandate of Chapter 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. That plan will be used as a reference as the Wood County comprehensive plan is developed.

It is the intent of this plan to bring those Wood County communities that have land use ordinances into compliance with the state planning law (Chapter 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes). The Wood County Board of Supervisors directed their “Planning & Zoning Committee and staff to proceed with a County comprehensive plan, as required by [state law] and, time permitting, assist municipalities with their comprehensive plans.”¹ It is the intent of this plan, then, to 1) assure that the County complies with the state mandate and 2) provide a foundation for other Wood County communities to build detailed comprehensive plans and, hopefully, provide enough detail for those communities that have zoning ordinances, subdivision ordinances or official street maps, to also comply with the state comprehensive planning law requirements. Individual plans for towns, cities and villages that will be completed as part of the county plan will be in less detail than if a comprehensive plan is prepared specifically for each community, but, as mentioned, any of the communities can use this document as a base upon which to build their detailed master plan.

¹ Wood County Resolution #03-7-5, July 15, 2003.

Demographics

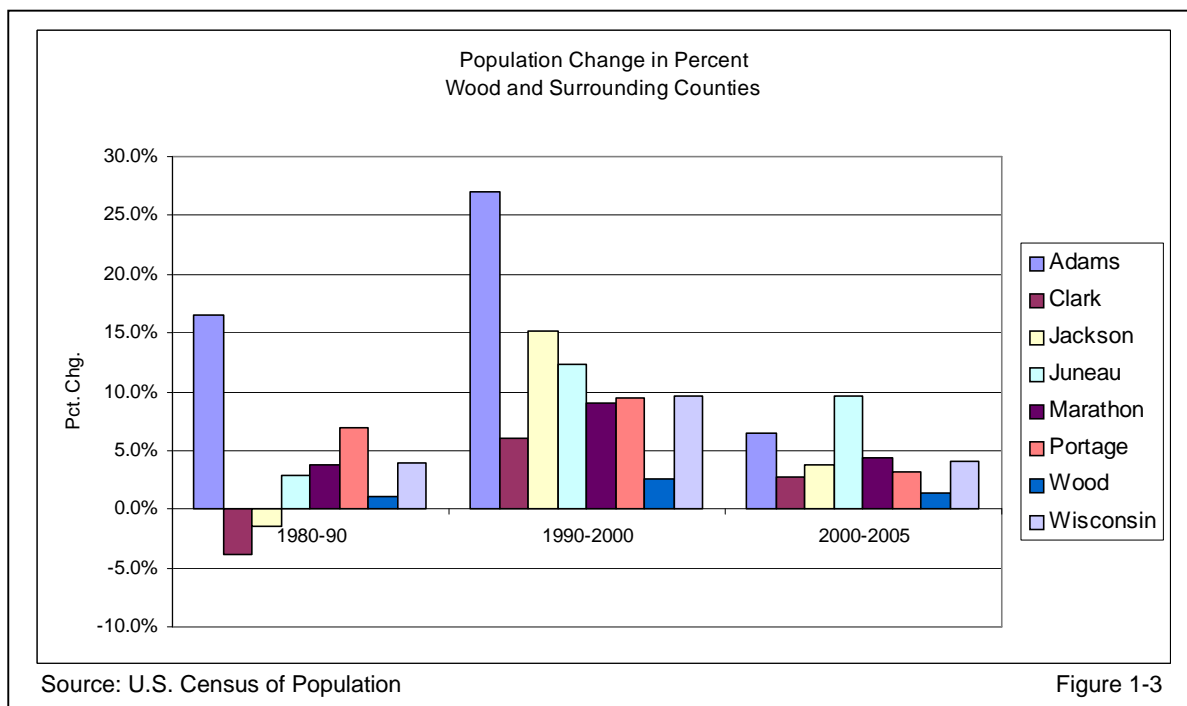
Population

In 1980, Wood County's population was 72,799. The County has experienced slow growth over the past two decades, only 3.8% to 75,555 in 2000. The Wisconsin Department of Administration population estimate for 2008 was 77,044. Wood County's rate of growth has been much slower than neighboring counties or the State for at least the past 15 years, as can be seen in Figure 1-3. A goal of this plan is to analyze the reasons for the slow growth and develop a strategy to improve Wood County's position with respect to rate of growth compared to neighboring counties.

Table 1-1 lists the census counts for Wood County, the State and each of Wood County's municipalities for 1980, 1990 and 2000. The proportion of the county's population that resided in the unincorporated towns and the incorporated villages and cities during each of those

census-reporting years is also listed in that table. There has not been much change, other than the proportion of population living in the towns has increased slightly from 38.4% in 1980 to 39.0% in 2000. The population in the cities has declined in proportion from 54.1% to 53.3% since 1980 even though the actual number of residents has increased by 897, with each city gaining new residents.

Three of the county's eight villages (Arpin, Port Edwards and Vesper) lost population between 1980 and 2000 and 10 of the 22 towns lost population, six of those ranging from -3.1% to -25.2%. The fastest growing towns in the Marshfield urban area are Richfield (+23.3%), Lincoln (+22.5%) and Rock (14.9%). Saratoga (23.4%) leads the way in the Wisconsin Rapids urban area, followed by Grand Rapids (6.6%). Figure 1-4 is a map, showing the population changes by municipality in Wood County. As expected, those towns that are in the urban areas had the greatest growth and those further from the urban areas had the least amount of growth or declined in population.

