



Issues and Opportunities



Issues and Opportunities

This section of the Comprehensive Plan describes how Fitchburg’s population, demographics and land use composition has changed over the course of the past few decades; it also forecasts population and demographic changes expected over the next 20 to 30 years. The information contained in this section, with the exception of a few pieces of added information, is taken directly from a report prepared by the Dane County Regional Planning Commission for the City of Fitchburg in November 2003. The report, titled “City of Fitchburg Demographic Forecasts: 2000-2030” is available from the City Planning Department.

Introduction

The Dane County Regional Planning Commission staff under contract with the City of Fitchburg prepared this report which presents forecasts of population, household and employment data for Dane County and the City of Fitchburg from 2000 to 2030. Much of the information found here is available from the U.S. Bureau of the Census or the Demographic Services Center of the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

Much of the demographic information needed by the City of Fitchburg to prepare its Comprehensive Plan required under Wisconsin’s “Smart Growth” Law is found in this report. To address some of the nine “planning elements” of the Smart Growth Law, the report detailed population, housing and employment data. Background data is generally provided from 1970 through 2000. The report also provides a comparison of the City of Fitchburg to Dane County.

Population Analysis

Population Growth. As shown in Figure 3 - 1, Dane County grew more rapidly in the 1980s than it did in the 1970s and even at a faster rate in the 1990s. During the 1970s, Dane County’s population grew by 12%. Dane County added more than 40,000 persons between 1980 and 1990, representing a growth rate of approximately 14%. From 1990 to 2000 the County added nearly 60,000 new residents at a rate of approximately 16%.

The City of Fitchburg grew much faster than the County during this entire period. The City’s population tripled in the 1970’s; and it increased by about a third in both the 1980’s and the 1990’s. In 2000, the City of Fitchburg was the second largest municipality in Dane County.

Figure 3 - 1: Population 1970- 2000

	Total Population				Percent Change		
	1970	1980	1990	2000	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000
Dane County	290,272	323,545	367,085	426,526	11.5%	13.5%	16.2%
City of Fitchburg	4,704	11,973	15,648	20,501	154.5%	30.7%	31.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Dane County Regional Planning Commission

Age Composition. The age composition of the County’s population has changed significantly since 1990, including:

- 1) Slight decrease in the number of preschoolers
- 2) Decrease in the number of adults between the ages of 25 and 34
- 3) Increase in the proportion of school-age persons between the ages of 5 and 19
- 4) Increase in the younger baby boomers between ages 35 and 44
- 5) Large increase in the older baby boomers between ages 45 and 54
- 6) Modest increase of older adults between ages 55 and 64
- 7) Increase in the proportion of older adults age 65 and over.

The decreasing number of adults between the ages of 25 and 34 is especially significant, since typically people within that age group enter the housing market for the first time as newly formed households (Figure 3 - 2). From 1990 to 2000, the median age within Dane County rose 30.7 to 33.2.

Figure 3 - 2: Population by Age Group: 1990 - 2000

Age Cohorts	Dane County				City of Fitchburg			
	1990	2000	2000 % of Total	'90- '00 % of Total	1990	2000	2000 % of Total	'90- '00 % of Total
Under 5	26,027	25,818	6.1%	-0.8%	1,120	1,449	7.1%	29.4%
5 to 9	24,312	26,693	6.3%	9.8%	1,002	1,431	7.0%	42.8%
10 to 14	21,392	27,733	6.5%	29.6%	912	1,279	6.2%	40.2%
15 to 19	27,760	32,912	7.7%	18.6%	717	1,162	5.7%	62.1%
20 to 24	42,123	43,986	10.3%	4.4%	2,006	2,134	10.4%	6.4%
25 to 34	72,726	68,386	16.0%	-6.0%	4,229	4,139	20.2%	-2.1%
35 to 44	60,830	70,108	16.4%	15.3%	3,004	3,482	17.0%	15.9%
45 to 54	33,578	60,220	14.1%	79.3%	1,337	3,031	14.8%	126.7%
55 to 64	24,359	30,801	7.2%	26.4%	720	1,341	6.5%	86.3%
65 to 74	18,999	20,211	4.7%	6.4%	371	571	2.8%	53.9%
75 or older	14,979	19,658	4.6%	31.2%	230	482	2.4%	109.6%
Total	367,085	426,526	100.0%	16.2%	15,648	20,501	100.0%	31.0%
Median Age	30.7	33.2			29.2	31.3		

