

Chapter 1 - Issues and Opportunities

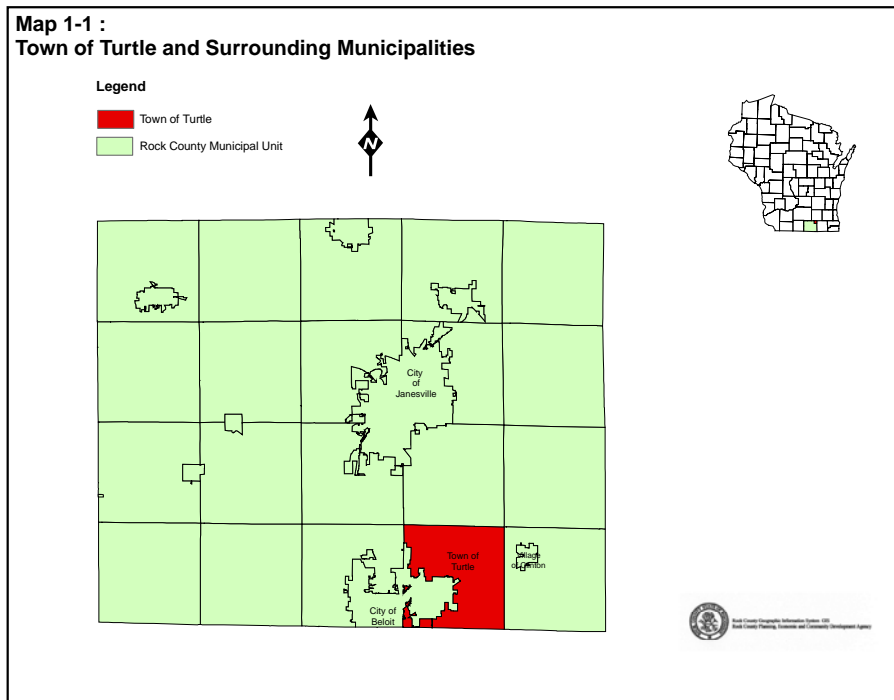
As defined in Wisconsin State Statutes 66.1001, the Issues and Opportunities element of a community's comprehensive plan is designed to provide "*background information*" on the community, including "*population, household and employment forecasts;*" as well as "*demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics.*" Also according to statute, the Issues and Opportunities element shall include a "*statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs*" of the community to guide its "*future development and redevelopment... over a (minimum) 20-year planning period.*" This document adheres to these guidelines while utilizing a 30-year planning horizon.

Introduction

The Town of Turtle Comprehensive Plan is a component of a multi-jurisdictional planning effort with Rock County and eleven other local communities in the county. The intent of this multi-jurisdictional effort is to promote coordinated and consistent planning across governmental boundaries and through governmental layers.

Geographic Setting

The Town of Turtle is located in southeastern Rock County, Wisconsin (Map 1-1). It is bound to the west by the Town of Beloit, to the north by the Town of La Prairie and to the east by the Town of Clinton, in Rock County. The Town of Turtle shares its southern boundary with portions of Winnebago and Boone Counties in Illinois.



Approximately the eastern half of the City of Beloit lies within the Town of Turtle, while 18,232 acres encompass unincorporated lands. The Town is located roughly three-and-a-half (3.5) miles from the southernmost border of the county seat,

Janesville, a city with over 60,000 residents. Also nearby is Illinois' third largest city (Rockford, approximately fifteen (15) miles south), and Wisconsin's largest city, Milwaukee (approximately seventy (70) miles northeast).

The defining natural characteristics in the Town are hydric soils and steep slopes, most prevalent along the Town's streams. Turtle Creek, the northernmost stream in the Town, is bordered by hydric soils and there are steep slopes along the creek's tributaries. There is an abundance of hydric soils present in the entire unincorporated area along Turtle Creek's most southern portion in the Town, nestled between portions of the City of Beloit. Spring Brook runs through the central portion of the Town, and connects to Turtle Creek in the southwestern edge. Much steep slope areas are found along Spring Brook, with hydric soils closely bordering the brook itself. Like Spring Brook, Dry Creek, which runs in the southern portion of the Town, is bordered by hydric soils, with areas of steep slope nearby. In addition to the hydric soils and steep slope areas, there are small groundwater recharge areas throughout the Town. Consideration of each of these geographic factors is vital to a responsible and thorough comprehensive planning process for the Town of Turtle.

Purpose and Intent

The primary purposes of this plan are to generate goals for attaining a desirable development pattern, devise strategies and recommendations the Town of Turtle can follow to achieve its desired development pattern, and to create a Comprehensive Plan Document that conforms with Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation, commonly referred to as "Smart Growth."

The Town of Turtle Comprehensive Plan should be used by local officials when revising and administering their ordinances, as well as when setting priorities for major investments. The plan should be the basis for reviewing future developments, constructing transportation improvements, and extending public services. The plan is designed to be a guiding vision so that there is a consistent policy to follow and a clear goal for the future residents of the Town of Turtle.

Comprehensive Planning Process

In order to produce a plan that meets the requirements of the comprehensive planning law, Town leaders decided to work with Rock County. This decision allows the town to take advantage of the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration Comprehensive Planning Grant program to develop a new plan that would conform to the requirements of the Comprehensive Planning Law and better reflect Town residents' vision of how Turtle should develop through 2035.

As administrator of the Comprehensive Planning Grant, the Rock County Planning, Economic, and Community Development Agency was contracted with to provide professional planning assistance. Staff from the agency will prepare the background information and the recommendations of this plan based upon the consensus opinions of the citizens advisory committees, Town visioning sessions, surveys, and the Comprehensive Planning Law. The resulting plan adheres to the requirements of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Legislation.

Organization of the Town of Turtle Comprehensive Plan Document

This document will be comprised of nine elements that reflect the requirements in the Comprehensive Planning Law: Issues and Opportunities; Housing; Transportation; Utilities and Community Facilities; Cultural, Natural, and Agricultural Resources; Economic Development; Intergovernmental Cooperation; Land Use; and Implementation. In addition to these nine elements, state statutes also provide that the County's existing Farmland Preservation Plans, Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans, Land Records Modernization Plans, and Park, Outdoor Recreation, and Open Space Plans be consistent with and part of a community's comprehensive plan.

