

# Chapter 1 - Issues and Opportunities

Per State of Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 - Comprehensive Planning (2)(a), the Issues and Opportunities element of a community's comprehensive plan is to provide:

*"Background information on the local governmental unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the local governmental unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local governmental unit over a 20-year planning period. Background information shall include population, household and employment forecasts that the local governmental unit 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".*

This Chapter provides information on the County's planning issues and opportunities. 1.1 provides a rationale for identification of planning issues and opportunities, whereas 1.2 provides a profile of the County, containing vital planning information. Overall County issues and opportunities to be addressed in the *Rock County Comprehensive Plan 2035 (Plan)* are derived from this information, as well as from *Citizen Participation Plan* activities, and identified in 1.3.

## 1.1. Issues and Opportunities Planning

As stated in Section I: Executive Summary of this *Plan*, a comprehensive plan is formulated with the general purpose of guiding development to best promote a community's general welfare. To achieve this end, a planning context needs to be established, centering on the essential questions of "What are we planning for?" and "What will help us get there?". Identification of planning issues and opportunities creates a planning context and provides the answer to these questions. Thus, a comprehensive plan aims to rectify a community's planning issues and to advantageously utilize planning opportunities.

The County, similar to any community, has various planning issues that will present challenges as it develops over the next 25 years. However, the County also possesses unique planning opportunities, which if utilized in a thoughtful manner, offer a path to continued community vibrancy and stability.

## 1.2. A County Profile

Profiling a community is vital in identifying its planning issues and opportunities. The following provides a profile of the County utilizing the following categories:

- Geography
- History
- Existing Population and Demographics
- Population and Demographic Trends
- Population Projections

## Geography

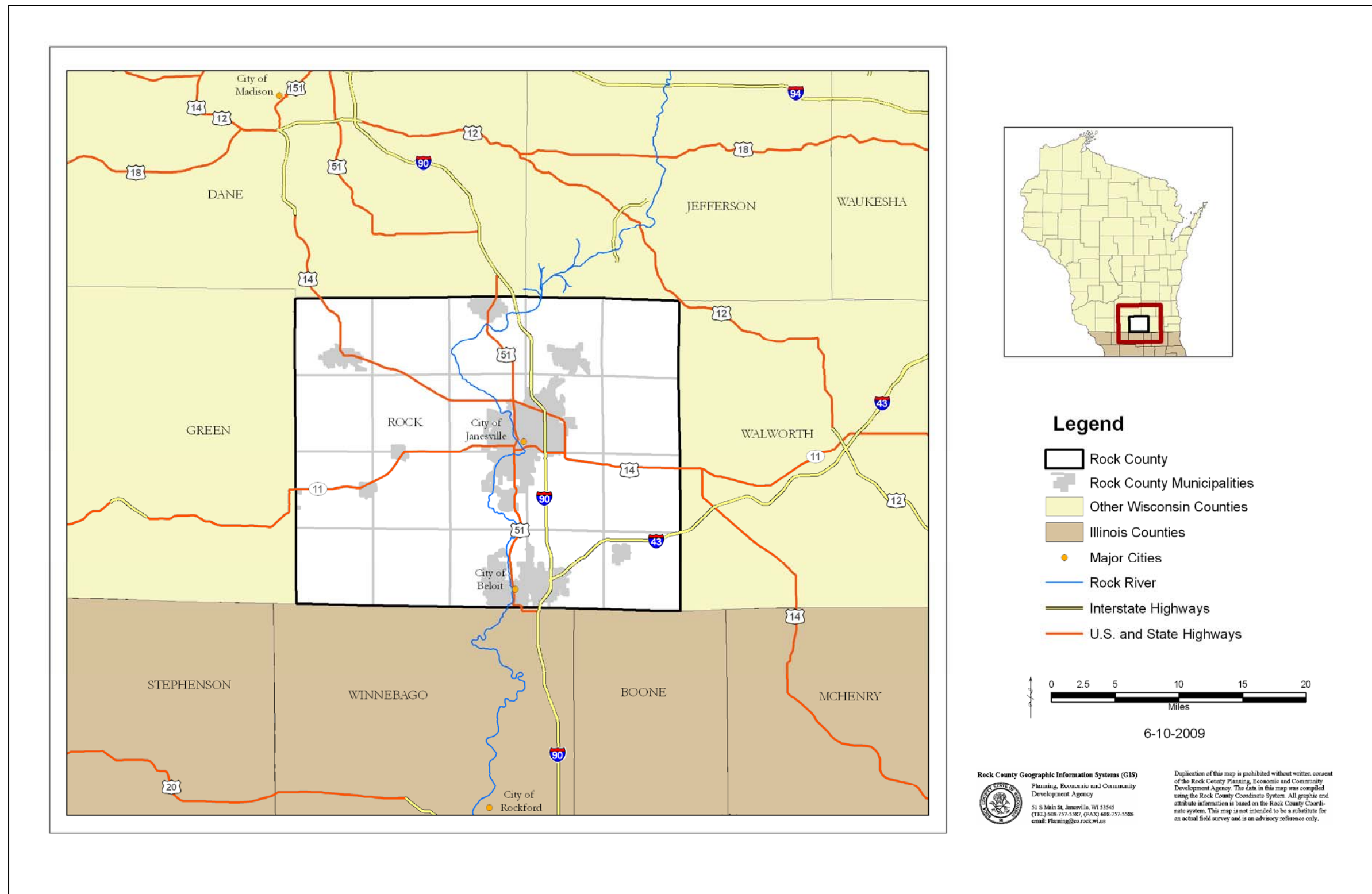
The County is located in the south-central portion of the State of Wisconsin, forming a portion of the State's southern boundary, approximately equidistant from Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River. The County covers 721 square miles and is composed of 29 municipalities including six Cities, three Villages, and 20 Towns, and multiple unincorporated hamlets. The County's Cities include Janesville, Beloit, Edgerton, Milton, Evansville, and Brodhead. The City of Janesville serves as the County seat, is located in the County's central portion, and is the largest municipality in the County with a population estimated at over 62,000 in 2005. The County's Villages include Clinton, Orfordville, and Footville.