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Dane County Regional Planning Commission

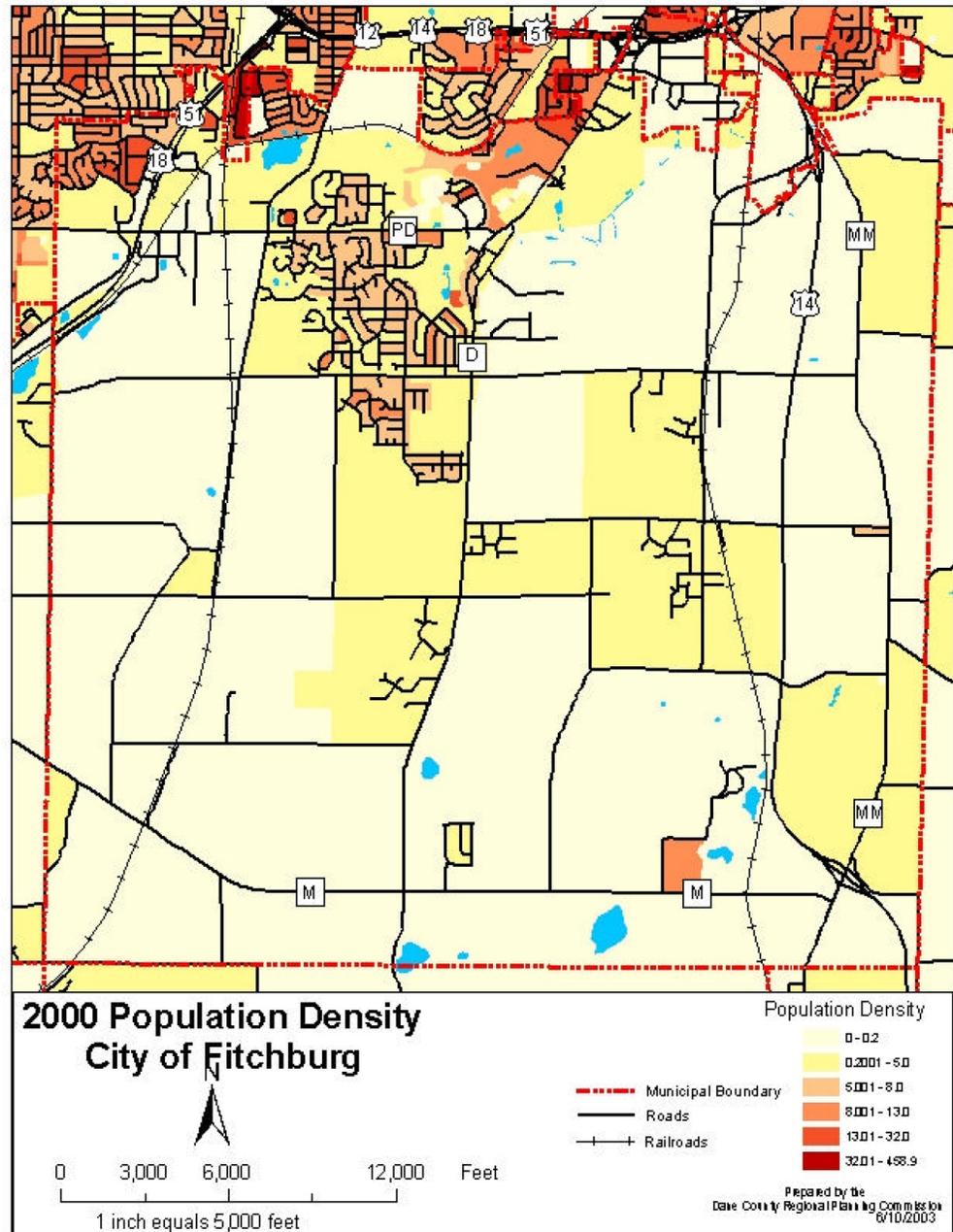
From 1990 to 2000 the City of Fitchburg’s median age rose from 29.2 to 31.3. Fitchburg experienced trends similar to the county, but at twice the growth rate! The City’s population had significant gains even at the under age 5 and age 65 or older cohorts. The City’s school age population also grew at twice the rate of the County.