Although all of these chapters have their own goals, objectives, and recommendations, the elements are all interrelated, and therefore, the goals, objectives, and recommendations are also. This plan is developed with the interrelationships of the elements in mind. The future land use plan contained in the land use chapter of the comprehensive plan provides a vision of how the Town of Turtle can look in the year 2035. There will be recommendations regarding the location, density, and design of future development, and these recommendations are the cornerstone of the overall plan. The future land use plan will be the composite of the goals, objectives, and recommendations contained in all of the chapters. The Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development Agency has determined how the documents and maps are to be constructed, in keeping with Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning legislation.

The final part of the plan involves implementing the recommendations made by the plan. A comprehensive plan is only effective when it is actually used. This includes utilizing the plan on a routine basis when making policy and administrative decisions and when creating or revising Town ordinances, such as the zoning ordinance, to guide development that is consistent with the plan. This document is not the end of the planning process. In fact, the plan will be reviewed and updated within five years of completion, and thereafter at a minimum of once every ten years. This periodic review ensures that planning within the Town will continue to evolve to reflect new trends and concepts.

Goals and Objectives Development Process

A major element of the comprehensive planning process is the identification of community-wide goals and objectives. This identification is obviously difficult as specific values held by residents are highly elusive and complex. While individuals vary widely in their choice of values and their tolerance and acceptance of differing attitudes, a large part of the plan's purpose is to satisfy the community's best interests. It is intended that the recommendations in this plan reflect the 14 local comprehensive planning goals prescribed in state statute and listed below:

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructures and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.

3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and low costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
7. Encouragement of cooperation and coordination among nearby units of government.
8. Building community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels within the community.
10. Providing infrastructure, services and developable land adequate to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting expansion or stabilization of the economic base and job creation.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and developing land uses that create or preserve unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that meets the needs of all citizens.

Citizen Participation Plan

The Rock County Planning and Development Agency constructed a Citizen Participation Plan at the beginning of the planning process. The intent of the Citizen Participation Plan is to foster public participation throughout every step of the planning process. In addition to a visioning process, the County will hold open discussions, citizen surveys, element workshops, and annual "open house" meetings to engender public participation in the creation of the comprehensive plan.

Visioning Sessions

<p style="text-align: center;">The Town of Turtle celebrates its rich history, while looking towards a future of balancing modern convenience with a rural landscape, to provide a high quality of life in friendly and safe surroundings.</p>

In order to identify the Town of Turtle's priorities for community development, as well as key issues and concerns to be addressed, the Rock County Planning and Development Agency has held a public two-part visioning session. The purpose of these sessions was for the agency to be provided with input into how the residents would like the Town to develop through the year 2035.

Both sessions were held at the Turtle Town Hall, at 7:00 in the evening. The first of the two sessions was held November 10th, 2005. There were 13 attendees at the session, and they gave input regarding the rate they wished Turtle to grow, what they liked and disliked about the transportation system, what resources should be protected, what kind of quality of life they desired for Turtle's future, and more. In addition, attendees drew on maps to indicate where they would like residential, commercial and industrial development to occur in the future. At the second visioning

session, held December 1st, 2005, these development areas were rated by attendees to determine the consensus of the participating public. There were 8 attendees at this second session.

Through the visioning, it was determined that Turtle did not wish to lose population, as projections indicate. Rather, a little less than 1% growth a year was desired. Some concerns were that a population decrease would result in fewer people paying taxes thus increasing taxes for everyone, and could decrease the amount of funding received by the Town for things such as highway improvements. Attendees were also concerned about the rising cost of rural homes in the Town, and feared the costs being driven further up if a commuter rail hub locates in neighboring Clinton. They all concurred that new development should take place in and around existing development, rather than scattered. Regarding utilities, attendees felt that cellular phone reception could be improved in the Town, and wished that DSL Internet and cable television were available. However, they were satisfied with road maintenance, fire protection and electric utilities. Most of the attendees agreed that small shops would be ideal additions to the Shopiere area, and possibly a town square and entertainment area. In the rural parts of the Town they would like to see environmentally friendly light industries and the preservation of wildlife and natural areas, including trails. The visioning results, in their entirety, can be viewed in Appendix A.

At the second visioning session attendees assigned point values to what they felt were ideal areas of future development for residential, commercial and industrial uses. The results indicated that they prefer new residential development to occur east of Interstate 90, along Creek Road and Shopiere Road, extending south some in the Butterfly Road area. In addition, the presently unincorporated pocket of land between Murphy Woods Road and Hart Road is considered an ideal location for future residential development.

Attendees felt that the only areas ideal for future commercial development are at the intersection of Interstate 90 and Shopiere Road, the intersection of Interstate 90 and Interstate 43, and in the Shopiere area. Industrial development is preferred to occur west of Interstate 90 and north of Shopiere Road, where these two roadways intersect.

Town of Turtle Comprehensive Plan Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives each have a distinct and different purpose within the planning process. Goals address major essential issues, which become apparent through the planning process. They are ideas and values, which are in the public interest and provide an end toward which the planning process is directed. The town's response to these goals and objectives are recommendations (policies) - discussed in each chapter specific to that comprehensive plan element- and programs - the means by which a community can achieve and/or implement the recommendations- discussed in the Implementation Element of the Town of Turtle Comprehensive Plan.

The comprehensive plan and future development of the Town is based on the following goals and objectives.

Issues and Opportunities Goal #1

To manage growth through a process involving all governmental units by guiding development to areas of sufficient physical characteristics and supporting infrastructure.

Objective: Manage growth by clearly designating Urban Transition Areas where access to cost-effective public sewer service and other public services are available to support future urban development, as long as the growth is occurs without annexation.

Objective: Manage growth by clearly designating Rural Transition Areas where existing rural development, physical features and existing public services support future rural development.

Issues and Opportunities Goal #2

To provide residents with opportunities to live, work, and recreate in the Town of Turtle.

Objective: Provide a diverse range of housing options to residents of all income levels.

Objective: Increase awareness and encourage utilization of higher education and continuing education opportunities in the area, thus encouraging young adults to remain in the Town of Turtle.

Objective: Explore Economic Development Programs to increase local employment opportunities.

Objective: Attract and support small commercial operations in the Shopiere area.

Objective: Promote outdoor recreation and the preservation of wildlife and natural areas in the Town of Turtle.