The County is surrounded by vibrant rural communities and burgeoning urban areas. The County is bordered by Wisconsin counties, Dane and Jefferson to the north, Green to the west, and Walworth to the east, and Illinois' counties Boone and Winnebago to the south. The rapidly growing Wisconsin State capital, the City of Madison, with an estimated population of over 223,000 people in 2005, is 30 miles to the County's northwest. Wisconsin's largest city, Milwaukee, with a metropolitan area containing over 1,700,000 inhabitants in 2005, lies 70 miles east of the County and Rockford, Illinois' third largest city with an estimated population of over 150,000 residents in 2005 is 30 miles south. Additionally, Chicago, Illinois, the country's third largest metropolitan area with a population of over 7,000,000 inhabitants, is 80 miles to the County's south. The County is connected to these urban areas and other regional, State, and national locations by a vast road network, including Interstates 90/39 and 43, and U.S. Highways 51 and 14.

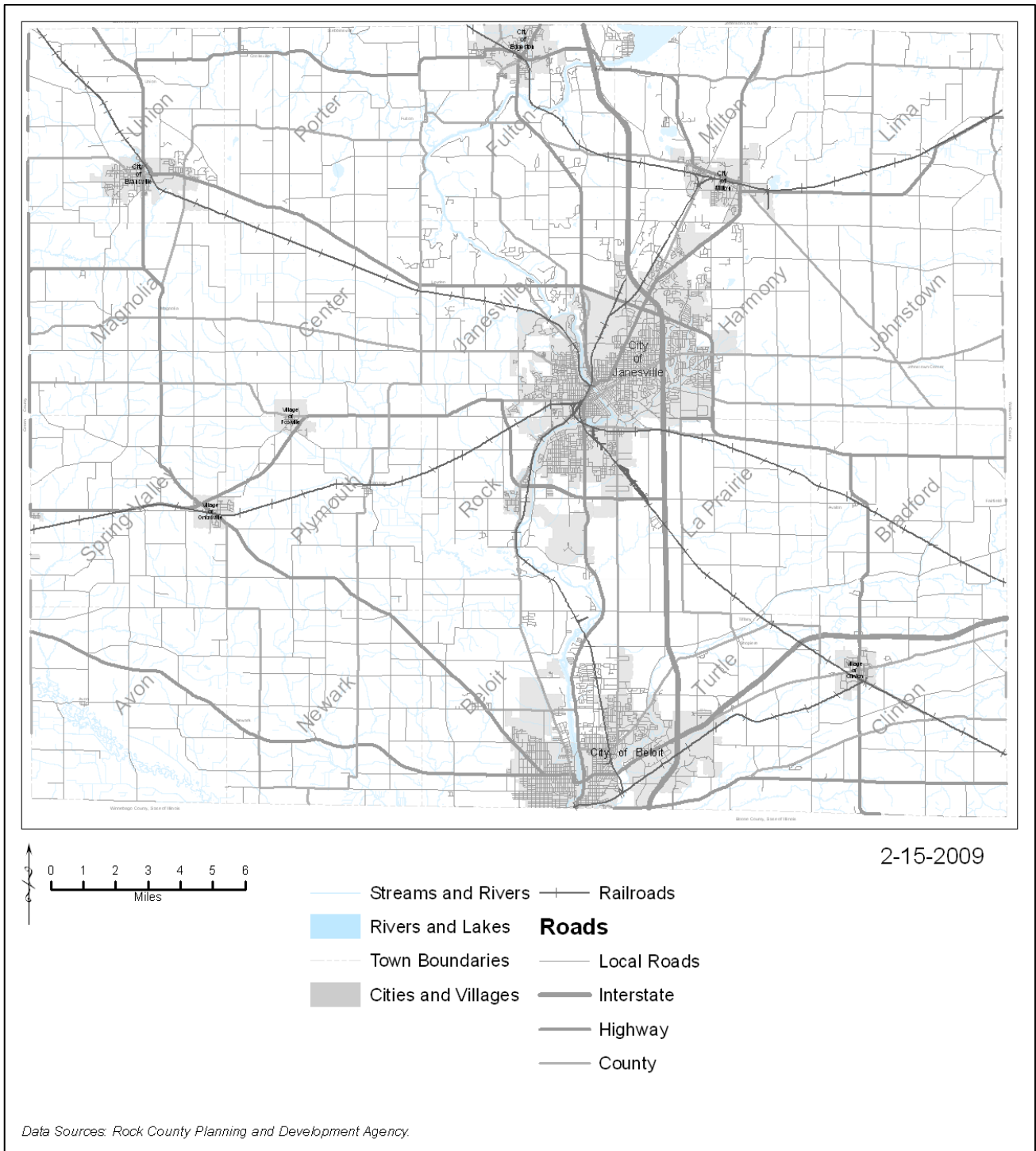
The County's physical geography is varied. The County's main waterway, the Rock River, bisects the County from north to south, running from Lake Koshkonong in the north-central portion of the County, through the Cities of Janesville and Beloit. The County is located in twelve base watersheds, all components of the Lower Rock Basin, which in turn is part of the Mississippi River Basin. The County's defining geologic feature is the end moraine, a remnant of the last glacial advance (Wisconsin Glaciation) approximately 10,000 years ago. The County's glacially formed kettle-moraine landscape is characterized by varying topography and drainage patterns, and uneven hills and ridges.

Maps 1.1 and 1.2 show the County's vicinity and location.

Map 1.1:  
Vicinity



Map 1.2:  
Location



The County's Cities and urban areas are home to diverse and unique commercial and industrial sectors, historic and cultural attractions, natural resources, and public and residential areas. The Cities of Janesville and Beloit both house substantial industrial sectors. Health care service entities, including Mercy Health System Corporation of Janesville and Beloit Memorial Hospital Incorporated, also employ a large segment of the County's labor force, as do various forms of

government, including the County and the City of Janesville and Beloit school districts. The County's many historic and cultural attractions include the City of Evansville historic district, Beloit College, an acclaimed liberal arts institution located in the City of Beloit, and the City of Janesville's Rotary Botanical Gardens and Tallman House, an exceptional example of Italian villa style architecture from the mid 1850's. Additionally, the Cities of Janesville and Beloit have a combined symphony orchestra, as well as individual performing arts centers. The Rock County Fair and Riverfest are regional cultural celebrations held every summer in the Cities of Janesville and Beloit respectively. These Cities both have extensive park and open space networks, including portions of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, a Statewide trail commemorating the State's geologic history. Additionally, the Rock River runs through these Cities, offering opportunities for recreation, land preservation, and highly-valued residential, commercial, and industrial development. Historic and modern neighborhoods, comprising single and multi-family residences, are interspersed throughout the County's Cities and urban areas.