Population Distribution. As shown on the 2000 Population Density Map (Figure 3 - 3), the City of Fitchburg’s population is clustered in the northern portion of the City where public sanitary sewer and water is available. During the 1990s, most of the City’s “infill” areas developed. After 2000 (not shown on map) development started in the northeastern portion of the City along with additional areas south of

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Lacy Road. The highest population density corridors are along Fish Hatchery Road (CTH D) and US Highway 18-151. The southern two-thirds of the City is rural with very low population density, except for the Oakhill Correctional Facility located near the Village of Oregon.

Figure 3 - 3



Housing

Housing Growth. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, there were about 180,000 housing units in Dane County in April 2000. Between 1990 and 2000, the county year-round housing stock increased by nearly 33,000 units, or 22%. In 2000, the City of Fitchburg housing stock was nearly 8,700: increasing by about 2,000 units or 30% (Figure 3 - 4). While multifamily housing is still the largest housing type in

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Fitchburg, single family housing, which increased by 43% during the 1990's, is now of comparable size.

Figure 3 - 4: Housing Stock by Type: 1970-2000

Dane County								
	April 1970		April 1980		April 1990		April 2000	
Type	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Number	% Total
1-Family	54,855	59.7%	72,107	57.4%	85,541	57.9%	105,903	58.7%
2- Family	8,623	9.4%	10,101	8.0%	9,743	6.6%	10,243	5.7%
3+ Family	27,050	29.4%	41,579	33.1%	50,318	34.0%	61,886	34.3 %
Mobile Home	1,398	1.5 %	1,824	1.5 %	2,247	1.5 %	2,366	1.3%
Total	91,926	100.0%	125,611	100.0%	147,849	100.0%	180,398	100.0%

City of Fitchburg								
	April 1970		April 1980		April 1990		April 2000	
Type	Number	% Total						
1-Family	921	66.6%	1,964	36.9%	2,819	42.2%	4,029	46.5%
2- Family	89	6.4%	218	4.1%	171	2.6%	293	3.4%
3+ Family	323	23.4%	3,067	57.6%	3,638	54.4%	4,277	49.4%
Mobile Home	49	3.5%	74	1.4%	57	0.9 %	63	0.7%
Total	1,382	100.0%	5,323	100.0%	6,685	100.0%	8,662	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Dane County Regional Planning Commission

Housing Tenure. According to the 2000 Census, of the total housing units in Dane County, 55% were owner-occupied, 41% were renter-occupied and 4% were vacant. In the City of Fitchburg, 43% were owner-occupied, 53% were renter-occupied and 4% were vacant (Figures 3 - 5 and 3 - 6).