Issues and Opportunities Goal #3

To preserve the rural, friendly atmosphere within the Town of Turtle

Objective: Promote the vitality and viability of existing agricultural operations, while exploring innovative agricultural pursuits.

Objective: Provide continued safety for all citizens of the Town of Turtle through rapid emergency response and adequate police and fire protection.

Demographic Characteristics

At the core of any effective effort to track a community's development is the study of that community's population growth. Not only does this effort illustrate past growth, it can also shed light on what the future holds. A thorough understanding of population trends for a community makes for more effective needs assessment regarding housing, education, utilities, and recreation, as well as its future land use and economic development. The Issues and Opportunities element of the Town of Turtle Comprehensive Plan addresses background information and supplies projections in the form of tables and figures embedded within the text of the document. In addition, a series of maps is compiled at the end of this chapter to illustrate many of the issues concerning the Town.

Table 1-1: Population Data, 1970-2005

Governmental Unit Name	1970 Census	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	2005 DOA Estimate
Town of Avon	614	555	570	586	589
Town of Beloit	9,182	8,382	6,778	7,038	7,319
Town of Bradford	1,071	1,100	1,030	1,007	1,027
Town of Center	942	908	861	1,005	1,040
Town of Clinton	1,090	925	899	893	909
Town of Fulton	2,126	2,866	2,867	3,158	3,230
Town of Harmony	1,364	2,090	2,138	2,351	2,448
Town of Janesville	2,700	3,068	3,121	3,048	3,343
Town of Johnstown	914	844	850	802	797
Town of La Prairie	1,086	1,099	943	929	905
Town of Lima	1,063	1,179	1,285	1,312	1,314
Town of Magnolia	736	746	717	854	855
Town of Milton	1,977	2,306	2,353	2,844	2,974
Town of Newark	1,456	1,574	1,514	1,571	1,593
Town of Plymouth	1,246	1,267	1,189	1,270	1,299
Town of Porter	884	940	953	925	969
Town of Rock	3,050	3,399	3,172	3,338	3,362
Town of Spring Valley	852	912	790	813	813
Town of Turtle	2,532	2,703	2,458	2,444	2,430
Town of Union	1,202	1,329	1,537	1,860	1,981
Village of Clinton	1,333	1,751	1,849	2,162	2,237
Village of Footville	698	794	764	788	769
Village of Orfordville	888	1,143	1,219	1,272	1,357
City of Beloit	35,729	35,207	35,571	35,775	36,106
City of Edgerton	4,118	4,335	4,254	4,891	5,096
City of Evansville	2,992	2,835	3,174	4,039	4,660
City of Janesville	46,426	51,071	52,210	60,200	62,130
City of Milton	3,699	4,092	4,444	5,132	5,437
Rock County Total	131,970	139,420	139,510	152,307	156,989
State of Wisconsin	4,417,731	4,705,642	4,891,769	5,363,715	5,580,000

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2005. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, 1990, & 2000.

Table 1-2: Population Change, 1970-2005

Governmental Unit Name	1970 - 1980		1980 - 1990		1990 - 2000		2000 - 2005*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Town of Avon	-59	-9.6%	15	2.7%	16	2.8%	3	0.5%
Town of Beloit	-800	-8.7%	-1,604	-19.1%	260	3.8%	281	4.0%
Town of Bradford	29	2.7%	-70	-6.4%	-23	-2.2%	20	2.0%
Town of Center	-34	-3.6%	-47	-5.2%	144	16.7%	35	3.4%
Town of Clinton	-165	-15.1%	-26	-2.8%	-6	-0.7%	16	1.8%
Town of Fulton	740	34.8%	1	0.03%	291	10.2%	72	2.3%
Town of Harmony	726	53.2%	48	2.3%	213	10.0%	97	4.1%
Town of Janesville	368	13.6%	53	1.7%	-73	-2.3%	295	9.7%
Town of Johnstown	-70	-7.7%	6	0.7%	-48	-5.7%	-5	-0.6%
Town of La Prairie	13	1.2%	-156	-14.2%	-14	-1.5%	-24	-2.6%
Town of Lima	116	10.9%	106	9.0%	27	2.1%	2	0.2%
Town of Magnolia	10	1.4%	-29	-3.9%	137	19.1%	1	0.1%
Town of Milton	329	16.6%	47	2.0%	491	20.9%	130	4.8%
Town of Newark	118	8.1%	-60	-3.8%	57	3.8%	22	1.4%
Town of Plymouth	21	1.7%	-78	-6.2%	81	6.8%	29	2.3%
Town of Porter	56	6.3%	13	1.4%	-28	2.9%	44	4.8%
Town of Rock	349	11.4%	-227	-6.7%	166	5.2%	24	0.7%
Town of Spring Valley	60	7.0%	-122	-13.4%	43	5.4%	-	0.0%
Town of Turtle	171	6.8%	-245	-9.1%	-14	-0.6%	-33	-1.0%
Town of Union	127	10.6%	208	15.7%	323	21.0%	121	6.5%
Village of Clinton	418	31.4%	98	5.6%	313	16.9%	75	3.5%
Village of Footville	96	13.8%	-30	-3.8%	24	3.1%	-19	-2.4%
Village of Orfordville	255	28.7%	76	6.7%	53	4.3%	85	6.7%
City of Beloit	-522	-1.5%	364	1.0%	204	0.6%	331	0.9%
City of Edgerton	217	5.3%	-81	-1.9%	637	15.0%	205	4.2%
City of Evansville	-157	-5.3%	339	12.0%	865	27.3%	621	15.4%
City of Janesville	4,645	10%	1,139	2.2%	7,990	15.3%	1,930	3.2%
City of Milton	393	10.6%	352	8.6%	688	15.5%	305	5.9%
Rock County Total	7,450	5.7%	90	0.06%	12,797	9.2%	4,682	3.1%
State of Wisconsin	287,911	6.5%	186,127	4.0%	471,946	9.7%	216,285	4.0%

Source : Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2005. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, 1990, & 2000. * Data from 2005 represent Wisconsin DOA estimates, not actual census figures.