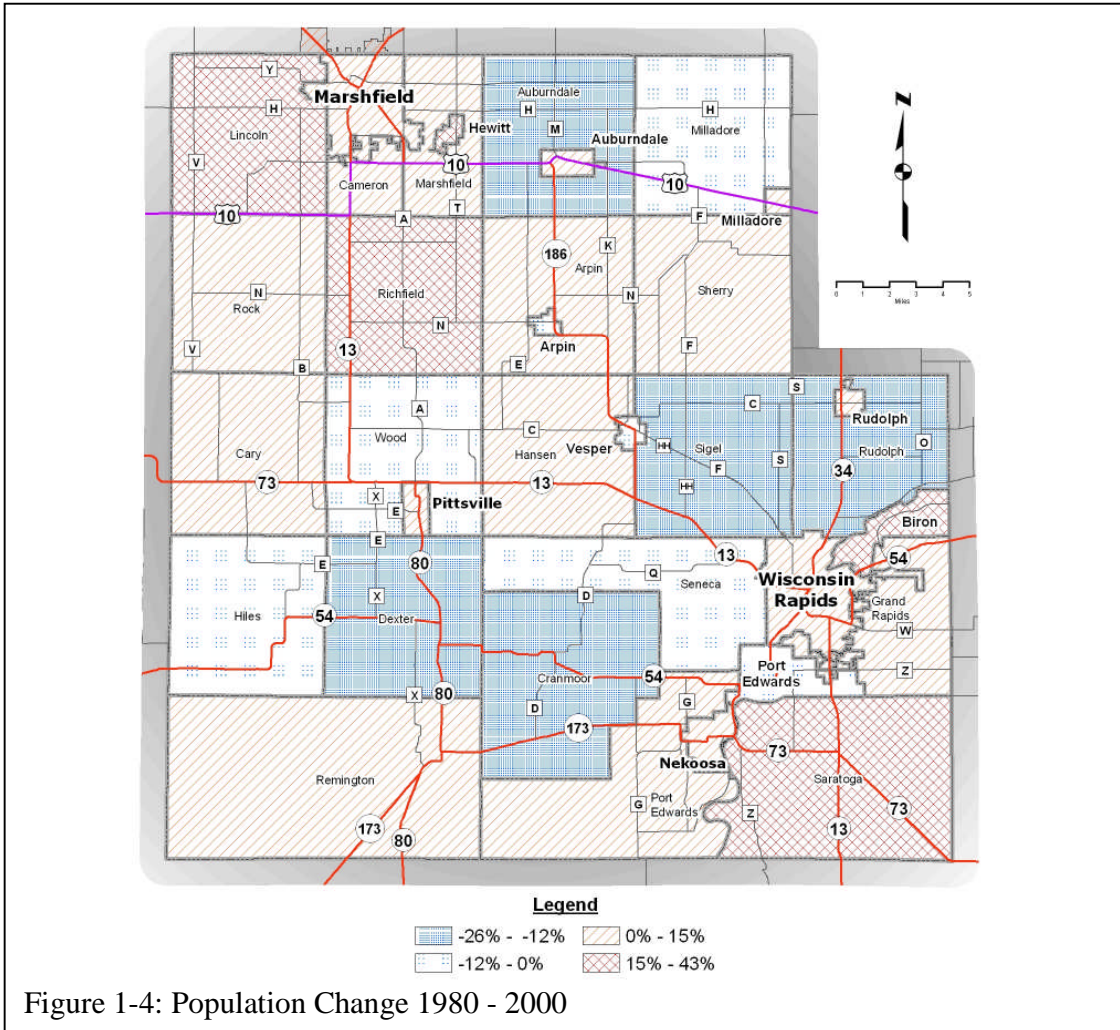


Municipality	Census 1980	Census 1990	Census 2000	1980 - 1990 % Change	1990 - 2000 % Change	1980 - 2000 % Change	1980 – 2000 Net Change
T Arpin	764	806	786	5.5%	-2.5%	2.9%	22
T Auburndale	942	844	829	-10.4%	-1.8%	-12.0%	-113
T Cameron	590	522	510	-11.5%	-2.3%	-13.6%	-80
T Cary	382	385	398	0.8%	3.4%	4.2%	16
T Cranmoor	234	185	175	-20.9%	-5.4%	-25.2%	-59
T Dexter	429	354	379	-17.5%	7.1%	-11.7%	-50
T Grand Rapids	7,319	7,071	7,801	-3.4%	10.3%	6.6%	482
T Hansen	705	698	707	-1.0%	1.3%	0.3%	2
T Hiles	194	144	188	-25.8%	30.6%	-3.1%	-6
T Lincoln	1,269	1,429	1,554	12.6%	8.7%	22.5%	285
T Marshfield	784	767	811	-2.2%	5.7%	3.4%	27
T Milladore	760	719	706	-5.4%	-1.8%	-7.1%	-54
T Port Edwards	1,387	1,351	1,446	-2.6%	7.0%	4.3%	59
T Remington	299	304	305	1.7%	0.3%	2.0%	6
T Richfield	1,235	1,344	1,523	8.8%	13.3%	23.3%	288
T Rock	745	764	856	2.6%	12.0%	14.9%	111
T Rudolph	1,385	1,180	1,161	-14.8%	-1.6%	-16.2%	-224
T Saratoga	4,363	4,775	5,383	9.4%	12.7%	23.4%	1,020
T Seneca	1,245	1,133	1,202	-9.0%	6.1%	-3.5%	-43
T Sherry	790	787	809	-0.4%	2.8%	2.4%	19
T Sigel	1,332	1,192	1,130	-10.5%	-5.2%	-15.2%	-202
T Wood	836	773	786	-7.5%	1.7%	-6.0%	-50
TOWNS	27,989	27,527	29,445	-1.7%	7.0%	5.2%	1,456
Pct of County	38.4%	37.4%	39.0%				
V Arpin	361	312	337	-13.6%	8.0%	-6.6%	-24
V Auburndale	641	665	738	3.7%	11.0%	15.1%	97
V Biron	698	794	915	13.8%	15.2%	31.1%	217
V Hewitt	470	595	670	26.6%	12.6%	42.6%	200
V Milladore	240	314	268	30.8%	-14.6%	11.7%	28
V Port Edwards	2,077	1,848	1,944	-11.0%	5.2%	-6.4%	-133
V Rudolph	392	451	423	15.1%	-6.2%	7.9%	31
V Vesper	554	598	541	7.9%	-9.5%	-2.3%	-13
VILLAGES	5,433	5,577	5,836	2.7%	4.6%	7.4%	403
Pct of County	7.5%	7.6%	7.7%				
C Marshfield	18,053	18,861	18,383	4.5%	-2.5%	1.8%	330
C Nekoosa	2,519	2,557	2,590	1.5%	1.3%	2.8%	71
C Pittsville	810	838	866	3.5%	3.3%	6.9%	56
C Wisconsin Rapids	17,995	18,245	18,435	1.4%	1.0%	2.4%	440
CITIES	39,377	40,501	40,274	2.9%	-0.6%	2.3%	897
Pct of County	54.1%	55.0%	53.3%				
Wood County	72,799	73,605	75,555	1.1%	2.6%	3.8%	2,756
Wisconsin	4,705,642	4,891,769	5,363,715	4.0%	9.6%	14.0%	658,073

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Wood County Planning & Zoning Office.

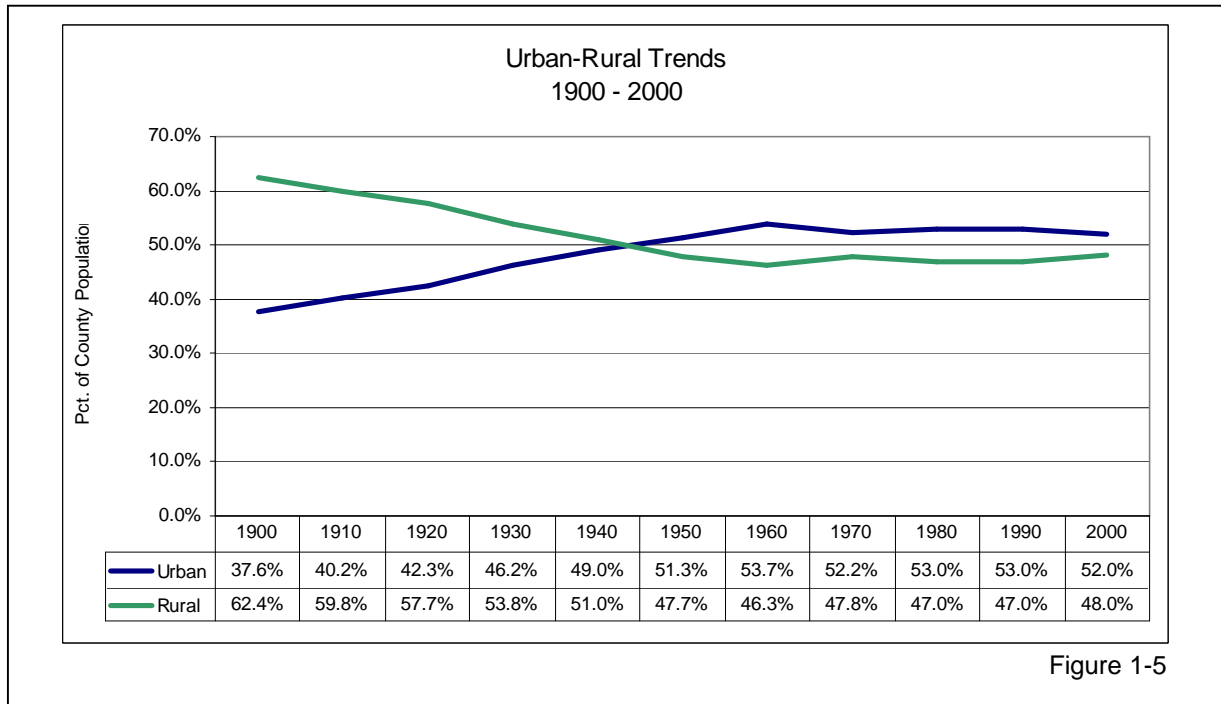
Wisconsin Department of Administration population estimates for 2008 suggest that the villages are still in a declining population situation. Five of the eight villages have reportedly lost population, with Auburndale, Hewitt and Rudolph being the only villages that have grown since 2000. If 2008 population estimates are accurate, population decline in the towns has

stabilized somewhat. Only three towns of 22 (Cranmoor, Hiles and Seneca) have reportedly declined in numbers since 2000. The fastest growing towns between 2000 and 2008, in terms of actual number increases, are Grand Rapids, Saratoga, Richfield, Lincoln and Rock. All four cities have has grown from 0.2% (Wisconsin Rapids) to 4.8% (Pittsville). The trend in the



distribution between “urban” areas and the “rural” parts of Wood County is interesting. Urban population is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as those who live in incorporated cities or villages of 2,500 people or more. Like many areas of the country, Wood County urbanized quite rapidly between 1900 and 1960. It was between 1960 and 1970 that the trend literally stopped and, in fact, reversed somewhat at that point. Figure 1-5 illustrates the trend and the data table in that chart shows the decline in the “urban” population from 53.7% in 1960 to 52.0% in 2000. Wisconsin Department of Administration population estimates suggest that this trend is continuing and that the

urban population in 2005 was 51.0%. Reasons for this trend reversal may include the desire of county residents to find unincorporated areas near cities in which to live that have lower taxes. As the cities grew, more costly municipal services and facilities were required which resulted in higher property taxes than what was charged in unincorporated areas that have fewer services. Another reason may be the desire to have more space, more distance between neighbors. There are probably other reasons as well. Again, Figure 1-4 supports these arguments by showing that the fastest growing unincorporated towns are near the Marshfield and Wisconsin Rapids urban areas.