The County's rural areas, including its Towns and Villages, are home to a wide variety of natural resources, historic and cultural attractions, and public and residential areas as well. The County's rural land base and its rich soils are predominately utilized for agriculture production. As the County's urban area industries drive regional economic growth, so to does the County's rural agriculture production, providing diversification and balance. Various crops are cultivated in the County's rural areas, including corn and soybeans. The County's crop market value (\$63.5 million) in 2002 was fifth among all Wisconsin counties. Milk cattle, hogs, sheep, and goats are predominant livestock types reared in the County. County parks, including Magnolia Bluff, home to a unique scenic overlook, scattered woodlands, Lake Koshkonong, the Rock River, and various other waterways provide the County's rural areas with recreation, and land preservation and development opportunities.

## History

The County has a rich history. The Lake Koshkonong area had been inhabited for thousands of years by various Native American groups including the mound building societies and later the Winnebago, Potawatomi, Sauk, Fox, and Menominee tribes. The Winnebago, in particular, figure prominently in the history of the area. The name Koshkonong is Winnebago meaning, "the lake we live on" and the largest Native American settlement in the State of Wisconsin in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century was a Winnebago settlement on the western side of the Lake, just northwest of the County's north-central border.

The Europeans first exposure to the area likely came in 1778 when French fur trader Charles Gautier de Verville passed through. In the next decade, French traders settled in the area now known as Charley Bluff on the southern end of the Lake in the present-day Town of Milton. Settlement of the area that was to become Rock County began in earnest in the 1830's, spurred on by two major events. Initially, the Federal Public Land Survey was completed in the area between 1833 and 1836. Additionally, U.S. soldiers returning from the Black Hawk War of 1832, which drove the great Winnebago chief Black Hawk westward through the lands that were to become the County, raved of the beauty and fertility of the Rock River Valley, peaking the

curiosity of restless souls eastward. John Inman and William Holmes left Milwaukee in 1835 to explore the area that was to become Rock County. The pair reached the site of the present-day City of Janesville and set up camp, deciding to return in the fall to begin a permanent settlement. The two men, along with four others, returned in November of 1835 and built a log house on the banks of the Rock River, becoming the County's first official settlers. The settlements of Janesville, Beloit and Milton soon sprung up, with other settlements following. Rock County, originally within Milwaukee County (one of six original counties of the Wisconsin Territory), was incorporated by territorial legislation in 1836. The City of Janesville was selected as the County seat in 1837 and the County's current boundaries were set in 1839.

The County's early settlers were greeted by a gently undulating landscape teeming with prairie grasses and wildflowers. Rock Prairie, the largest in the State of Wisconsin, occupied nearly half the County, extending from the Rock River eastward. Early settlers also found extremely productive agricultural soils, particularly in the Rock River Valley, and soon large swaths of the County were under cultivation.

The City's urban areas, particularly the Cities of Janesville and Beloit, both settled in the early 1830's, developed quickly due to the productive hinterlands that surrounded them, their geography, both on the Rock River and in close proximity to the larger urban areas of Chicago, Milwaukee, and Madison, and emerging rail technology. The Rock River in particular, given its capacity for energy generation, transportation, and agricultural production, figured prominently in the development of these Cities. So too did rail, with lines coming to the County in the early 1850's, linking the County's farms to its urban areas and its urban areas to larger regional urban centers. The Milwaukee and Mississippi Rail Road passed through the northern part of the County, containing a branch from Milton to Janesville that was eventually continued west to the Mississippi River as the Wisconsin Southern. The Rock River Valley Rail Road ran from the Wisconsin-Illinois border up the Rock River, originating in Beloit and terminating in Madison. Lines also ran from Racine, on Lake Michigan, to Beloit and from Janesville to Kenosha, also on the Lake. The Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Northwestern Railway would later emerge, consolidating many of the rail lines in the County.

The County's population surpassed 30,000 by 1850. The County, with its balance of rural agricultural production and urban industry, continued to grow throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, spurred by innovation in both sectors. Prominent manufacturers in the County's early days included Beloit Reaper and Sickle Works, Merrill and Houston Iron Works, Rock River Paper Company, D.W. Dake's Creamery, and Beloit Plough and Wagon Works. Agricultural staples in the County's early days included wheat, corn, oats, and barley, and to a lesser extent wool, potatoes, pork, butter, and fruits.

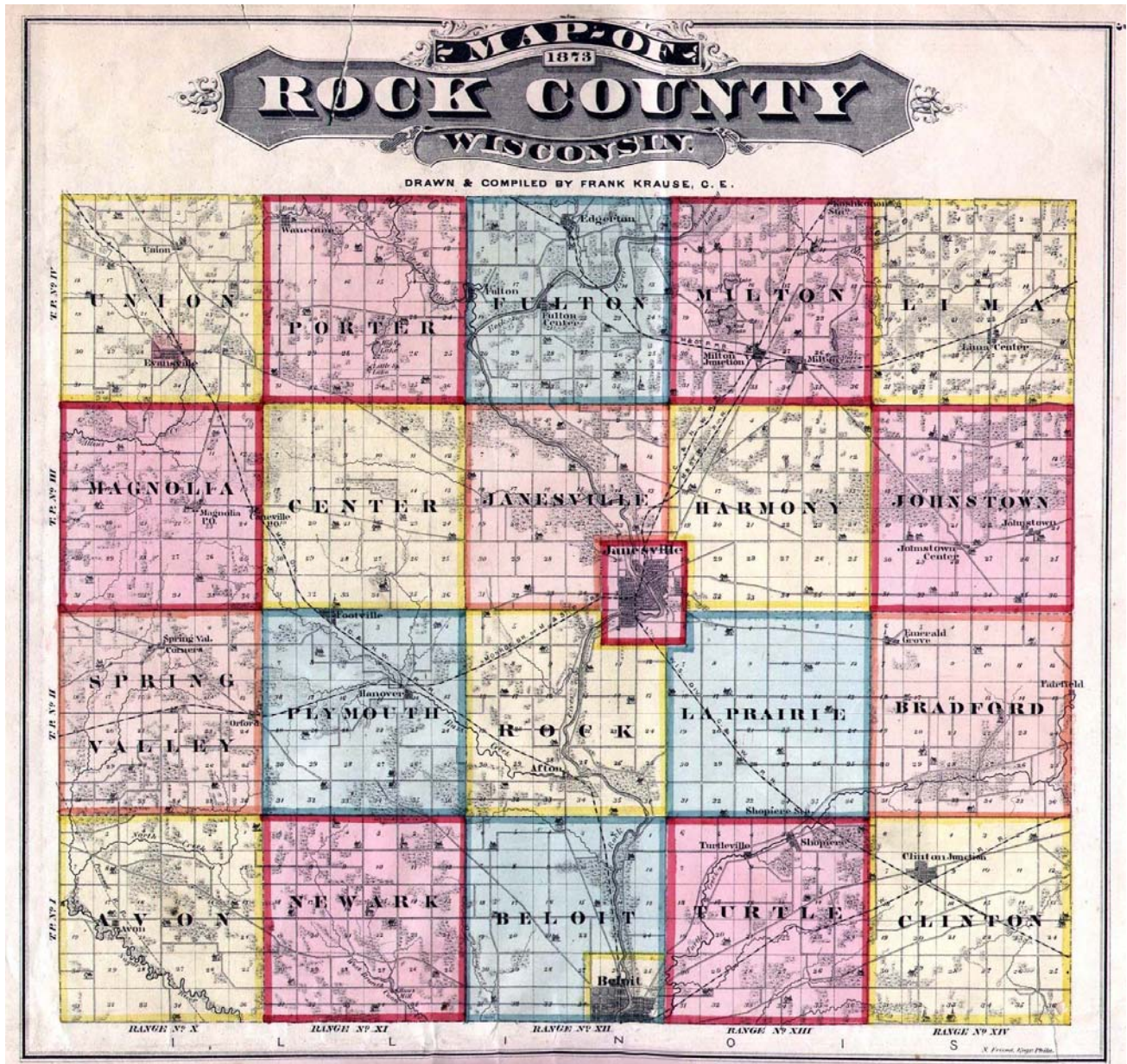
The County emerged as a regional industrial center in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Cities of Beloit and Janesville became centers of diversified industry, attracting immigrant workers. Parker Pen Company, a global pen manufacturer, was founded in the City of Janesville in 1891 and remained a staple of the County's economy into the century's second half. General Motors Corporation (GM) opened one of its first automobile assembly plants in the City of Janesville in 1919, providing the region with an industrial identity throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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Stagnated population and economic growth was evident in the County in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, coinciding with a national decline in domestic manufacturing and industry. Similarly, 2009 witnessed the closure of the GM plant, in turn affecting many other dependent industries in the County. Recent economic diversification, including an emerging health services sector, continued agricultural production, and the County's favorable geography have provided stability to the region though, and the County continues to grow and develop at a steady rate.