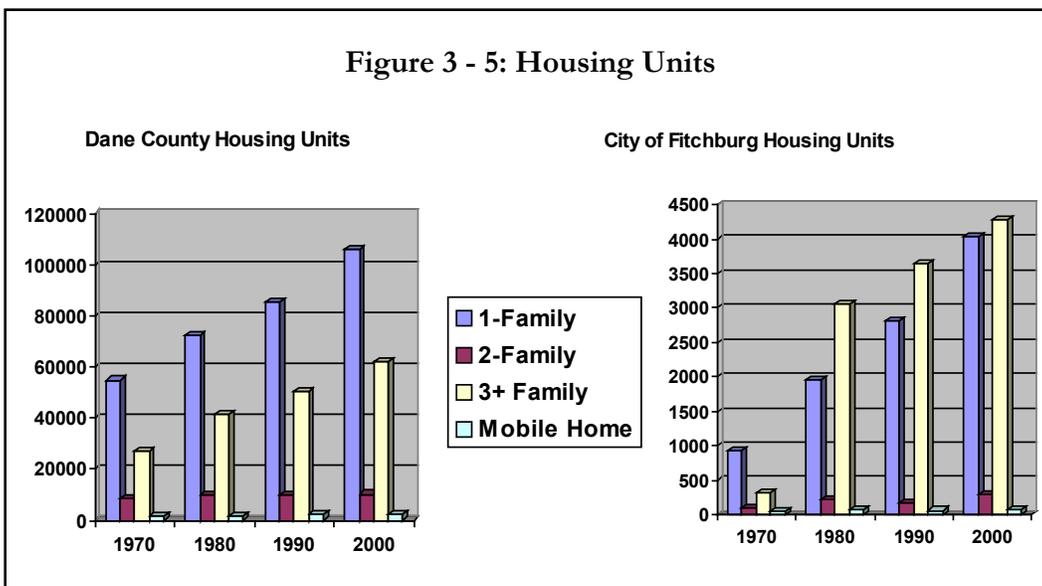


Figure 3 - 6: Housing Units by Tenure: 1970-2000

Dane County Housing Units						
Year	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied		Vacant	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Number	% Total
1970	49,941	54.3%	38,633	42.0%	3,352	3.7%
1980	67,152	53.3%	53,449	42.5%	5,010	4.0%
1990	78,848	53.3%	63,938	43.3%	5,065	3.4%
2000	99,895	55.4%	73,589	40.8%	6,914	3.8%

City of Fitchburg Housing Units						
Year	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied		Vacant	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Number	% Total
1970	822	59.5%	508	36.8%	52	3.8%
1980	1,745	32.8%	3,244	60.9%	334	6.3%
1990	2,496	37.3%	3,903	58.4%	286	4.3%
2000	3,738	43.3%	4,524	52.6%	342	4.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Dane County Regional Planning Commission

Housing Vacancy. For a housing market to operate efficiently, it must have an adequate supply of available housing units for sale or rent. The market's supply of available housing units must be sufficient to allow for the formation of new households, to allow for in-migration and to provide opportunities for changing household size and status. The available vacancy rate of a housing market is a good indication of the adequacy of the housing supply.

According to Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an overall available vacancy rate of 3% (1.5% for the owned portion of a housing stock and 5% for the rented portion) allows for an adequate housing choice among customers. The overall available vacancy rate for the county was 3.8% in 2000. The owner-vacancy rate for the County was 1.0%, while the renter-available vacancy rate was 4.2%. In Fitchburg, the overall vacancy rate was 4.0% (Figure 3 - 6). The owner-available vacancy rate for the City was 1.0%, while the renter-available vacancy rate was 4.6%. Since Dane County and Fitchburg both had higher vacancy rates or not a tight housing market, it should not result in higher housing costs

Household Growth. From 1990 to 2000, the number of households in Dane County increased by 30,700 to about 173,500. This represents an increase of 22%, compared to the population growth of 16%. Between 1980 and 1990, the household growth rate was slower (Figure 3 - 7). In the City of Fitchburg, the number of households grew by about 1,900 to nearly 8,300 households or an increase of 29%. The household growth rate was similar in the 1980's.

Figure 3 - 7: Households: 1970 -2000

	Number of Households				Percent Change		
	1970	1980	1990	2000	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000
Dane County	88,574	120,601	142,786	173,484	36.2%	18.4%	21.5%
City of Fitchburg	1,327	4,989	6,399	8,262	276.0%	28.3%	29.1%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Dane County Regional Planning Commission

Household Size. Household size is one of the primary factors that must be considered when determining existing and future housing demand. As households change in size, so do their housing requirements.

In 1990, the County’s average household size was 2.5 persons. By 2000, the average household size had declined to 2.4 persons. In Fitchburg, the average household size stayed at 2.4 persons.

The average size of an owner household is larger than the average size of a renter household. In 2000, the average size of an owner household was 2.6 to 2.8 persons, while the average size of a renter household was 2.0 persons (Figure 3 - 8). The County’s household size decreased since 1990 while Fitchburg’s household size increased slightly due to the large increase in owner-households.