Age Distribution & Median Age

As is typical throughout the country, Wood from age 35 and up has increased in numbers since 1980 (Table 1-2 and Figure 1-6). Second, every age group younger than age 35 has declined in numbers. This observation is important for several reasons. With regard to the aging population, government services may have to change or expand to accommodate the needs of an elderly population, things like transportation services, meal delivery, home care, senior day care, senior centers, housing types and others. Many of these type services are supported by the working age populations, which have also grown in Wood County, as evidenced by the increasing number of persons between the ages of 35 and 64. The declining number of children under the age of 18 will likely have its greatest impact on schools. School boundaries may have to be realigned more often and, if the number of school-age children continues to decline, some schools

may have to close, such as was the case in the Wisconsin Rapids Public School District when declining student population and rising costs forced the closing of Children's Choice Elementary School in the Town of Grand Rapids. For certain, changes will occur in the number and types of programs that can be offered in both public and private schools. Changes in financing are already occurring with the implementation of registration fees and costs of sports programs being passed on to the parents of program participants.

The age groups 18–24 and 25–34 have experienced the largest decline in the cohort spectrum. Although the decline slowed between 1990 and 2000, the age group 18–24 fell by 3,417 persons, or 37% over the twenty-year period. This huge loss has been attributed to high school graduates leaving the area for college, military service or jobs and not returning. The next age group, 25–34, initially rose by 1,142 (10.3%) between 1980 and 1990, but fell sharply (-2,009, or 16.5%) between 1990 and 2000.

AGE GROUP	Census Count			Percent			# CHANGE	# CHANGE	# CHANGE
	1980	1990	2,000	1980	1990	2000	1980 - 1990	1990 - 2000	1980 - 2000
Under 5	5,747	5,528	4,634	7.9%	7.5%	6.1%	-219	-894	-1,113
5 - 9	5,433	6,111	5,217	7.5%	8.3%	6.9%	678	-894	-216
10 - 14	6,807	5,697	5,837	9.4%	7.7%	7.7%	-1110	140	-970
15 - 17	4,575	3,239	3,697	6.3%	4.4%	4.9%	-1336	458	-878
18 - 19	2,737	1,843	1,966	3.8%	2.5%	2.6%	-894	123	-771
20 - 24	6,505	4,391	3,859	8.9%	6.0%	5.1%	-2114	-532	-2,646
25 - 29	5,764	6,204	4,122	7.9%	8.4%	5.5%	440	-2082	-1,642
30 - 34	5,271	5,973	4,904	7.2%	8.1%	6.5%	702	-1069	-367
35 - 39	4,269	5,825	6,107	5.9%	7.9%	8.1%	1556	282	1,838
40 - 44	3,520	4,961	6,318	4.8%	6.7%	8.4%	1441	1357	2,798
45 - 49	3,343	3,942	5,614	4.6%	5.4%	7.4%	599	1672	2,271
50 - 54	3,511	3,249	4,801	4.8%	4.4%	6.4%	-262	1552	1,290
55 - 59	3,536	3,145	3,681	4.9%	4.3%	4.9%	-391	536	145
60 - 61	1,169	1,158	1,314	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	-11	156	145
62 - 64	1,852	1,901	1,888	2.5%	2.6%	2.5%	49	-13	36
65 - 69	2,820	3,260	2,789	3.9%	4.4%	3.7%	440	-471	-31
70 - 74	2,237	2,527	2,733	3.1%	3.4%	3.6%	290	206	496
75 - 79	1,676	2,168	2,424	2.3%	2.9%	3.2%	492	256	748
80 - 84	1,101	1,234	1,900	1.5%	1.7%	2.5%	133	666	799
85 & Over	926	1,249	1,750	1.3%	1.7%	2.3%	323	501	824
TOTAL	72,799	73,605	75,555	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	806	1950	2,756
Under 5	5,747	5,528	4,634	7.9%	7.5%	6.1%	-219	-894	-1,113
5 - 17	22,562	15,047	14,751	31.0%	20.4%	19.5%	-1,768	-296	-2,064
Under 18	22,562	20,575	19,385	31.0%	28.0%	25.7%	-1,987	-1,190	-3,177
62 & Over	10,612	12,339	13,484	14.6%	16.8%	17.8%	1,727	1,145	2,872
65 & Over	8,760	10,438	11,596	12.0%	14.2%	15.3%	1,678	1,158	2,836
80 & Over	2,027	2,483	3,650	2.8%	3.4%	4.8%	456	1,167	1,623

Source: U.S Census, 1980, General Social and Economic Characteristics – Wisconsin, Table 171.
U.S. Census, 1990, Summary File 3.
U. S. Census, 2000, Table P 12, Summary File 1.

As the population has aged, it follows that the median age in the county and its municipalities will have risen and will continue to rise in the future. Table 1-3 lists the median age for each municipality, Wood County and the State for 1980, 1990 and 2000. The median age of the county has risen by 9.1 years from 28.9 in 1980 to 38.0 in 2000. The median age of every municipality has also increased, ranging from +3.8 years (V. Port Edwards) from 1980 to 2000 to +14.7 years (T. Cameron). Wood County's median age has increased

faster than the State, but it is typical for more rural areas – those where there is a loss of younger age groups, as discussed above – to have a median age that is higher than urban areas. That fact is also true at the county level, as evidenced by the fact that the median age in Wood County's unincorporated towns has increased faster (+10.5 years) than the villages (+8.5 years) or cities (+6.2 years) between 1980 and 2000.

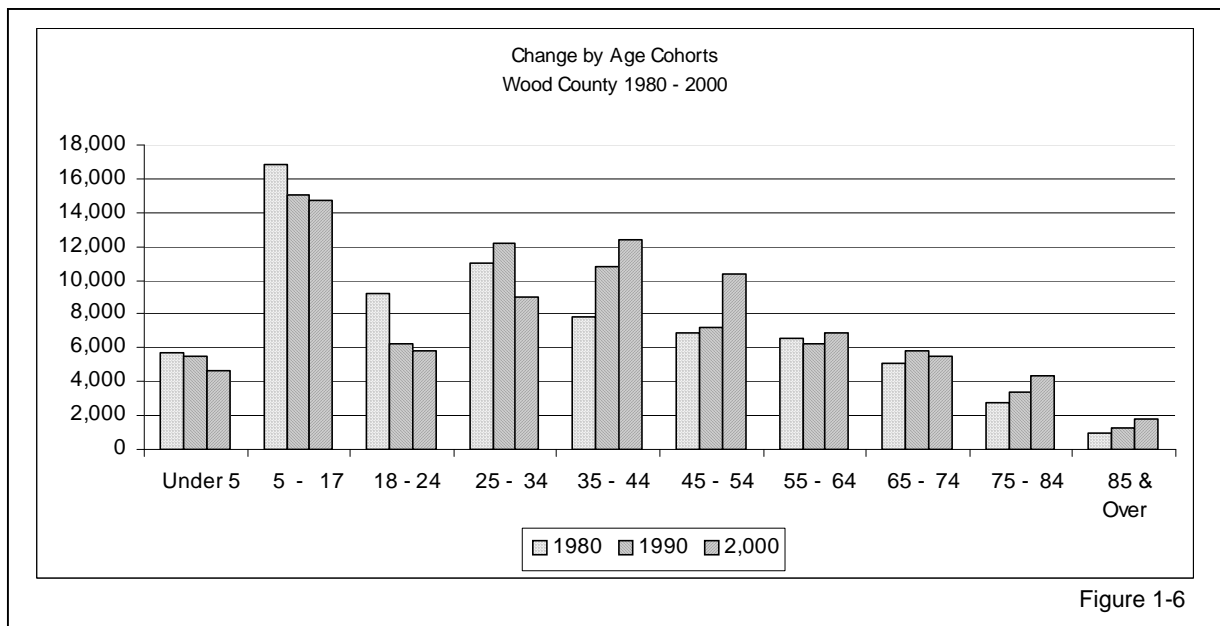


Figure 1-6

Educational Levels

The educational level of Wood County residents has continued to increase in recent years. Figure I-7 illustrates that increase. Of those Wood County residents age 25 and over, 78.3% had completed high school in 1990 and 84.8% had done so in 2000. The proportion of Wood County's population that has completed high school was within a fraction of a percentage point of State figures in neighboring counties lag behind the State and Wood County, although the gap closed slightly in 2000. Of the six surrounding counties, Portage County was the only one with a higher percentage than Wood County in both 1990 and 200, although the gap between these two counties was very small. The reason for Portage County having a higher proportion of high school or higher educational level is due to the fact that Portage County has a small total population, but has a UW campus in Stevens Point.