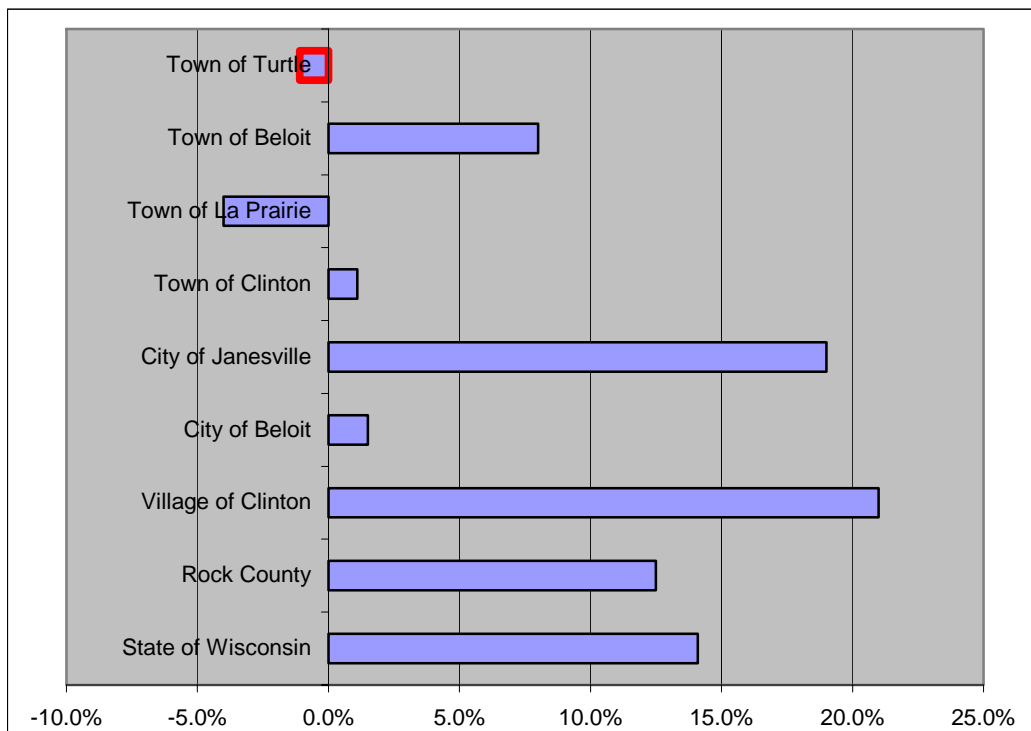
Tables 1-1 and 1-2 outline the different rates of population change that have taken place in the Town of Turtle and other municipalities within Rock County since the 1970 census. While Turtle did gain population between 1970 and 1980, a sharp decline occurred in the following ten years, as 245 people were lost between 1980 and 1990. The population in Turtle has continued to decrease, only slightly, and is estimated to continue to do so. Rock County, as a whole, has consistently gained population. Likewise, the population for the State of Wisconsin has been on a slight, but steady incline. Figure 1-1 (next page) analyzes the Town of Turtle's population changes from a slightly more local perspective by illustrating it respective to neighboring municipalities in Rock County, from 1990 to 2005.

Comparative Population Change

Studying the Town of Turtle’s population change in this more specific context allows for more accurate planning. It is important to recognize that external markets, in this case the Town’s neighboring municipalities, can potentially impact the magnitude and scope of development in the Town of Turtle in the short term as well as the long term. As figure 1-1 below indicates, the Town has lost population, though not as severely as the Town of La Prairie, which borders to the north. All other neighboring municipalities have experienced population increases. Most substantial is the Village of Clinton, located approximately one mile from the Town’s eastern boundary. The Town of Clinton’s planned direction for growth is to the west, eventually expected to abut the Town of Turtle. This could result in speculation by development at Turtle’s eastern edge.

Though it is not depicted on Figure 1-1, the population increases taking place directly to the south in north central Illinois are noteworthy. Between 1990 and 2000, Winnebago County, Illinois gained 25,505 people, which was an increase of 10.1%. Boone County, Illinois gained 10,980 people, which was an increase of 35.6%. The total population of the three northernmost incorporated municipalities in north central Illinois (South Beloit, Rockton and Roscoe) increased 186.6% from 1990 to 2000. Development in this portion of Illinois is continuing at a consistent pace. The Town of Turtle can realistically expect similar development pressures to eventually cross the state line, into Wisconsin, as Chicago and Rockford area developers set their sights further north, and Chicago area workers increasingly opt for long commutes to work to achieve a more peaceful lifestyle at home.

Figure 1-1: Population Change, 1990 - 2005, Town of Turtle and Neighboring Communities

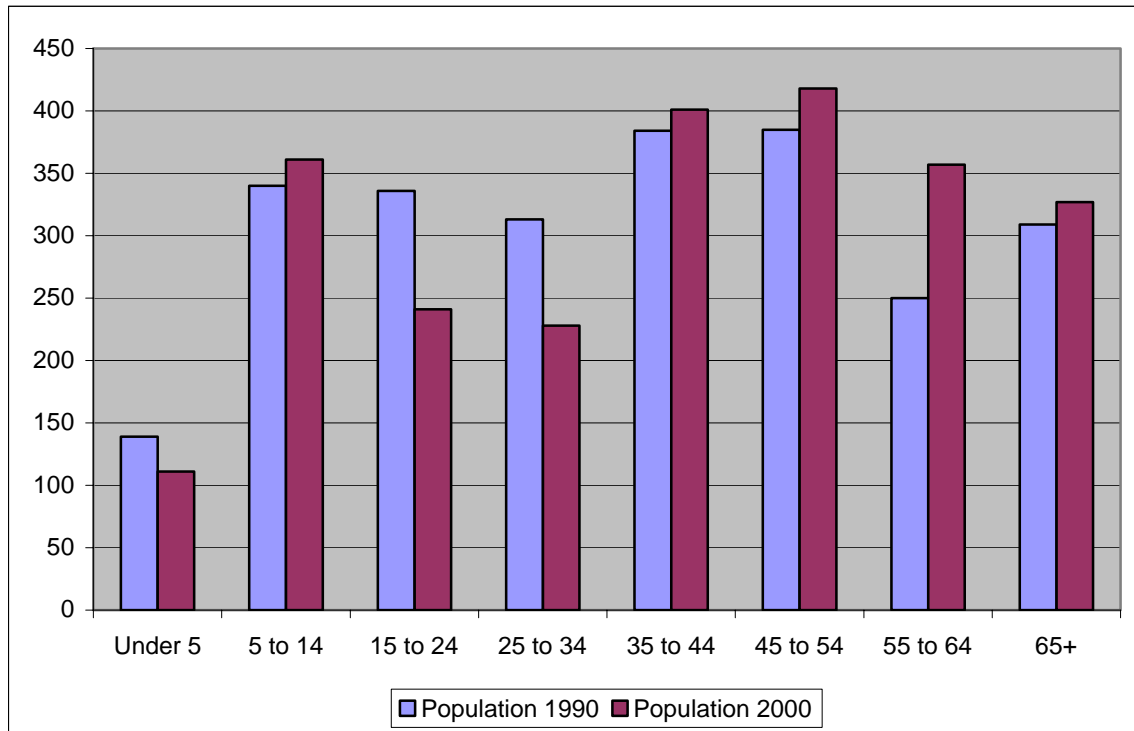


Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration Estimate, 2005. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.