Figure 3 - 8: Average Household Size

	Persons Per Household					
	Owner-Occupied		Total-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Dane County	2.76	2.61	2.46	2.37	2.10	2.03
Fitchburg	2.97	2.79	2.36	2.38	1.97	2.05

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Dane County Regional Planning Commission

Figure 3 - 9 is a combination of Land Use Inventory Data and Census Data for the past four decades. The areas are all expressed in acres; the residential numbers are expressed as the units of each type, while the density is expressed in the number of units per acre. The general trend for the past four decades is an increase in density, particularly in the 90s. The City of Fitchburg mirrors the densities of Dane County because it encompasses both urban and rural areas like the County. The City’s residential density was much lower in 1970 because 64% of the housing units in the Town of Fitchburg utilized on-site septic systems. By 1980, 80% of Fitchburg’s housing units were served by public sanitary sewer on smaller lots. Multifamily housing units also increased by a factor of ten between 1970 and 1980.

Figure 3 - 9: Housing and Residential Land Use: 1970-2000

Dane County	1970			1980			1990			2000		
	Acres	Units	Density	Acres	Units	Density	Acres	Units	Density	Acres	Units	Density
Residential	29,847	92,430	3.10	41,560	126,275	3.04	48,002	147,851	3.08	49,194	180,398	3.67
1-Family	27,601	55,359	2.01	37,737	72,771	1.93	42,710	84,909	1.99	43,198	105,903	2.45
2-Family	748	8,623	11.54	1,213	10,101	8.33	1,804	9,672	5.36	1,716	10,243	5.97
3+ Family	971	27,050	27.87	2,096	41,579	19.84	2,914	49,946	17.14	3,843	61,886	16.10
Mobile Home	528	1,398	2.65	514	1,824	3.55	573	3,324	5.80	436	2,366	5.043

Fitchburg	1970			1980			1990			2000		
	Acres	Units	Density									
Residential	1,070	1,382	1.29	1,541	5,323	3.45	2,037	6,685	3.28	2,304	8,662	3.76
1-Family	999	921	.92	1,329	1,964	1.48	1,764	2,819	1.60	1,926	4,029	2.09
2-Family	15	89	5.82	29	218	7.49	62	171	2.74	82	293	3.57
3+ Family	47	323	6.93	178	3,067	17.22	204	3,638	17.81	292	4,277	14.65
Mobile Home	10	49	4.67	5	74	16.09	6	57	8.77	4	63	15.14

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Dane County Regional Planning Commission, and the City of Fitchburg

Employment

Employed Labor Force. As of 2000, Dane County had a civilian labor force of about 256,000. Of that total, 246,000 were employed; 3.8% were unemployed. The employed labor force is largely employed in what are typically referred to as “white collar” occupations with 83% of employees working in professional, technical or service-related positions. This compares to 70% statewide employed in the same positions. Dane County’s higher percentage can be partially attributed to the presence of Wisconsin’s state capital and major university (Figure 3 - 10).

The City of Fitchburg had a civilian labor force of 12,363. Of that total, 11,768 were employed; 3.6% were unemployed. Similar to Dane County the employed labor force is largely employed in white-collar occupations with 84% of employees working in professional, technical or service-related positions. From 1990 to 2000, the City’s employed labor force grew similar to the County.

Figure 3 - 10: Occupation of the Employed: 1990 - 2000

Dane County		Employed Persons Age 16 and Older						
Occupation Groups	1981		1990		2000		Change 1990-2000	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Change	% Total	Change	Percent
Management, professional and technical	57,602	34.0%	79,158	38.0%	107,347	43.6%	27,189	35.6%
Service Occupations	24,661	14.5%	27,110	13.0%	31,362	12.7%	4,252	15.7%
Sales and office occupations	51,063	30.1%	60,792	29.2%	65,285	26.5%	4,493	7.2%
Farming, fishery & forestry	4,516	2.7%	4,541	2.2%	891	0.4%	-3,650	-80.49
“Blue Collar” occupations	31,816	18.8%	36,468	17.5%	41,179	16.7%	4,711	12.9%
Dane County Total	169,658	100.0%	208,069	100.0%	246,064	100.0%	37,995	18.3%