Figure 1-8 shows the proportion of the age 25 and over population that has completed four or more years of college and again compares Wood County with the neighboring counties and the State. In 1990, 13.5% of Wood County's population

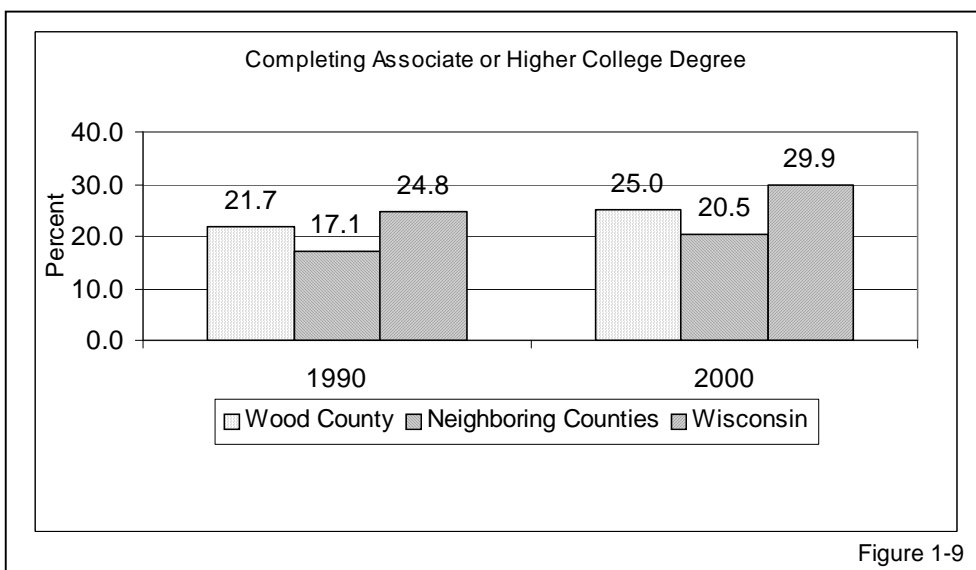
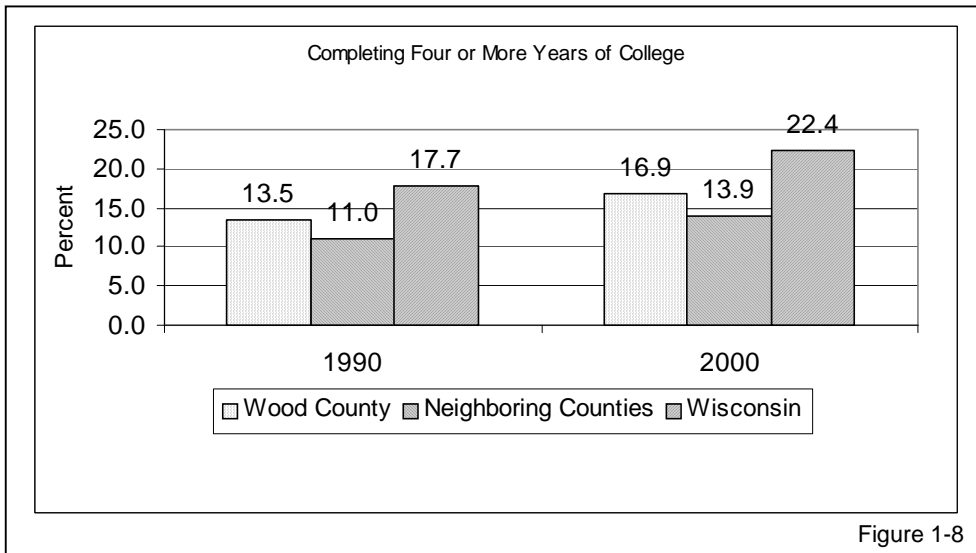
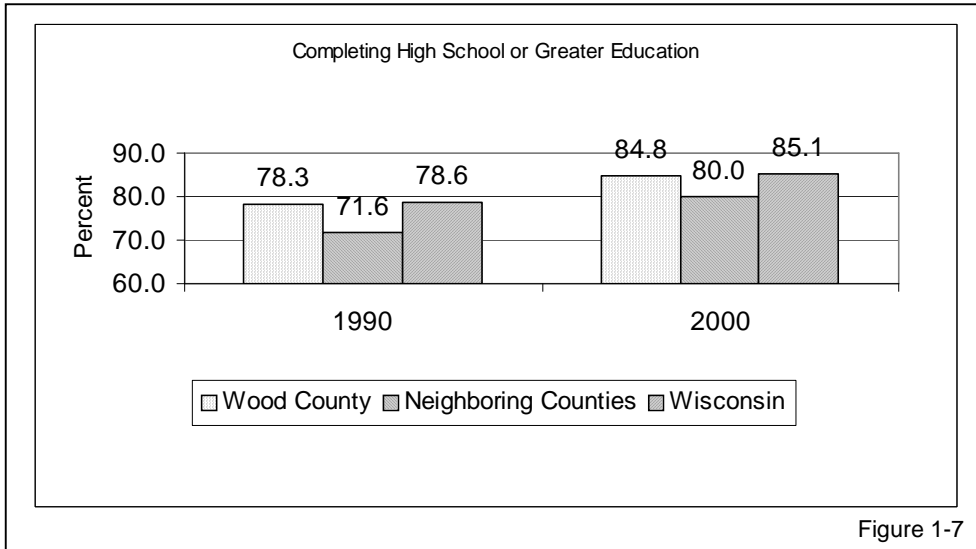
in that age group had earned a bachelor's degree or higher. That compared to 11.0% for the neighboring counties and 17.7% for Wisconsin. All geographic areas improved in 2000, but, as seen in Figure I-5, the percentage at the State level grew faster than either Wood County or the neighboring counties. Wood County's proportion of college graduates is now 5.5 percentage points behind Wisconsin.