Age Distribution

Besides simply studying raw population trends, the issues and opportunities element is made more effective by a detailed study of the character of the Town of Turtle’s population. Vitally important for the planning of facilities and services, as well as development patterns, is a study of age characteristics. The Town’s median age in 2000 was 42.2, which is significantly older than both the State (36.0) and County (35.9) figures. On the next page, figure 1-2 and table 1-3 detail the age distribution of the Town’s population for the census years of 1990 and 2000. Analysis of this data provides clues not only to how the Town changed in one decade, but also how it can be expected to change in the future.

Figure 1-2: Population by Age Group, Town of Turtle, 1990 - 2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.

As evidenced by figure 1-2, a significant portion of the Town of Turtle’s population in the year 2000 was between the ages of 35 and 54, while the 55 - 64 age group grew most rapidly since 1990. The 5 - 14 age group slightly increased since 1990, but every other age group below the age of 35 experienced a decline. Like the rest of Rock County (and the country in general), this data reflects the result of the “baby boomer” generation continuing to age and approach retirement. Again, this data allows the Town to plan for the economic (job market, industry, tax base) and social (recreation, health care, school systems) implications of the dynamics of its population.

Table 1-3: Population by Age Group, Town of Turtle, 1990 - 2000

Age Cohort	Population 1990	Pct. Of Total Population	Population 2000	Pct. Of Total	Number Change 1990 - 2000	PCT Chg. 1990 - 2000
Under 5	139	5.7	111	4.5	-28	-20.1
5 to 14	340	13.8	361	14.8	21	6.2
15 to 24	336	13.7	241	9.9	-95	-28.3
25 to 34	313	12.7	228	9.3	-85	-27.2
35 to 44	384	15.6	401	16.4	17	4.4
45 to 54	385	15.7	418	17.1	33	8.6
55 to 64	250	10.2	357	14.6	107	30.6
65+	309	12.6	327	13.4	18	5.8
Total	2456	100	2444	100	-12	-0.5

Source U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.

School Enrollment and Educational Attainment

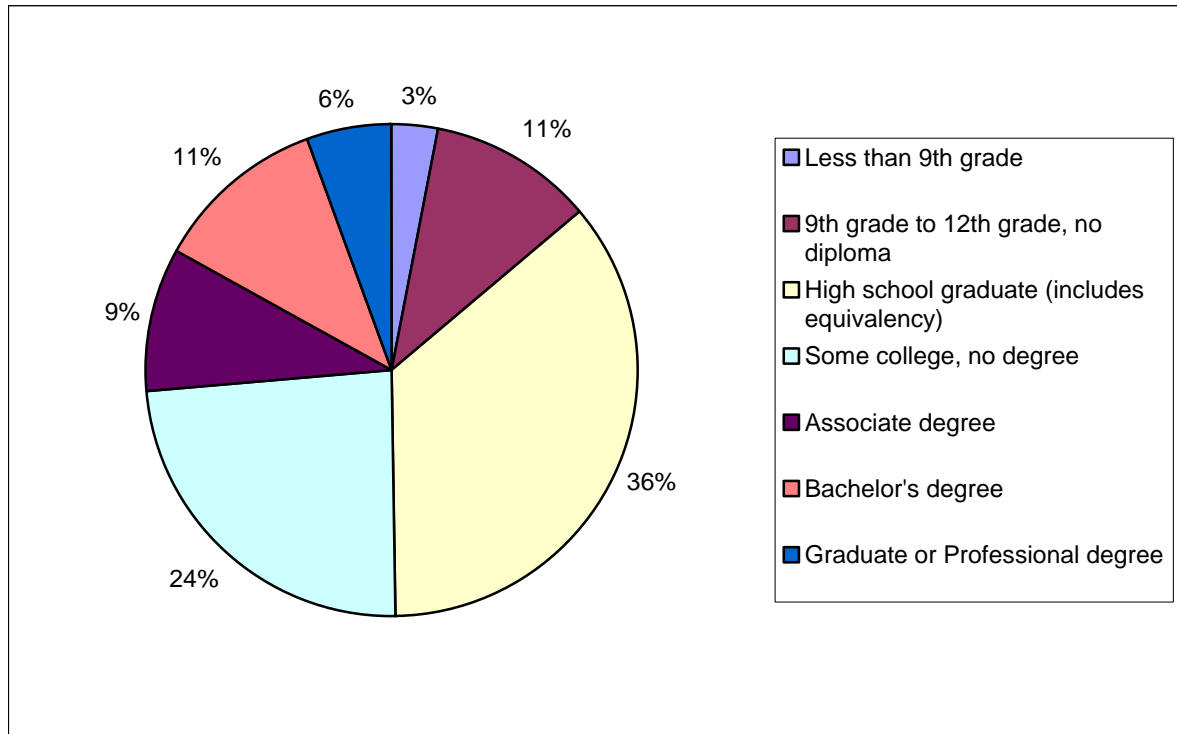
Table 1-4 expands upon the age group data by identifying enrollment in any type of educational venue for citizens age three and older for the year 2000. A study of school enrollment works in concert with the age group figures to assess educational resource needs, among other things. Figure 1-3 displays the year 2000 data for the highest level of education attained for citizens age twenty-five and over in the Town of Turtle. Educational attainment is a useful tool in indicating the overall economic health of an area, a topic explored in more detail beginning in the next section of this chapter.

Table 1-4: School Enrollment of Persons Age 3 & Over, Town of Turtle, 2000.