Fitchburg		Employed Persons Age 16 and Older						
Occupation Groups	1981		1990		2000		Change 1990-2000	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Change	% Total	Change	Percent
Management, professional and technical	NA		4,097	40.8%	5,150	43.8%	1,053	25.7%
Service Occupations	NA		1,032	10.3%	1,701	14.5%	669	64.8%
Sales and office occupations	NA		3,220	32.1%	3,082	26.2%	-138	-4.3%
Farming, fishery & forestry	NA		176	1.8%	37	0.3%	-139	-79.0%
“Blue Collar” occupations	NA		1,515	15.1%	1,798	15.3%	283	18.7%%
City of Fitchburg Total	7,266	100.0%	10,040	100.0%	11,768	100.0%	1,728	17.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Dane County Regional Planning Commission

As shown in Figure 3 - 11 , more than half of Dane County’s employed residents work in the retail trade or service sectors of the economy. From 1980 to 2000, the employed labor force has increased 45%. During the same time period, jobs within Dane County increased from 170,000 to 288,575, an increase of 118,575 or 70%.

Using U. S. Census Bureau’s County Business Pattern data by zip code for 1994 to 2000, the County’s private employment increased by 22%. In the zip code (53711) serving part of Fitchburg and Madison, private employment increased by 31%.

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Figure 3 - 11: Industry of the Employed Labor Force: 1980 -2000

Dane County: Employed Persons Age 16 and Older								
Occupation Groups	1981		1990		2000		Change 1990-2000	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Change	% Total	Change	Percent
Construction and mining	12,435	7.3%	14,603	7.0%	15,572	6.3%	3,137	25.2%
Manufacturing	19,406	11.4%	25,024	12.0%	26,418	10.7%	7,012	36.1%
Transportation & Public Utilities	8,839	5.2%	11,100	5.3%	15,988	6.5%	7,149	80.9%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	33,717	19.9%	42,232	20.3%	51,092	20.8%	17,375	51.5%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	13,451	7.9%	18,798	9.0%	22,755	9.2%	9,304	69.2%
Services incl. Public Administration	81,810	48.2%	96,411	46.3%	114,239	46.4%	32,429	39.6%
Dane County Total	169,658	100.0%	208,069	100.0%	246,064	100.0%	76,406	45.0%

City of Fitchburg : Employed Persons Age 16 and Older								
Occupation Groups	1981		1990		2000		Change 1990-2000	
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	Change	% Total	Change	Percent
Construction and mining	433	6.0%	715	7.1%	566	4.8%	133	30.7%
Manufacturing	653	9.0%	1,095	10.9%	1,217	10.8%	618	94.6%
Transportation & Public Utilities	421	5.8%	570	5.7%	797	6.8%	376	89.3%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	1,478	20.3%	2,018	20.1%	1,600	13.6%	122	8.3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	830	11.4%	1,283	12.8%	1,221	10.4%	391	47.1%
Services incl. Public Administration	3,451	47.5%	4,359	43.4%	6,313	53.6%	2,862	82.9%
City of Fitchburg Total	7,266	100.0%	10,040	100.0%	11,768	100.0%	4,502	62.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Dane County Regional Planning Commission

Also shown in Figure 3 - 11, two-thirds of the City of Fitchburg’s employed residents work in the retail trade or service sectors of the economy. From 1980 to 2000, the employed labor force in Fitchburg has increased 62% compared to a 45% increase for Dane County.

Educational Level. In 2000, of the residents that were enrolled in school, nearly 43 % were in elementary school, with the next highest enrollment in college or graduate school (Figure 3 - 12). With the current high enrollment in grade school, this will cause a sudden influx of students in the future years within the area high schools.

Of those residents that are 25 and older and currently not enrolled in school, approximately 72 % have an educational attainment higher than a high school

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diploma (Figure 3 - 13). This attainment can be attributed to the students that graduate from the numerous higher educational facilities within the area and find employment within the Madison metro area. In addition, many of the residents are migrant graduates from other outside institutions that are drawn to the area by the high-tech, government, and research oriented job market the metropolitan area offers.