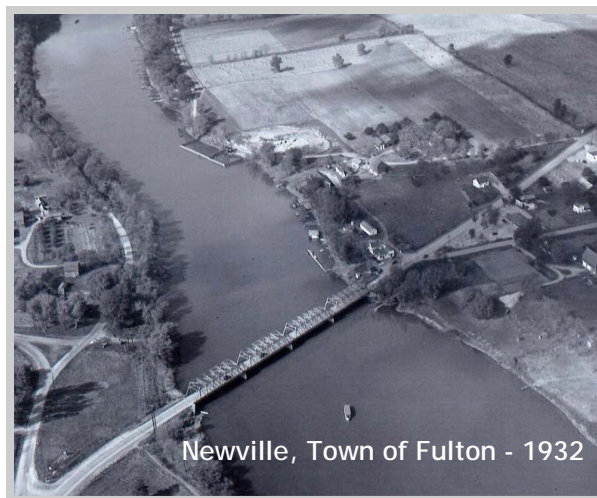
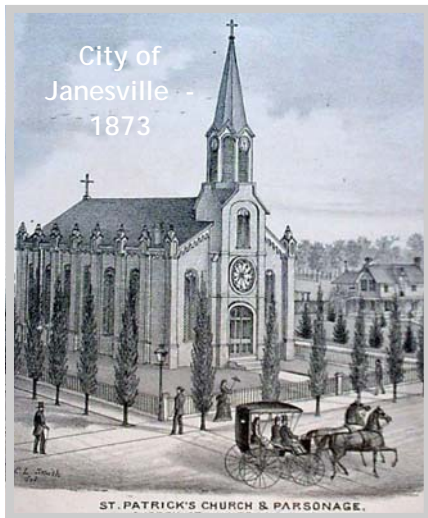
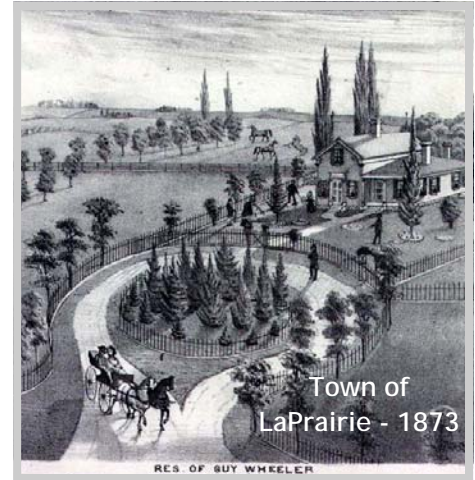
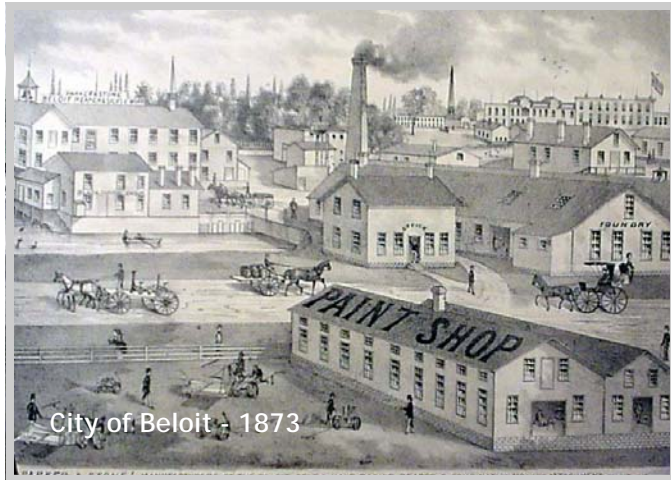
Figure 1.1 displays a plat map of the County in 1873, whereas Figures 1.2 and 1.3 display scenes from the County's earlier days.

Figure 1.1:  
Plat Map: 1873



Source: WIRock Group - 2008

Figure 1.2:  
Early County Scenes



Source: WIRock Group and Rock-Koshkonong Lake District - 2008



## Existing Population and Demographics

Figure 1.3 displays the County's population by community in 2005.