Type of Institution	Number Enrolled	Percent of Total Enrolled	Percent of Total Population
Nursery School	45	7.3%	50.0% (Age 3-5)
Kindergarten	14	2.3%	15.7% (Age 4-6)
Elementary School (Grades 1-8)	286	46.4%	71.3% (Age 5-15)
High School (Grades 9-12)	200	32.5%	98.0% (Age 14-19)
College or Graduate School	71	11.5%	3.7% (Age 16 & Over)
Total	616	100.0%	25.8% (Age 3 & Over)

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000.

Figure 1-3: Educational Attainment, Town of Turtle, 2000*



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000. **Figures represent percentage of population age 25 & over only.*

Population Forecasts

In January 2004, the Wisconsin Department of Administration released updated population projections for Wisconsin municipalities through the year 2025. Using the same population forecast methodology employed by the WDOA, the Rock County Planning, Economic, and Community Development Agency calculated the Town of Turtle’s population to the year 2035. While this broad picture of the Town’s population is insightful, it is by dissection of these population figures that thorough planning is possible. Table 1-5 does just that, comparing the projected population of the Town with the other municipalities in Rock County. As this data indicates, Turtle is projected to experience steady, albeit slight population decreases through 2035. A loss of 63 people during those 35 years is projected.

Table 1-5: Population Forecast, Rock County 2000 - 2035*

Municipality	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%
COUNTY TOTAL	160,911	165,354	169,648	174,018	177,855	182,644	21,733	13.5%

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

Town officials are not satisfied with these projected population losses, so the Town will have to put forth increased effort in order to attract and accommodate growth. These efforts include, but are not limited to, a planned revision of the 2021 Boundary Line Agreement the Town has with the City of Beloit. As the Town's population strives to grow and its characteristics change, so will the demand for housing, jobs, and many services. In short, these population forecasts, along with trends that have developed in Rock County, will foster a planning process that is a concentrated and well-directed

effort. On the next page, the issues and opportunities element addresses some of the characteristics of the economic climate that exist in the Town of Turtle, which will be incorporated with these forecasts to make more detailed projections regarding the Town's future.

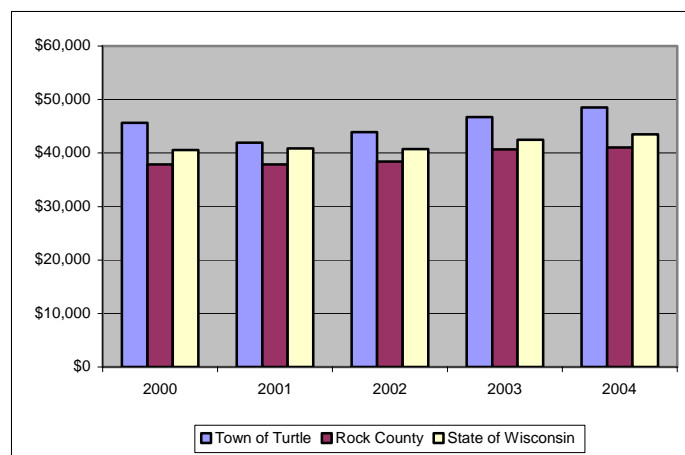
Economic Characteristics

Perhaps the most accurate and effective way to gauge the economic health of an area is to analyze the characteristics of the area's workforce and labor opportunities. Covered in more detail by the Economic Development Element of the Town of Turtle Comprehensive Plan, economic growth is introduced here in the Issues and Opportunities element according to law because it provides vital background information to the planning process. Addressed in this element are basic employment data including industries of employment opportunity, occupation of employed persons, income, and commuting data. This background information engenders a thorough planning practice in the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Income Data

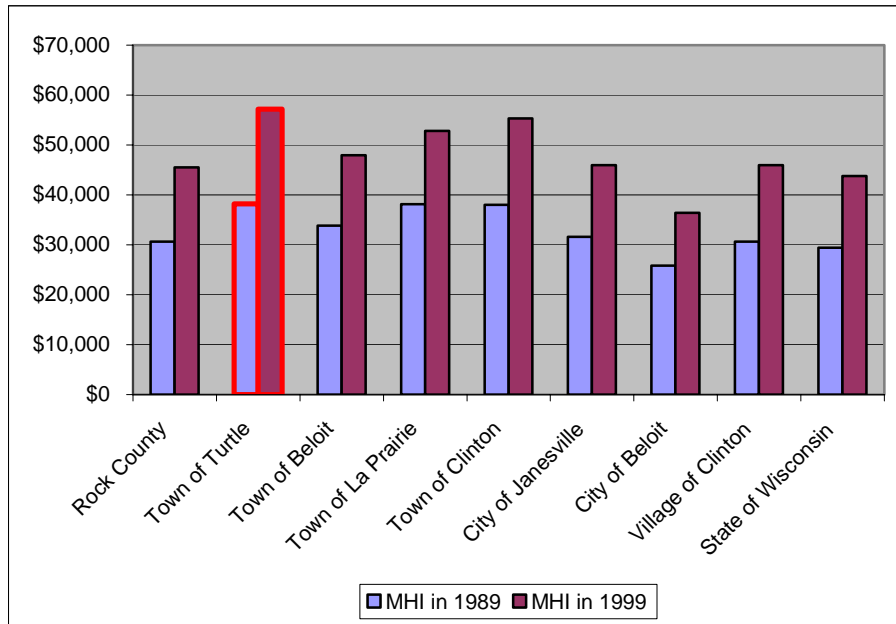
In addition to employment figures, the study of trends in personal income is also indicative of an area's economic health. According to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue-Division of Research and Analysis, the Town of Turtle's adjusted gross income (AGI) per tax return has been historically slightly higher than the State of Wisconsin's, and significantly higher than Rock County as a whole. The most recent reported year lists the 2004 AGI for the Town at \$48,523, the highest AGI in all of the past five years, after consistently increasing each year since 2001. Figure 1-4 displays the AGI trend from 2000-2004 for the Town, Rock County, and the State of Wisconsin. Also, the Town's median household income (figure 1-5, next page), leads above neighboring figures, and has increased the most between the years 1989 to 1999.

Figure 1-4: Municipal Per Return Income, 2000 - 2004



Source: State of Wisconsin Department of Revenue, *Municipal Per Return Income Report, 2000 - 2004*.

Figure 1-5: Median Household Income, Town of Turtle and Neighbors, 1989 & 1999



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 & 2000.