County high school graduation rates are strong and growing stronger. The growing gap between the County and State of persons with four-year or more college degrees would, at first blush, indicate that Wood County is not keeping pace with technological advances or developing jobs that require higher education. A closer look at the numbers proves otherwise. First, the number of college graduates with at least a four-year degree continues to grow; it is up 3.4% from 1990 (13.5% to 16.9%). Second, Wood County's industrial-based economy has required technical college education, that is, two-year Associate degrees. The proportion of Wood County's population that has earned an associate degree remained stable in 1990 and 2000 at slightly over eight percent. Figure I-9 shows how the three geographic areas compare for college

**Table 1-3
Median Age of Wood County Municipalities
1980 – 2000**

Municipality	Median Age			Net Change in Years		
	1980	1990	2000	1980 - 1990	1990 - 2000	1980 - 2000
T Arpin	24.7	29.3	35.0	4.6	5.7	10.3
T Auburndale	24.7	31.2	36.4	6.5	5.2	11.7
T Cameron	26.3	32.3	41.0	6.0	8.7	14.7
T Cary	31.1	37.8	41.8	6.7	4.0	10.7
T Cranmoor	24.3	33.8	38.3	9.5	4.5	14.0
T Dexter	31.9	33.1	38.7	1.2	5.6	6.8
T Grand Rapids	27.2	32.9	38.4	5.7	5.5	11.2
T Hansen	28.3	31.5	38.0	3.2	6.5	9.7
T Hiles	33.3	34.7	37.7	1.4	3.0	4.4
T Lincoln	28.0	32.4	38.3	4.4	5.9	10.3
T Marshfield	28.4	32.6	38.5	4.2	5.9	10.1
T Milladore	25.1	29.4	36.3	4.3	6.9	11.2
T Port Edwards	25.6	30.5	36.2	4.9	5.7	10.6
T Remington	36.6	35.2	41.3	-1.4	6.1	4.7
T Richfield	28.6	32.2	36.2	3.6	4.0	7.6
T Rock	28.0	31.4	36.9	3.4	5.5	8.9
T Rudolph	24.9	33.6	38.9	8.7	5.3	14.0
T Saratoga	26.2	31.4	38.5	5.2	7.1	12.3
T Seneca	26.2	32.4	36.9	6.2	4.5	10.7
T Sherry	24.3	30.5	35.4	6.2	4.9	11.1
T Sigel	27.9	34.6	40.1	6.7	5.5	12.2
T Wood	25.1	32.7	38.9	7.6	6.2	13.8
TOWNS AVG	27.6	32.5	38.1	4.9	5.6	10.5
V Arpin	29.5	32.9	36.8	3.4	3.9	7.3
V Auburndale	24.0	28.0	35.5	4.0	7.5	11.5
V Biron	35.4	38.8	43.3	3.4	4.5	7.9
V Hewitt	25.6	29.0	35.6	3.4	6.6	10.0
V Milladore	28.3	28.8	36.0	0.5	7.2	7.7
V Port Edwards	36.3	41.1	40.1	4.8	-1.0	3.8
V Rudolph	28.3	31.5	37.4	3.2	5.9	9.1
V Vesper	28.1	31.1	39.1	3.0	8.0	11.0
VILLAGES AVG	29.4	32.7	38.0	3.2	5.3	8.5
C Marshfield	29.3	33.3	38.7	4.0	5.4	9.4
C Nekoosa	31.7	34.1	36.6	2.4	2.5	4.9
C Pittsville	30.4	31.9	34.5	1.5	2.6	4.1
C Wisconsin Rapids	31.3	34.6	37.6	3.3	3.0	6.3
CITIES AVG	30.7	33.5	36.9	2.8	3.4	6.2
Wood County	28.9	33.3	38.0	4.4	4.7	9.1
Wisconsin	29.0	32.9	36.0	3.9	3.1	7.0

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Wood County Planning & Zoning Office.



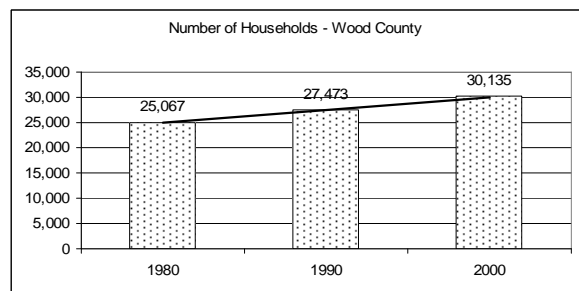
degrees when Associate degrees are added into the mix. Wisconsin's associate degree graduate numbers were 7.1% in 1990 and 7.5% in 2000. The average in neighboring counties was 6.1% in 1990 and 6.6% in 2000, with Wood County being second only to Marathon County for both periods. It is anticipated that the associate degree programs will remain strong and the proportion of County residents earning at least a four-year degree will continue to climb as the County attracts more high-tech employers to the area.

Households

First, it is important to understand the difference between "households" and "housing units." A housing unit is the physical structure. The structure can contain more than one household (i.e., duplexes and other multiple-family structures). Each side of the duplex or each apartment in a larger structure is a "household." This section deals with the number of households in the county and its municipalities.

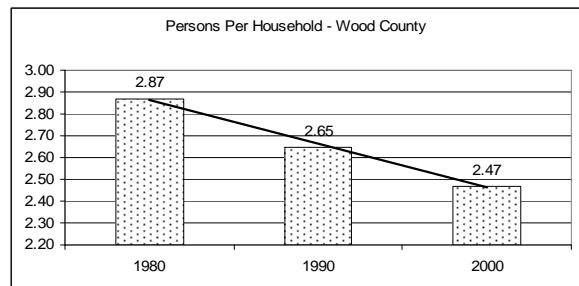
In 1980, there were 25,067 households in Wood County (Table 1-4). By 2000, that number had grown to 30,135, an 8.8% increase (population increase was 3.8%). Conversely, between 1980 and 2000, the population per household declined from 2.87 to 2.47; there are now more households with fewer occupants (smaller families). This trend is the same in the cities, villages and towns, although the largest household size continues to be in the towns. There are several reasons for this trend, including more people living alone, more couples without children and couples having fewer children. As mentioned earlier, the county has lost population in the age cohorts that include the 18 to 24 year olds and this attributes to the smaller household size as well. Figures I-10 and I-11 show each of the trends discussed here.

The growth in the number of households has been steady in the County, increasing by 9.6% and 9.7% between 1980 and 1990 and 1990 and 2000, respectively. The towns have actually experienced a substantial percentage increase in household numbers in the most recent census decade while the villages and cities had a slight-to-moderate slow-down in how rapidly their household count was increasing.



Source: U. S. Census

Figure 1-10



Source: U. S. Census

Figure 1-11

Income & Poverty

The median household income for Wood County and the adjacent counties are listed in Table 1-5. Wood County had the highest median household income in the region in 1980, followed by Marathon County and then Portage County. In 1990, Marathon County surpassed Wood County and Portage County remained third. In the year 2000, Marathon County continued as the region's leader, widening the gap, with Wood County slipping to third behind Portage County. That change reflects the growth that both Marathon and Portage

Municipality	No. of Households			Persons Per Household		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
T Arpin	215	239	267	3.51	3.33	2.94
T Auburndale	247	271	299	3.81	3.11	2.77
T Cameron	172	174	190	3.43	3.00	2.68
T Cary	126	145	162	3.03	2.66	2.46
T Cranmoor	64	66	66	3.66	2.80	2.65
T Dexter	145	129	144	2.96	2.74	2.63
T Grand Rapids	2,266	2,348	2,788	3.23	3.01	2.79
T Hansen	220	223	255	3.20	3.13	2.77
T Hiles	65	52	63	2.98	2.77	2.98
T Lincoln	378	471	539	3.36	3.03	2.88
T Marshfield	231	249	295	3.39	3.09	2.75
T Milladore	216	224	251	3.52	3.21	2.78
T Port Edwards	422	460	526	3.29	2.94	2.75
T Remington	111	114	125	2.69	2.67	2.44
T Richfield	330	375	473	3.41	3.29	2.98
T Rock	236	250	291	3.16	3.06	2.94
T Rudolph	382	381	423	3.63	3.10	2.74
T Saratoga	1,367	1,613	2,011	3.19	2.96	2.66
T Seneca	361	369	408	3.45	3.07	2.94
T Sherry	227	246	270	3.48	3.20	3.00
T Sigel	380	376	410	3.51	3.17	2.76
T Wood	236	242	285	3.54	3.19	2.76
TOWNS TOTAL	8,397	9,017	10,541	3.34	3.02	2.78
Percent Change		7.4%	16.9%			
V Arpin	130	113	139	2.72	2.76	2.42
V Auburndale	209	235	284	3.07	2.83	2.60
V Biron	246	333	384	2.84	2.38	2.28
V Hewitt	141	189	233	3.33	3.15	2.88
V Milladore	87	107	102	2.76	2.93	2.63
V Port Edwards	663	660	706	2.88	2.58	2.58
V Rudolph	127	165	170	3.09	2.63	2.49
V Vesper	182	213	234	3.04	2.81	2.31
VILLAGES TOTAL	1,785	2,015	2,252	2.97	2.76	2.52
Percent Change		12.9%	11.8%			
C Marshfield	6,712	7,614	8,054	2.63	2.44	2.24
C Nekoosa	901	970	987	2.80	2.64	2.55
C Pittsville	284	308	331	2.85	2.66	2.60
C Wisconsin Rapids	6,988	7,549	7,970	2.54	2.38	2.26
CITIES TOTAL	14,885	16,441	17,342	2.70	2.53	2.41
Percent Change		10.5%	5.5%			
Wood County	25,067	27,473	30,135	2.87	2.65	2.47
Percent Change		9.6%	9.7%			

Source: U.S. Census of Population.