**Figure 1.3:  
Population: Rock County: 2005**

Community	Number	Percent
Town of Avon	589	0.4%
Town of Beloit	7,319	4.7%
Town of Bradford	1,027	0.7%
Town of Center	1,040	0.7%
Town of Clinton	909	0.6%
Town of Fulton	3,230	2.1%
Town of Harmony	2,448	1.6%
Town of Janesville	3,343	2.1%
Town of Johnstown	797	0.5%
Town of La Prairie	905	0.6%
Town of Lima	1,314	0.8%
Town of Magnolia	855	0.5%
Town of Milton	2,974	1.9%
Town of Newark	1,593	1.0%
Town of Plymouth	1,299	0.8%
Town of Porter	969	0.6%
Town of Rock	3,362	2.1%
Town of Spring Valley	813	0.5%
Town of Turtle	2,430	1.5%
Town of Union	1,981	1.3%
Village of Clinton	2,237	1.4%
Village of Footville	769	0.5%
Village of Orfordville	1,357	0.9%
City of Beloit	36,106	23.0%
City of Brodhead	5	0.0%
City of Edgerton	5,096	3.2%
City of Evansville	4,660	3.0%
City of Janesville	62,130	39.6%
City of Milton	5,437	3.5%
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>156,994</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration - 2004*

Figure 1.3 indicates the large majority of the County's population was located in its Cities, including Janesville (62,130 and 39.6%) and Beloit (36,106 and 23.0%), in 2005. Towns with large populations in 2005 include Beloit (7,319 and 4.7%), Rock (3,362 and 2.1%), Janesville (3,343 and 2.1%), Fulton (3,230 and 2.1%) and Milton (2,974 and 1.9%).

Figure 1.4 displays the age distribution of the County’s population and its median age in 2006.

**Figure 1.4:  
Age Distribution: Rock County: 2006**

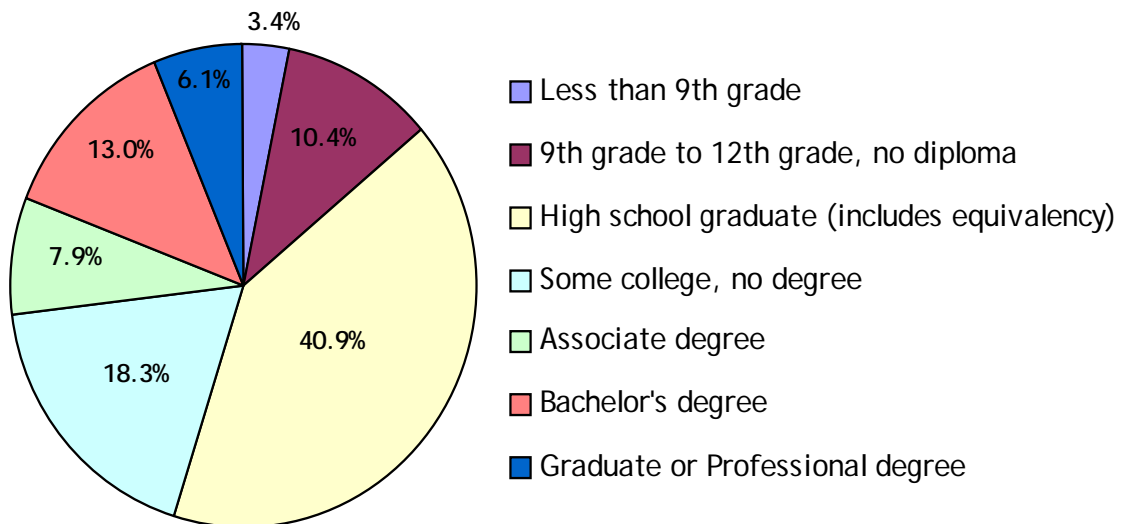
Age Group	2006	
	Number	Percent
Under 5	10,198	6.4%
5 to 19	33,297	20.9%
20 to 34	31,214	19.6%
35 to 44	23,290	14.6%
45 to 54	23,920	15.0%
55 to 64	17,145	10.8%
65 to 84	17,568	11.0%
85 and over	2,521	1.6%
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>159,153</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>MEDIAN AGE</b>		
	<b>36.6</b>	

Source: United States Bureau of the Census - 2006

Figure 1.4 indicates 46.9% (74,709) of the County’s population was 34 years of age or younger in 2006. Figure 1.4 also indicates 29.6% of the County’s population was between the ages of 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 in 2006. The County’s median age in 2006 was 36.6.

Figure 1.5 displays the education level of the County population age 25 years and older in 2006.

**Figure 1.5:  
Education Level (Age 25 Years and Older): Rock County: 2006**



Source: United States Bureau of the Census - 2006

Figure 1.5 indicates 86.2% of the County’s population age 25 years and older had at least a high school diploma, and 45.3% had some education beyond high school, as of 2006.

Figure 1.6 displays the diversity of the County’s population in 2006.

**Figure 1.6:  
Diversity: Rock County: 2006**

Race	Number	Percent
White	139,037	87.4%
Black or African American	6,648	4.2%
Hispanic or Latino	9,152	5.8%
Asian	1,738	1.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	108	0.1%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	215	0.1%
Other race	2,255	1.4%
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>159,153</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Source: United States Bureau of the Census - 2006*

Figure 1.6 indicates the largest segment of the County’s population (139,037 and 87.4%) is classified as White as of 2006, whereas Hispanic or Latino comprises the second largest portion at 5.8% (9,152).



## Population and Demographic Trends

Figure 1.7 illustrates County population by community from 1980 to 2000.

**Figure 1.7:**  
**Population: Rock County: 1980 - 2000**

Community	1980	1990	2000	Change: 1980-2000	
				Number	Percent
Town of Avon	555	570	586	31	5.6%
Town of Beloit	8,382	6,778	7,038	-1,344	-16.0%
Town of Bradford	1,100	1,030	1,007	-93	-8.5%
Town of Center	908	861	1,005	97	10.7%
Town of Clinton	925	899	893	-32	-3.5%
Town of Fulton	2,866	2,867	3,158	292	10.2%
Town of Harmony	2,090	2,138	2,351	261	12.5%
Town of Janesville	3,068	3,121	3,048	-20	-0.7%
Town of Johnstown	844	850	802	-42	-5.0%
Town of La Prairie	1,099	943	929	-170	-15.5%
Town of Lima	1,179	1,285	1,312	133	11.3%
Town of Magnolia	746	717	854	108	14.5%
Town of Milton	2,306	2,353	2,844	538	23.3%
Town of Newark	1,574	1,514	1,571	-3	-0.2%
Town of Plymouth	1,267	1,189	1,270	3	0.2%
Town of Porter	940	953	925	-15	-1.6%
Town of Rock	3,399	3,172	3,338	-61	-1.8%
Town of Spring Valley	912	790	813	-99	-10.9%
Town of Turtle	2,703	2,458	2,444	-259	-9.6%
Town of Union	1,329	1,537	1,860	531	40.0%
Village of Clinton	1,751	1,849	2,162	411	23.5%
Village of Footville	794	764	788	-6	-0.8%
Village of Orfordville	1,143	1,219	1,272	129	11.3%
City of Beloit	35,207	35,571	35,775	568	1.6%
City of Brodhead	0	0	0	0	N/A
City of Edgerton	4,335	4,254	4,891	556	12.8%
City of Evansville	2,835	3,174	4,039	1,204	42.5%
City of Janesville	51,071	52,210	60,200	9,129	17.9%
City of Milton	4,092	4,444	5,132	1,040	25.4%
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>139,420</b>	<b>139,510</b>	<b>152,307</b>	<b>12,887</b>	<b>9.2%</b>