Workforce Data

Crucial to the understanding of economic health is determining the personality and scope of the people who work in an area. As of 2000, 1,506 of the Town’s 2,114 working-age residents considered themselves to be in the labor force. Table 1-5 divides the Town’s labor force based upon occupation and industry for 1980, 1990, and 2000. Most notable in regard to this data is the striking increase of citizens employed in service jobs, while the number working in farming, fishing and forestry has dramatically decreased. While the amount of workers in “blue collar” jobs has fallen some and remains the smallest occupation segment in the Town, the number of “blue collar” workers has remained the most steady of all segments. The service industry is the only industry where the number of Town of Turtle workers has steadily increased over the past twenty years. Transportation and utilities jobs rose sharply between 1980 and 1990, and then leveled off. While unemployment rates improved significantly between 1980 and 1990, the Town has experienced a backslide in more recent years.

**Table 1-6: Occupation & Industry of the Employed*, Town of Turtle
1980 - 2000**

Occupation	1980		1990		2000		Change 1980 - 2000	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Number	Percent
Management, Professional, & Technical	281	21.0%	375	27.9%	335	23.2%	54	19.2%
Service	101	7.6%	137	10.2%	193	13.4%	92	91.1%
Sales and Office	295	22.1%	352	26.2%	416	28.8%	121	41.0%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	67	5.0%	21	1.6%	9	0.6%	-58	-86.6%
"Blue Collar"	520	39.0%	413	30.7%	491	34.0%	-29	-5.6%
Unemployed & Unemployment Rate	71	5.3%	46	3.4%	62	2.9%	-9	-12.7%
Total Civilian Workforce	1,335	-	1,344	-	1,506	-	171	12.8%
Industry of Employed								
Construction, Mining, & Natural Resources	150	11.9%	78	6.0%	126	8.7%	-24	-16.0%
Manufacturing	486	38.4%	516	39.8%	473	32.8%	-13	-2.7%
Transportation & Utilities	33	2.6%	62	4.8%	61	4.2%	28	84.8%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	209	16.5%	296	22.8%	227	15.7%	18	8.6%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	97	7.7%	40	3.1%	86	6.0%	-11	-11.3%
Services	264	20.9%	292	22.5%	441	30.5%	177	67.0%
Total Employed	1,264	94.7%	1,298	96.6%	1,444	95.9%	180	14.2%

Source U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, & 2000. * *Employed persons 16 years of age and older.*

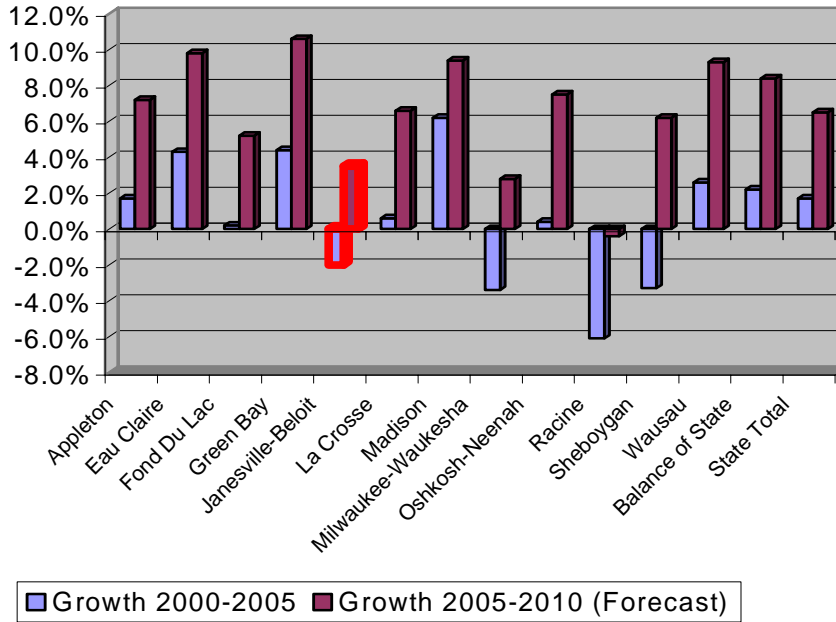
Additionally, the average commute time for Town of Turtle residents in 2000 was 21.4 minutes, which is over one minute longer than the county average of 20.3. While the workforce in the Town of Turtle is diversifying, the citizens are traveling slightly greater distances to earn their living. Current employment characteristics and trends are discussed in greater detail in the Economic Development Element of this plan. However, the historical data provided in this chapter, along with the forecast section that follows, set the stage for later discussion regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the employment opportunities in the Town of Turtle.

Employment Forecasts

Following tremendous job growth in the 1990s, the Janesville-Beloit Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes the Town of Turtle, is projected to continue employment growth through 2008. According to the State of Wisconsin Department of Revenue-Division of Research and Policy, the most recent Metropolitan Area Outlook states that employment in the Janesville-Beloit MSA experienced significant job loss for the first four years of the decade. Much of this is due to the decline in manufacturing jobs, a trend which finally stabilized and reversed in 2004, and coupled with the increase in service sector employment, indicates moderate growth for the rest of the decade.

On the following page, a labor force projection is provided for the Town (table 1-7) based upon the application of year 2000 labor force data to population forecasts. These projections should be used with caution due to the complex and very much reactive nature of characteristics like the labor force. It is impossible to account for the myriad of factors that may influence employment habits of the working-age population. These forecasts are based on present conditions and cannot predict how those conditions may change through the year 2035, but they can foretell what the Town's labor force very well could look like barring any monumental economic (i.e. major change in unemployment, depression) or social (i.e. withdrawal of certain group from workforce) events.

Figure 1-6: Metropolitan Area Non-Farm Employment Forecast, 2000 - 2010



Source: *Metropolitan Area Outlook Report*, Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 2004.

Table 1-7: Town of Turtle Employment Forecast, 2000 - 2035

Clearly, an issue to be investigated more thoroughly in the Economic Development Element of this document is how to plan for an increasingly diversifying Town workforce through 2035. As Rock County’s economic landscape continues to transform, the data presented in this section of the Issues and Opportunities element will enable the county to plan accordingly.