Table 1-5 Median Household Income							
County	Median Household Income			Percent Change			Net Chg.
	1980	1990	2000	1980 - 1990*	1990 - 2000*	1980 - 2000*	1980 - 2000
Adams	\$12,990	\$21,548	\$33,408	4.3%	17.5%	23.1%	\$20,418
Clark	\$12,805	\$22,177	\$34,577	8.9%	18.1%	29.2%	\$21,772
Jackson	\$12,574	\$21,409	\$37,015	7.1%	31.0%	40.9%	\$24,441
Juneau	\$12,528	\$22,073	\$35,335	10.8%	21.3%	35.0%	\$22,807
Marathon	\$17,334	\$30,143	\$45,165	9.4%	13.5%	24.7%	\$27,831
Portage	\$16,659	\$28,686	\$43,487	8.3%	14.8%	24.9%	\$26,828
Wood	\$17,482	\$29,735	\$41,595	7.0%	6.0%	13.8%	\$24,113
Central WI	\$14,625	\$25,110	\$38,655	8.0%	16.6%	26.5%	\$24,030
State	\$17,680	\$29,442	\$43,791	4.7%	12.7%	18.5%	\$26,111
Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation factor =				\$1.59	\$1.32	\$2.09	
* Note: This percentage has been adjusted for inflation per U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics guidelines, July 26, 2006.							
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics							

counties have experienced along the Interstate 39 corridor and reveals the importance that access to an Interstate highway has for economic growth. The figures also show that, although the median household income in Wood County is increasing, it is at a slower pace than the rest of central Wisconsin and of the State, in fact ranks last among the seven counties in the area. The net change in actual dollars, however, tells a better story with Wood County ranking fourth among the seven area counties.

Table 1-6 shows the distribution of household income in Wood County for 1990 and 2000 and compares it to state figures for the same years. While there was a shift in both geographic areas toward higher income levels, Wood County fell behind the state average household income in 2000, after having been slightly higher than the state average ten years earlier. It is the higher income levels at the state level that caused the change, levels of \$75,000 and higher. Caution should be used in using these numbers because absolute numbers rise with inflation and the cost of living in Wood County is lower than the overall state average.

Another key indicator of income is the per capita measure. According to census figures (Table 1-7), Wood County's per capita income was highest in central Wisconsin in 1980 and 1990 and second highest, behind Marathon County, in 2000. The increase in per capita income was considerably slower than both the State and central Wisconsin average between 1990 and 2000, tying Clark County at +16.6%, adjusted for inflation. Of the seven central Wisconsin counties, Wood County ranks third in net change over the 20-year period from 1980 – 2000, with an increase of \$13,349. Although slightly higher than the average net change for the region, Wood County's net change lags behind that of the State by \$679.

More recent per capita personal income data is available through the US Dept. of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis that was completed in May 2004. That census showed that, in 2002, Wood County's per capita personal income was \$29,533, 15th highest among Wisconsin counties and, once again, higher than other counties in central Wisconsin (Table 1-8). This table is provided because of its more recent data, but care should be used when comparing these figures to census figures

Income Level	1990 - Percent		2000 - Percent	
	Wood Co	Wisconsin	Wood Co	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	13.8%	14.0%	7.1%	7.1%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	9.7%	9.4%	6.9%	5.8%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	18.6%	18.7%	13.6%	12.7%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	17.0%	17.4%	13.5%	13.2%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	22.1%	20.2%	18.9%	18.1%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	13.5%	14.1%	23.8%	22.7%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	2.8%	3.6%	8.9%	10.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	1.5%	1.7%	4.9%	6.4%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%	1.5%
\$200,000 or more	-	-	1.4%	1.5%
Median HH Income	\$29,735	\$29,442	\$41,595	\$43,791

Source: U.S. Census, Table DP-4.

County	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change			Net Chg. 1980 - 2000
				1980 - 1990*	1990 - 2000*	1980 - 2000*	
Adams	\$5,647	\$10,926	\$17,777	21.7%	23.3%	50.6%	\$12,130
Clark	\$5,266	\$9,810	\$15,100	17.2%	16.6%	37.2%	\$9,834
Jackson	\$5,565	\$10,173	\$17,604	15.0%	31.1%	51.4%	\$12,039
Juneau	\$5,590	\$10,304	\$17,892	15.9%	31.5%	53.1%	\$12,302
Marathon	\$6,697	\$12,718	\$20,703	19.4%	23.3%	47.9%	\$14,006
Portage	\$6,249	\$11,730	\$19,854	18.1%	28.2%	52.0%	\$13,605
Wood	\$6,854	\$13,130	\$20,203	20.5%	16.6%	41.0%	\$13,349
Central WI	\$6,318	\$11,945	\$19,529	18.9%	23.9%	47.9%	\$13,211
State	\$7,243	\$13,286	\$21,271	15.4%	21.3%	40.5%	\$14,028
Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation factor =				\$1.59	\$1.32	\$2.09	

Note: This percentage has been adjusted for inflation per U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics guidelines.
Source: North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

because of different collection methods that are used. Although different collection methods may reveal different figures, Table 1-8 provides a good comparison of Wood County to the rest of central Wisconsin and to the State.

The percentage of persons and families at or below the poverty level in 1989 and 1999 are shown in Table 1-9 for Wood County, the surrounding counties in central Wisconsin and the State. All geographic areas saw an improvement between 1989

(1990 census) and 1999 (2000 census). Wood County's poverty rates are significantly better than either of the other two areas, probably because of the manufacturing and health industries that dominate the two urban areas.

Employment

The number of people employed in Wood County and throughout the central Wisconsin region and the State has continued to grow since 1980. Although the

1	Ozaukee	\$ 47,418	25	Green	\$ 28,065	49	Shawano	\$ 23,878
2	Waukesha	\$ 41,114	26	Pierce	\$ 27,676	50	Langlade	\$ 23,686
3	Dane	\$ 35,414	27	Walworth	\$ 27,364	51	Florence	\$ 23,648
4	Washington	\$ 34,149	28	Eau Claire	\$ 27,301	52	Douglas	\$ 23,639
5	Door	\$ 31,292	29	Manitowoc	\$ 27,097	53	Burnett	\$ 23,482
6	Brown	\$ 31,095	30	Green Lake	\$ 26,952	54	Iron	\$ 23,407
7	St. Croix	\$ 30,756	31	Rock	\$ 26,865	55	Ashland	\$ 23,228
8	Sheboygan	\$ 30,612	32	Portage	\$ 26,674	56	Monroe	\$ 23,193
9	Columbia	\$ 30,528	33	Waupaca	\$ 26,297	57	Bayfield	\$ 23,085
10	Milwaukee	\$ 30,456	34	Jackson	\$ 25,835	58	Juneau	\$ 22,950
11	Racine	\$ 30,331	35	Dodge	\$ 25,684	59	Dunn	\$ 22,859
12	Calumet	\$ 30,050	36	Chippewa	\$ 25,655	60	Washburn	\$ 22,851
13	Outagamie	\$ 29,850	37	Vilas	\$ 25,623	61	Lafayette	\$ 22,724
14	Winnebago	\$ 29,537	38	Kewaunee	\$ 25,499	62	Adams	\$ 22,698
15	Wood	\$ 29,533	39	Trempealeau	\$ 25,338	63	Richland	\$ 22,603
16	Iowa	\$ 29,532	40	Oconto	\$ 24,836	64	Crawford	\$ 22,595
17	Fond du Lac	\$ 29,487	41	Lincoln	\$ 24,588	65	Taylor	\$ 22,573
18	Marathon	\$ 29,103	42	Pepin	\$ 24,495	66	Marquette	\$ 22,552
19	Buffalo	\$ 29,087	43	Price	\$ 24,483	67	Waushara	\$ 22,182
20	Jefferson	\$ 28,805	44	Marinette	\$ 24,466	68	Forest	\$ 21,975
21	Kenosha	\$ 28,775	45	Barron	\$ 24,420	69	Clark	\$ 21,691
22	Sauk	\$ 28,298	46	Sawyer	\$ 24,288	70	Vernon	\$ 20,878
23	La Crosse	\$ 28,250	47	Polk	\$ 24,210	71	Rusk	\$ 20,859
24	Oneida	\$ 28,213	48	Grant	\$ 24,060	72	Menominee	\$ 18,394

percentage rate of growth has not been as rapid as other counties in the region, Wood County added the third largest number of jobs, behind Marathon and Portage Counties, during the 20-year period shown in Table 1-10. Both of those counties can attribute that growth, in large part, to their location on Interstate 39 at the crossroads of major state highways (10 and 29). Wood County's number of jobs has increased at a much slower rate than Wisconsin and, between 1990 and 2000, was the slowest by a substantial margin in central Wisconsin. It was during that decade that many manufacturing jobs disappeared as local paper mills were sold to global companies and were downsized or some jobs relocated to other areas. Development of a technology or manufacturing job base must continue to be a major goal in Wood County.