*Source: United States Bureau of the Census - 1980, 1990, and 2000*

Figure 1.7 indicates modest population number (12,887) and percent (9.2%) growth at the County level from 1980 to 2000. Figure 1.7 indicates the highest population number increases were exhibited in the Cities of Janesville (9,129), Evansville (1,204), and Milton (1,040) from 1980 to 2000. The Town of Beloit experienced the largest population number decrease (1,344) from 1980 to 2000. Figure 1.7 also indicates the City of Evansville and the Town of Union (in

which the City of Evansville is located) experienced the highest population percent gains from 1980 to 2000, 42.5% and 40.0%, respectively. The majority of other County communities experienced modest growth during this same time period. A few County communities experienced negative population percent growth from 1980 to 2000, including the Towns of Beloit (16.0%), LaPrairie (15.5%), Spring Valley (10.9%), and Turtle (9.6%).

Figure 1.8 displays County population from 1980 to 2000, comparing its figures against neighboring counties.

**Figure 1.8:  
Population: Rock County: 1980 - 2000**

County	1980	1990	2000	Change: 1980-2000	
				Number	Percent
Rock	139,420	139,510	152,307	12,887	9.2%
Green	30,012	30,339	33,647	3,635	12.1%
Dane	323,545	367,085	426,526	102,981	31.8%
Jefferson	66,152	67,783	74,021	7,869	11.9%
Walworth	71,507	75,000	93,759	22,252	31.1%
Stephenson (Illinois)	49,536	48,052	48,979	-557	-1.1%
Winnebago (Illinois)	250,884	252,913	278,418	27,534	11.0%
Boone (Illinois)	28,630	30,806	41,786	13,156	46.0%
McHenry (Illinois)	147,897	183,241	260,077	112,180	75.9%

*Source: United States Bureau of the Census - 1980, 1990, and 2000*

Figure 1.8 indicates neighboring counties Dane and McHenry (Illinois) have seen substantial population number increases (over 100,000) from 1980 to 2000. Figure 1.8 indicates the County is near the bottom of the displayed counties in population number (12,887) and percent (9.2%) increase from 1980 to 2000.

Figure 1.9 details age distribution of the County’s population from 1980 to 2000.

**Figure 1.9:  
Age Distribution: Rock County: 1980 - 2000**

Age Group	1980		1990		2000		Change: 1980-2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5	10,790	7.7%	10,922	7.8%	10,263	6.7%	-527	-1.0%
5 to 19	37,003	26.5%	31,019	22.2%	34,218	22.5%	-2,785	-4.1%
20 to 34	34,721	24.9%	32,599	23.4%	29,601	19.4%	-5,120	-5.5%
35 to 44	15,908	11.4%	20,358	14.6%	24,810	16.3%	8,902	4.9%
45 to 54	13,915	10.0%	14,743	10.6%	20,645	13.6%	6,730	3.6%
55 to 64	11,790	8.5%	12,320	8.8%	13,375	8.8%	1,585	0.3%
65 to 84	13,693	9.8%	15,586	11.2%	16,843	11.1%	3,150	1.2%
85 and over	1,600	1.1%	1,963	1.4%	2,552	1.7%	952	0.5%
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>139,420</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>139,510</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>152,307</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12,887</b>	<b>N/A</b>

*Source: United States Bureau of the Census - 1980, 1990, and 2000*

Figure 1.9 indicates the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 age groups have seen the highest increases in numbers (8,902 and 6,730) and percent (4.9% and 3.6%) from 1980 to 2000. Figure 1.9 also indicates the 20 to 34 and 5 to 19 age groups exhibited the highest decreases in numbers (5,120 and 2,785) and percent (5.5% and 4.1%) during this same time period.

Figure 1.10 displays education levels for County residents age 25 years and older from 1980 to 2000. Due to the nature of the data, the 1980 Some college, no degree and Associate degree Education Level categories have been combined, as have the Bachelor’s degree and Graduate or professional degree categories. Subsequently, these same categories were combined for 1990 and 2000 to produce the percents as stated in the Change: 1980-2000 column for these categories.

**Figure 1.10:  
Education Level: (Age 25 Years and Older): Rock County 1980 - 2000**

Education Level	1980	1990	2000	Change: 1980-2000
9th grade to 12th grade, no diploma	28.9%	21.8%	16.1%	-12.8%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	45.7%	42.9%	39.3%	-6.4%
Some college, no degree	13.0%	15.4%	21.3%	14.9%
Associate degree		6.6%	6.7%	
Bachelor's degree	12.4%	8.9%	11.3%	4.3%
Graduate or professional degree		4.4%	5.4%	
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>NA</b>

*Source: United States Bureau of the Census - 1980, 1990, and 2000*

Figure 1.10 indicates the County’s population age 25 years and older has experienced increases in education level, including a drop of 12.8% of those residents who do not have a high school diploma and a combined increase of 19.2% of residents who have some education beyond a high school diploma.

Figure 1.11 displays the diversity of the County’s population in 1990 and 2000.

**Figure 1.11:  
Diversity: Rock County: 1990 and 2000**

Race	1990		2000		Percent of Population Change: 1990-2000
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
White	130,803	93.8%	138,610	91.0%	61.0%
Black or African American	6,638	4.8%	7,048	4.6%	3.2%
Hispanic or Latino	1,754	1.3%	5,953	3.9%	32.8%
Asian	963	0.7%	1,191	0.8%	1.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	369	0.3%	422	0.3%	0.4%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	22	< 0.1%	61	< 0.1%	0.3%
Other race	715	0.5%	2,691	1.8%	15.4%
Two or more races	N/R	N/R	2,284	1.5%	N/A
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>139,510</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>152,307</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>N/A</b>

*Source: United States Bureau of the Census - 1990 and 2000*

Figure 1.11 indicates the County’s population has historically been classified predominately as White. Figure 1.11 also indicates the Hispanic or Latino population has tripled, representing approximately a third (32.8%) of total County population percent increase from 1990 to 2000.