Year	Labor Force	Percent Change Since 2000
2000	1,506	-
2005	1,485	-1.4%
2015	1,468	-2.5%
2025	1,452	-3.6%
2035	1,437	-4.6%

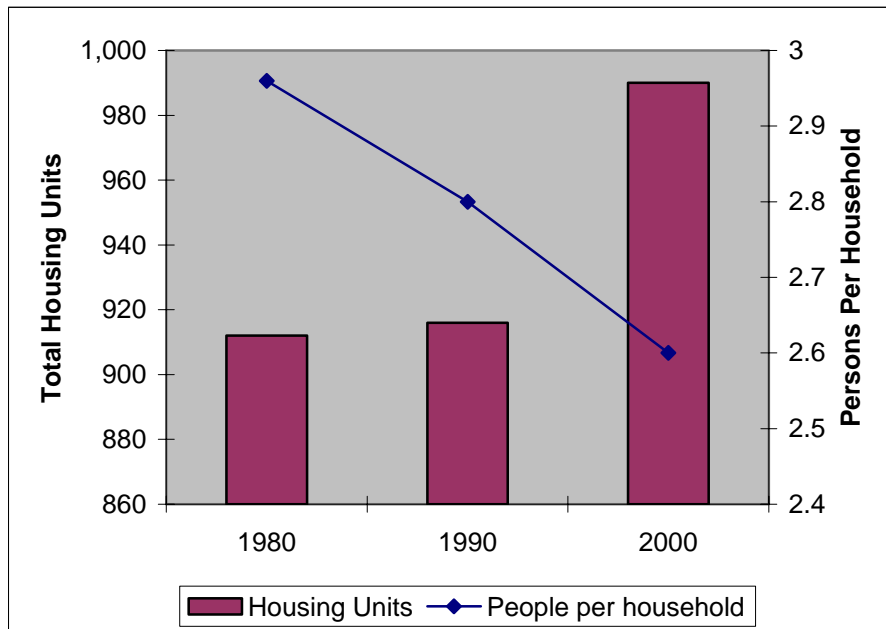
Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2004, Rock County Planning & Development Agency, 2005.

Household Characteristics

In order to establish accurate household projections, an analysis of existing conditions must first be completed. This section simply addresses historical patterns in household composition, which will be reflected in the forecast section of this element. This allows for more appropriate accommodation for housing needs throughout the

planning process. The total number of housing units in the Town of Turtle has increased at a moderate rate since 1980. In 2000, there were 990 housing units in the Town, an 8.6% increase over the 1980 figure of 912. As figure 1-7 displays, the ten-year period between 1990 and 2000 saw a greater rise in the number of new housing units, compared to the previous decade. Note the dramatic decrease in the household size between over the period. Combined with an increasing population, the trend towards smaller household size intensifies the strain on housing.

Figure 1-7: Number of Housing Units & Household Density, Town of Turtle, 1980 - 2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980-2000.

As figure 1-7 illustrates, the average household size in the Town of Turtle in 2000 was 2.60, down from 2.96 in 1980. In the same time, nearly 80 additional housing units have been built while the population has decreased by 259 people. While these findings are in keeping with the nationwide trend of smaller households and an increasing number of people living alone, it is unusual for the housing stock to rise so significantly while the population is declining. It is important to keep these trends, as well as other potential changes in demographics and housing preferences, in mind when projecting future housing needs.

Households and Householders

Of the 990 housing units in the Town of Turtle in 2000, 957 (96.7%) were occupied. The table and figure below illustrate the changes in household characteristics and occupancy between 1980 and 2000, and will serve to put into context the projections provided in the next section. Note the relatively steady vacancy rate, hovering around 3% throughout the last three decades. Also, the number of renter-occupied units has been on a decline, which has gained momentum since 1990. In all, the number of new households in the Town is due entirely to the increase in owner-occupied units over

the twenty-year period. As the demographic and economic landscape of the town continue to develop, these household characteristics will certainly evolve according to those developments.

Table 1-10: Town of Turtle Household Type and Vacancy Rate, 1980 - 2000

	1980	1990	2000	Change 1980-2000	
				Number	Percent
Households	912	916	990	78	19.8%
Owner-Occupied	753	763	859	106	28.5%
Renter-Occupied	128	126	98	-30	-13.4%
Vacancy Rate	3.1%	2.9%	3.3%	0.2%	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 - 2000

Household Forecasts

Utilizing the Wisconsin DOA method for projecting household and population growth, it is estimated that approximately 24 more households will be needed in 2035 than in 2000, even given the projection that population will decline. According to these estimates, the Town's average household size will decrease from its current rate of 2.55 to 2.38 in 2035. Although the predicted reduction in Town population foresees the future need of only a few new households to accommodate new residents, the Town is currently averaging approximately 10 new home constructions a year.

Currently in the Town, nearly ninety-six percent of the units in structure are one-unit detached homes (standard, single-family house), while duplexes account for over four percent. As an increasing percentage of the Town population approaches retirement age and families continue to have fewer children, there may be an increasing demand for a wider variety of housing options. The Housing Element of the Rock County comprehensive plan provides information relating to the different housing types that the county might wish to encourage, as well as the tools that the county and local communities can utilize to encourage a range of housing options for an increasingly diverse population.

Recommendations

The goals and objectives to be identified in the Town of Turtle Comprehensive Plan will reflect the concepts contained in the fourteen State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning goals, as well as the thoughts and comments obtained from residents, elected officials, and other interested parties throughout the planning process. Accordingly, the goals and objectives will create a framework around which the comprehensive plan is developed.

Based on past trends, the Town of Turtle is expected to experience a slight population decline by 2035. However, town leaders wish to encourage slight to moderate population growth. And given trends in surroundings areas, it is unlikely that the stagnant growth experienced in previous decades will continue. The Town must be

prepared to deal with the possible influx of development, to insure that the Town grows in an orderly and fiscally responsible manner.

While service industry jobs are increasingly available to Turtle residents, these positions tend to pay less than others, and more diversity of occupations should be encouraged. Not only does such diversity stimulate the economy, it also spurs growth in skilled population and housing diversity. One hurdle to climb in the future, though, is the decreasing proportion of a working-age population. As current data and forecasts show, this age group is one of the most slowly-growing in the Town of Turtle and Rock County. To accommodate the aging population, a healthy variety of housing option will need to be available, in addition to the need for facilities to service a diversifying population.

Continued growth in population, employment, and housing in the Town of Turtle will provide an opportunity to implement many of the stated objectives in the comprehensive plan. While development pressure will continue, it is the duty of the citizens and governments of the Town to use this document responsibly, maintaining those features of our community that make it a desirable place to live and do business in.