Table 1-11 shows where the job growth has occurred by employment sector. The information in this table is from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development first quarter reports for 1990 and 2000 and, therefore, the figures differ slightly from what can be found in official census data. It should also be noted that the State data does not include those who are self-employed or work in family businesses and, therefore may be understated. This is particularly true of the agriculture, forestry and fishing employment numbers.

Between 1990 and 2000, the fastest growing sectors were agriculture, forestry and fishing; construction; and services. Although agriculture, forestry and fishing showed the largest percentage gain, it should be noted that employment in that sector

**Table I-9
Percent in Poverty**

Municipality	Pct. Families		Pct. Individuals	
	1989	1999	1989	1999
Wood County	6.4	4.4	8.5	6.5
No. Central Wis. Region	9.1	5.9	12.8	9.3
Wisconsin	7.6	5.6	10.7	8.7

Source: U.S. Census, Summary Tape File3 (STF-3), 1990 2000.

**Table 1-10
Employed Labor Force**

County	Employed			Percent Change			Net Change
	1980	1990	2000	1980 - 1990	1990 - 2000	1980 - 2000	1980 - 2000
Adams	4,635	5,640	7,859	21.7%	39.3%	69.6%	3,224
Clark	13,096	13,956	15,869	6.6%	13.7%	21.2%	2,773
Jackson	6,599	7,264	8,881	10.1%	22.3%	34.6%	2,282
Juneau	8,206	9,478	11,333	15.5%	19.6%	38.1%	3,127
Marathon	49,163	57,719	66,550	17.4%	15.3%	35.4%	17,387
Portage	24,947	30,150	35,677	20.9%	18.3%	43.0%	10,730
Wood	30,635	34,173	37,345	11.5%	9.3%	21.9%	6,710
Central WI	137,281	158,380	183,514	15.4%	15.9%	33.7%	46,233
Wisconsin	2,114,473	2,386,439	2,734,925	12.9%	14.6%	29.3%	620,452

Source: U.S. Census, Table DP-3.

continues to only 1.4% of total employment.

Two sectors – manufacturing and finance, insurance and real estate – showed a decline in the number of persons employed. Both were about 2% and the manufacturing sector continues to have a higher total employment than any other sector, except for services. Services, manufacturing and retail trade are the largest employment sectors in Wood County, accounting for nearly 72% of the county's employment.

Wood County has five companies that employ over 1,000 people and another six that employ between 500 and 1,000. There are 25 companies that have between 100 and 500 employees. One company has 300 full-time positions and 3,000 seasonal employees. Employers with 500 or more employees who are actually located in

Wood County are listed in Table 1-12. Other employers that have several hundred employees are located just outside of Wood County, but are a benefit to Wood County residents and commercial establishments. Those companies include McCain Foods, between Wisconsin Rapids and Plover on State Highway 54 and Land O'Lakes in Spencer, north of Marshfield and A&B Process Systems Corporation in Stratford, north of Marshfield.

Growth Projections: Population, Housing and Employment

Population Projections

Wisconsin law (§16.96, Wis. Stats.) requires the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) to make annual population

**Table 1-11
Employment by Sector - Wood County**

Employment Sector	Year		1990 – 2000	
	1990	2000	No. Chg.	Pct. Chg.
Government	3,979	4,605	626	15.7
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	315	619	304	96.5
Construction	882	1,476	594	67.3
Manufacturing	9,915	9,713	-202	-2.0
Transportation, communication, electric, gas & sanitary services	2,243	3,130	887	39.6
Wholesale trade	1,364	1,401	37	2.7
Retail trade	7,111	7,681	570	8.0
Finance, insurance & real estate	898	879	-19	-2.1
Services	9,455	13,422	3,967	42.0
Total Employed Persons Age 16 & Over	36,162	42,926	6,764	18.7

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 202 Reports, 1st Quarter.

estimates for each municipality and county and to periodically make projections of the anticipated future population of the state, counties and municipalities. Those projections are deemed to be the official population projections for the State, to be used for all official estimate and projection purposes, with few exceptions. WDOA's Demographic Services Center is the official agency that is responsible for the statutory mandates, in addition to other census-related tasks. Although population projections are often developed by municipalities for use locally, it is the WDOA projections that will be considered for any federal or state grants, for developing water quality management plans and for many other uses. The WDOA population projections, in five-year increments, for Wood County, central Wisconsin counties and the State are presented in Table 1-13. Figure I-12 shows Wood County's projected population change graphically. State projections suggest that the County's population will top out at about 79,000 in 2020 and then level off or slightly decline after that.

**Table 1-12
Employers With 500 Or More Employees (located in Wood County)**

Employer	Industry	Location	Employees
Marshfield Clinic	Medical	Marshfield	3609
Stora Enso North America	Paper	Wisconsin Rapids & Biron	3500
Saint Joseph's Hospital	Medical	Marshfield	2173
Roehl Transport, Inc.	Transportation	Marshfield	2066
Domtar Industries	Paper	Port Edwards & Nekoosa	1325
County of Wood	Government	Wisconsin Rapids	800
Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools	Education	Wisconsin Rapids	768
Riverview Hospital	Medical	Wisconsin Rapids	700
Wick Building Systems, Inc.	Manufactured Housing	Marshfield	700
Renaissance Learning	Education Software	Wisconsin Rapids	575
DeBoer, Inc.	Transportation	Town of Sherry	500

Source: Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Heart of Wisconsin Business & Economic Alliance websites, July, 2006.

**Table 1-13
Population Projections**

	2000 Census	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Wood County	75,555	76,420	77,455	78,393	79,072	79,026
Wisconsin	5,363,715	5,563,896	5,751,470	5,931,386	6,110,878	6,274,867
Central Wisconsin	365,464	377,290	388,974	399,091	409,286	418,416
Percent Change:						
Wood County		1.1%	1.4%	1.2%	0.9%	-0.1%
Wisconsin		3.7%	3.4%	3.1%	3.0%	2.7%
Central Wisconsin		3.2%	3.1%	2.6%	2.6%	2.2%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2004.