**Population and Demographic Projections\***

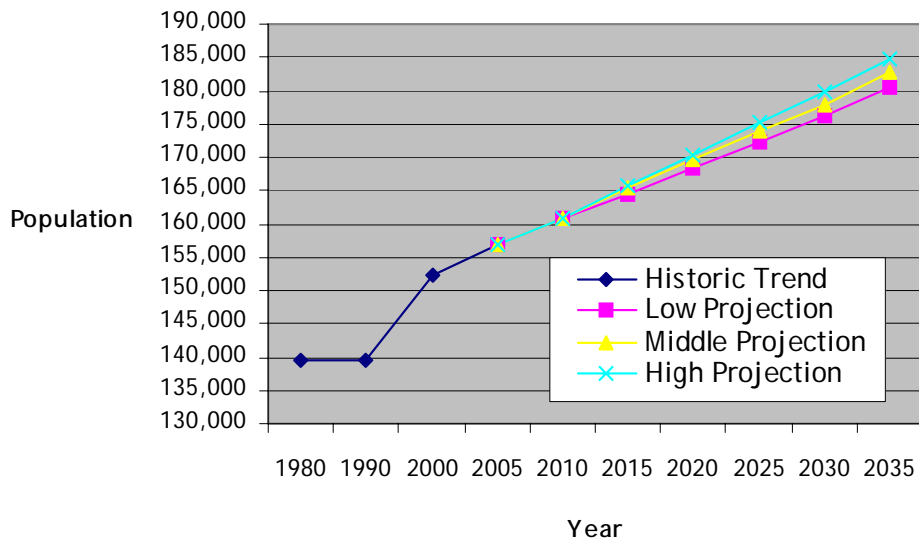
Figures 1.12 and 1.13 illustrate County population projection scenarios. Three projection scenarios, a High, Middle, and Low are presented to illustrate various, possible future County populations through 2035.

**Figure 1.12:  
Population: Rock County: 2010 - 2035**

Projection	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	Change: 2010-2035	
							Number	Percent
High	160,952	165,706	170,460	175,214	179,968	184,722	23,770	14.8%
Middle	160,911	165,354	169,648	174,018	177,855	182,644	21,733	13.5%
Low	160,662	164,416	168,258	172,189	176,212	180,330	19,668	12.2%

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration - 2004  
Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency - 2008*

**Figure 1.13:  
Population: Rock County: 1980 - 2035**



*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration - 2004  
Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency - 2008*

Figures 1.12 and 1.13 indicate the High population projection scenario would add approximately 24,000 County residents above the 2010 projection, whereas the Low projection adds approximately 20,000. For the purposes of this *Plan*, the Middle projection will be utilized.

\* These projections are presented to serve as a guide for planning purposes, providing only an indication of possible future County population and cannot account for the myriad of future factors that may influence future County population. For a detailed explanation regarding projection methodology, please see Appendix F - Projection Sources and Formulation Methodologies.

Figure 1.14 depicts the Middle projection of County population by community from 2010 to 2035.

**Figure 1.14:  
Population: Rock County: 2010 - 2035**

Community	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	Change: 2010-2035	
							Number	Percent
Town of Avon	593	597	601	605	609	612	19	3.2%
Town of Beloit	7,406	7,597	7,781	7,968	8,125	8,314	908	12.3%
Town of Bradford	999	996	992	989	984	980	-19	-1.9%
Town of Center	1,101	1,150	1,198	1,247	1,295	1,343	242	22.0%
Town of Clinton	900	905	909	913	916	921	21	2.3%
Town of Fulton	3,375	3,486	3,594	3,704	3,812	3,922	547	16.2%
Town of Harmony	2,561	2,672	2,781	2,891	2,996	3,105	544	21.2%
Town of Janesville	3,540	3,789	4,034	4,280	4,523	4,769	1,229	34.7%
Town of Johnstown	765	748	729	712	701	687	-78	-10.2%
Town of La Prairie	886	865	844	823	803	782	-104	-11.7%
Town of Lima	1,359	1,383	1,407	1,431	1,455	1,478	119	8.8%
Town of Magnolia	918	951	982	1,015	1,047	1,076	158	17.2%
Town of Milton	3,200	3,380	3,557	3,735	3,913	4,085	885	27.7%
Town of Newark	1,616	1,640	1,663	1,686	1,708	1,732	116	7.2%
Town of Plymouth	1,324	1,352	1,379	1,406	1,428	1,454	130	9.8%
Town of Porter	942	951	960	969	978	986	44	4.7%
Town of Rock	3,377	3,399	3,419	3,440	3,460	3,483	106	3.1%
Town of Spring Valley	823	828	833	838	845	850	27	3.3%
Town of Turtle	2,395	2,383	2,369	2,357	2,344	2,332	-63	-2.6%
Town of Union	2,149	2,295	2,439	2,584	2,729	2,874	725	33.7%
Village of Clinton	2,480	2,640	2,798	2,957	3,116	3,175	695	28.0%
Village of Footville	784	783	781	780	775	777	-7	-0.9%
Village of Orfordville	1,335	1,367	1,399	1,431	1,455	1,486	151	11.3%
City of Beloit	35,927	36,029	36,100	36,190	36,268	36,317	390	1.1%
City of Edgerton	5,243	5,423	5,599	5,776	5,936	6,103	860	16.4%
City of Evansville	4,692	5,021	5,346	5,672	5,997	6,214	1,522	32.4%
City of Janesville	64,535	66,756	68,910	71,096	73,309	75,680	11,145	17.3%
City of Milton	5,686	5,968	6,244	6,523	6,815	7,107	1,421	25.0%
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>160,911</b>	<b>165,354</b>	<b>169,648</b>	<b>174,018</b>	<b>177,855</b>	<b>182,644</b>	<b>21,733</b>	<b>13.5%</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration - 2004  
Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency - 2008

Figure 1.14 indicates the highest population number increases from 2010 to 2035 will be seen in the Cities of Janesville (11,145), Evansville (1,522), and Milton (1,421), while the highest population percent gains will be seen in the City of Evansville (32.4%), Village of Clinton (28.0%), and Towns of Janesville (34.7%), Union (33.7%), and Milton (27.7%). Figure 1.14 also indicates the highest population losses, both in number and percent, will be seen in the Towns of LaPrairie (104 and 11.7%) Johnstown (78 and 10.2%).



Figure 1.15 displays the Middle projection of County population from 2010 to 2025 in comparison to neighboring counties.

**Figure 1.15:  
Population: Rock County: 2010 - 2025**

County	2010	2015	2020	2025	Change: 2010-2025	
					Number	Percent
Rock	160,911	165,354	169,648	174,018	13,107	8.1%
Green	36,093	37,259	38,474	39,609	3,516	9.7%
Dane	480,573	503,017	527,534	554,848	74,275	15.5%
Jefferson	82,161	85,178	88,302	91,464	9,303	11.3%
Walworth	100,634	106,588	111,237	113,506	12,872	12.8%
Stephenson (Illinois)	47,812	48,136	49,268	50,553	2,741	5.7%
Winnebago (Illinois)	307,349	320,683	337,049	352,965	45,616	14.8%
Boone (Illinois)	45,484	46,773	48,540	50,807	5,323	11.7%
McHenry (Illinois)	337,034	377,315	407,931	434,286	97,252	28.9%

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration - 2004  
Illinois Department of Public Health - 2008*

Figure 1.15 indicates the County will experience a low population percent growth rate (8.1%) and a moderate population number increase (13,107) in comparison to neighboring counties from 2010 to 2025.

Figure 1.16 displays a projection of the age distribution of the County population from 2010 to 2025.

**Figure 1.16:  
Age Distribution: Rock County: 2010 - 2025**

Age Group	2010		2015		2020		2025		Change: 2010-2025	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5	10,794	6.7%	11,151	6.7%	11,299	6.7%	11,267	6.5%	473	-0.2%
5 to 19	32,980	20.5%	32,622	19.7%	33,385	19.7%	34,291	19.7%	1,311	-0.8%
20 to 34	31,813	19.8%	33,034	20.0%	32,810	19.3%	32,123	18.5%	310	-1.3%
35 to 44	21,574	13.4%	21,282	12.9%	22,660	13.4%	24,085	13.8%	2,511	0.4%
45 to 54	24,391	15.2%	23,267	14.1%	21,314	12.6%	21,165	12.2%	-3,226	-3.0%
55 to 64	18,436	11.5%	20,729	12.5%	21,869	12.9%	20,955	12.0%	2,519	0.6%
65 to 84	17,804	11.1%	19,896	12.0%	22,794	13.4%	26,391	15.2%	8,587	4.1%
85 and over	3,119	1.9%	3,373	2.0%	3,517	2.1%	3,741	2.1%	622	0.2%
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>160,911</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>165,354</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>169,648</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>174,018</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>13,107</b>	<b>N/A</b>

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration - 2004*

Figure 1.16 indicates the highest population gains (8,587 and 4.1%) will be seen in the 65 to 84 age group from 2010 to 2025. However, it is important to note that this age group spans 21 years, while the majority of other age groups span only 11. Figure 1.16 also indicates the 45 to 54 age group will exhibit the highest losses in population number (3,226) and percent (3.0%) during this same time period.

### 1.3. *Plan* Issues and Opportunities

Identifying issues and opportunities provides a planning context, providing answers to the essential questions of “What are we planning for?” and “What will help us get there?”. The following identifies the County’s planning issues and opportunities derived from both analysis of the County’s profile as provided in 1.2 and *Citizen Participation Plan* activities.

#### County Profile

- The County is a growth community.
  - The County’s geography, including proximity to Interstates 90/39 and 43 and various growing urban areas such as the Cities of Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago, has and will continue to contribute to growth and provide opportunities for development.
  - County population trends and projections indicate steady growth through 2035. Population trends and projections for County communities, including the Cities of Janesville, Evansville, and Milton, the Village of Clinton, and the Towns of Union and Janesville, exhibit significant growth rates.
- The dynamic of the County’s population is changing.
  - County age distribution trends and projections indicate an aging population.
  - The education of the County’s population age 25 and older will likely continue its recent trend, exhibiting increases in residents with high school educations and beyond.
  - The County’s Hispanic or Latino population has increased substantially in recent years.
- Growth and a changing population dynamic will have various implications for the County.
  - An aging and increasingly diverse County population has specific service needs that will need to be met.
  - The land base of the County’s Town’s will be eroded by annexations by the County’s Cities and Villages, and productive agricultural lands in the Towns will need to be converted to other uses to accommodate additional residential and associated (i.e. commercial, transportation, etc.) development in the Towns.
  - New residential and associated development will threaten the County’s agricultural, natural, and cultural resources. Residential development in the County should be responsible, entailing quality, diverse, affordable, and attractive units located in

appropriate, designated locations. The County's transportation system should also be responsible, entailing a safe, affordable, regional, diverse, efficient, and highly-connected system. Utilities and community facilities, and associated services, should be provided in the County at adequate levels and in appropriate, designated locations, in a timely, efficient, and affordable manner. Finally, economic development in the County should capitalize on the County's strengths, again ensuring diverse, viable, and responsible economic development in appropriate, designated locations

- Increased efforts, including multi-jurisdictional cooperation and planning, will need to be put forth by the County government to maintain and expand current levels of service to County residents.

### ***Citizen Participation Plan\****

The following list of planning issues and opportunities was derived from *Citizen Participation Plan* activities.

County residents:

- Are generally satisfied with the County's overall quality of life
- Support moderate (1% a year or less) increases in County population
- Recognize the continued preservation of agricultural lands, open space, and the agricultural industry as vital to the County's socio-economic identity
- Support the authority of local governments to regulate land use but are also supportive of intergovernmental cooperation between various governments (County, City, Village, and Town)
- Support agricultural innovation, bio-fuel production, and community and hobby farming activities
- Are concerned about the impact of Dane County's growth and escalating costs of County land and housing
- Are concerned about the threat that residential and commercial development of the County's urban fringes pose to the Town's agricultural land and open space
- Desire land use planning, in the County and surrounding areas, that provides stability to small farm owners and the agricultural industry, and ensures preservation of agricultural and open space lands

*\* This list of planning issues and opportunities, derived from Citizen Participation Plan activities, is not intended to be exhaustive nor representative of the entire County population, but rather to reflect input and a general consensus as put forth by participating stakeholders, including County residents and elected officials, and other interested parties.*