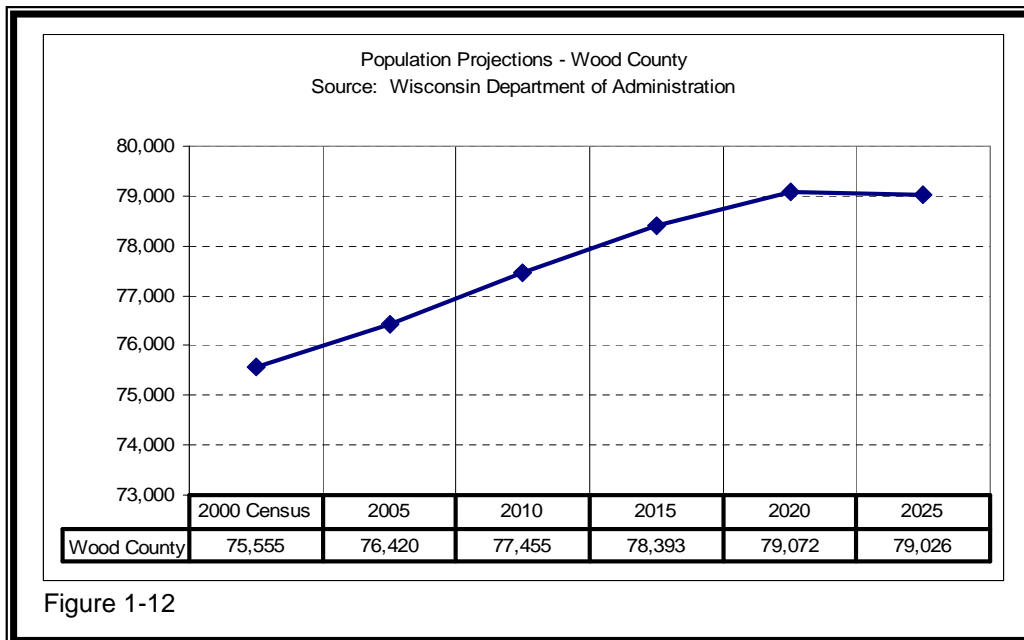


Figure 1-12

Household Projections

The number of households that will be needed over the planning period is driven by the projected population and the population per household. Replacement housing units will also be needed as some are destroyed by fire, wind or other means or as they become worn and dilapidated. More will be said about that in the next chapter, "housing." As housing structures are added to accommodate the needs of

future households, some undeveloped land will have to be converted.

The population that is projected for Wood County by the Wisconsin Department of Administration shows a steady increase between 2000 and 2020, when it then levels off or begins a slight decline. Figures I-7 & I-8 illustrated the rising number of households and declining population per household in Wood County since 1980. It was also pointed out in Figure I-3 that the early child-bearing population – ages 18-24

– and the middle child-bearing population – ages 25-34 – have been declining in the County. Those in their later child-bearing years – ages 35-44 – have been increasing steadily since 1980. That same chart showed a steady decline in the under age 18 categories. These changes are the basis for WDOA's projected population slow down or decline after the year 2020. As the County's population ages, it is likely that the population per household will continue to decline. The Department of Administration has also projected the number of households for all municipalities and counties in Wisconsin. According to their projections, the population per household in Wood County will continue to decline throughout the planning period. Although the number of persons living in each household will be less, the demand for the number of households will continue to increase. There were 30,135 households in Wood County in 2000 and that number is expected to grow to 34,342 in the year 2025.

The projections indicate that the proportion of new households that is located in the unincorporated towns will continue to grow through 2025 (Table 1-14). Nearly 62% of the new households will be located in the unincorporated towns. Because all of those new households will be serviced with private septic systems, it is likely that nothing larger than a duplex, accommodating two households, will be built. Therefore, nearly all of the additional 2,598 households in the towns will be single-family housing units. Each housing unit will be built on anywhere from one to five acres of land – land which will be converted from agricultural or other uses. Using an average of two acres for new residential housing would result in nearly 5,200 acres of land in unincorporated towns being converted to residential uses in the next 20-years.

Employment Projections

Future employment is difficult to project because of the dynamics of a global economy and the impact it has had, and continues to have, on Wood County business and industry. Nevertheless, it is important to attempt to project what the future holds for employment in our area. Employment in Wood County is expected to continue to increase throughout the planning period. In 2000, 42,946 people were employed in Wood County. That number is projected to increase each five years to the year 2020 when nearly 51,000 people will be employed in the County, according to projections that were developed by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The Wood County Planning & Zoning Office also prepared projections using the simple methodology that the proportion of employed persons will remain constant with the projected population change. Table 1-15 lists the projections which provide a range of employment for Wood County to the year 2020.

Table I-14 Projected Households in Wood County						
Municipality	2000 Census	Projected				
		2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
T Arpin	267	275	284	291	296	298
T Auburndale	299	306	315	321	324	324
T Cameron	190	195	202	206	209	210
T Cary	162	175	189	202	214	224
T Cranmoor	66	66	66	66	64	63
T Dexter	144	151	159	167	173	177
T Grand Rapids	2,788	2,985	3,204	3,403	3,580	3,721
T Hansen	255	266	279	290	299	304
T Hiles	63	67	71	75	78	81
T Lincoln	539	572	609	643	671	694
T Marshfield	295	308	323	336	346	353
T Milladore	251	255	262	266	268	266
T Port Edwards	526	556	589	620	644	664
T Remington	125	128	132	137	139	139
T Richfield	473	507	544	579	610	631
T Rock	291	311	334	355	372	388
T Rudolph	423	427	431	433	430	424
T Saratoga	2,011	2,144	2,291	2,426	2,543	2,634
T Seneca	408	412	434	455	471	483
T Sherry	270	280	293	303	311	316
T Sigel	410	416	423	428	428	424
T Wood	285	294	305	313	319	321
Town Total	10,541	11,096	11,739	12,315	12,789	13,139
Percent of County	35.0%	35.6%	36.3%	37.0%	37.6%	38.3%
V Arpin	139	145	151	158	162	165
V Auburndale	284	305	329	350	369	386
V Biron	384	386	388	388	384	376
V Hewitt	233	251	271	290	306	320
V Milladore	102	102	102	102	101	99
V Port Edwards	706	718	734	746	751	745
V Rudolph	170	173	177	179	179	178
V Vesper	234	235	238	238	236	233
Village Total	2,252	2,315	2,390	2,451	2,488	2,502
Percent of County	7.5%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	7.3%	7.3%
C Marshfield	8,054	8,268	8,513	8,706	8,824	8,847
C Nekoosa	987	1,015	1,048	1,075	1,092	1,098
C Pittsville	331	344	360	374	383	390
C Wisconsin Rapids	7,970	8,120	8,287	8,392	8,428	8,366
City Total	17,342	17,747	18,208	18,547	18,727	18,701
Percent of County	57.5%	57.0%	56.3%	55.7%	55.1%	54.5%
Wood County	30,135	31,158	32,337	33,313	34,004	34,342

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration.

Table I-15 Projected Employment					
	Employed Persons				
	Actual	Projected			
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Projected By:					
NCWRPC*	42,926	44,930	46,934	48,937	50,941
WCP&Z**	42,926	43,417	44,005	44,538	44,924
* North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission					
** Wood County Planning & Zoning Office					

Trends in Demographics

Many trends have developed over the past couple of decades with respect to Wood County's demographics. Significant trends are summarized in Table 1-16.

Table 1-16

Trends in Demographics

1. Wood County's population continues to grow, although at a slow pace

The proportion of the county's population that lives in the towns has increased slightly.

2. Towns in the "urban" areas have had the most growth in recent years

3. Wood County has one of the highest median ages of all Wisconsin counties

Wood County's median age of 38.0 is up nearly 10 years since 1980.

All population groups below age 35 have been declining in numbers while those over age 35 have been increasing.

4. Wood County's educational levels are improving, but lag behind the State for post-high school education

Wood County has a higher percentage of residents who graduated from high school or with some level of college than did neighboring counties but continues to lag behind state averages. This trend is likely to continue because of the age of Wood County's population.

5. Household size continues to decline in Wood County

Household size has declined from 2.87 persons per household in 1980 to 2.47 in 2000. The number of households has increased from about 25,000 in 1980 to over 30,000 in 2000. These trends are both likely to continue into the next few decades.

6. Wood County has a higher median income than most of the surrounding counties

The County lags behind its main competitors, Marathon and Portage counties.

Wood County ranks 15th of 72 Wisconsin counties for per capita personal income (2002).

7. The percent of families and individuals in poverty has continued to drop

Wood County's poverty levels are lower than the average for adjacent counties and the State.

8. Wood County's employed labor force has consistently been higher than other counties in the region

Although the economy has left many workers without jobs, Wood County is expected to continue with higher levels of workers employed than its neighbors.

9. Wood County's population is expected to peak in 2020, then decline slightly

The rate of growth will be slow, will peak at about 79,100, then begin to decline unless something is changed to create more jobs and attract more people to Wood County.

10. New housing structures will require changes in land use

Senior housing will likely be constructed in cities and villages where public sewer and water is available.

Rural housing is expected to require up to 5,200 acres of land to be converted to its current undeveloped status.

11. Employment opportunities are expected to result in new jobs in Wood County

State projections show that the employment numbers will increase by more than 4000 between 2000 and 2025.