Figure 3 - 12: School Enrollment - 2000

	Number	Percent
Nursery School, preschool	384	7.0%
Kindergarten	319	5.8%
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	2,361	42.9%
High School (grades 1-8)	966	17.5%
College or graduate school	1,479	26.8%
Total (Population 3 years and over enrolled in school)	5,509	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 3 - 13: Educational Attainment - 2000

	Number	Percentage
Less than 9th grade	232	1.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	798	6.2%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	2,497	19.3%
Some collage, no degree	2,857	22.1%
Associate degree	1,114	8.6%
Bachelor's degree	3,379	26.1%
Graduate or professional degree	2,065	16.0%
Total (Population over 25 years and over)	12,942	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Income Levels. The City of Fitchburg had 8,137 households, with a median household income of \$50,433 in 1999 (Figure 3 - 14). The median household income is slightly higher than Dane County's by approximately \$1,000, in addition to the state. Overall, the high median household income can be attributed to the high tech job market and the substantial number of residents with a college education.

The 2000 Census showed that only 6.4% of Fitchburg's population (1,264) was living below the poverty level compared with 9.4% for Dane County's population and 12.4 % for Wisconsin.

Figure 3 - 14: Median Household Income

	1989	1999	Adj. Net Change*	Percent Change*
City of Fitchburg	\$35,550	\$50,433	\$1,847	3.8%
Dane County	\$32,703	\$49,223	\$4,528	10.1%
Wisconsin	\$29,442	\$43,791	\$3,553	8.8%

* Adjusted for inflation

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Forecasts

Population. In order to plan adequately for housing production and employment needs in Dane County on a long-term basis, future demand must be determined. As the County's population grows and its characteristics change, so will the demand for housing and jobs. Thus, the purpose of this section is to determine the number of housing units and jobs that must be produced to accommodate the future needs of households and labor force that will generate Dane County's population by 2030.

The City's population is expected to grow at about twice the County's growth rate. City forecasts were developed using data from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) – Demographic Services Center population projections for Dane County from 2000 to 2030. The City of Fitchburg's population will increase to 25,477 by 2010, 30,431 by 2020 and 35,386 by 2030. The resulting K-12 enrollment is expected to increase to 4,189 by 2010, 4,544 by 2020 and 5,295 by 2030 (Figure 3 - 15).

Figure 3 - 15: City of Fitchburg Population Projections by Age Groups: 2000 -2030

Age Group	2000	2010	2020	2030	2000 - 2010	2010 - 2020	2020 - 2030	2000 -2030
Under 5	1,449	1,822	2,139	2,371	337	318	232	63.6%
5 - 17	3,450	3,964	4,300	5,011	247	336	711	45.2%
18 -24	2,556	3,057	3,442	4,045	690	385	603	58.2%
25 - 44	7,621	8,512	10,286	11,433	972	1,774	1,148	50.0%
45 - 64	4,372	6,606	7,586	7,951	2,407	980	365	81.9%
65 & Over	1,053	1,516	2,678	4,575	323	1,162	1,897	334.5%
Total Population	20,501	25,477	30,431	35,386	4,976	4,954	4,955	72.6%
K - 12 enrollment	3,646	4,189	4,544	5,295	261	355	751	45.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Administration and the Dane County Regional Planning Commission

Labor Force. The labor force forecasts are based upon the 2000 percentage of labor force by four age groups applied to the population forecasts. The labor force forecasts represent the future supply of available civilian workers in the area. Comparing labor force forecasts to employment forecasts in Dane County shows a continuing shortage of available labor for new jobs.

The City of Fitchburg's labor force is expected to grow at a slightly slower rate than the population as a whole, and probably slower than growth in new jobs created in the County. Fitchburg's labor force will increase to 15,495 by 2010, 18,392 by 2020 and 20,625 by 2030 (Figure 3 - 16).

Figure 3 - 16: City of Fitchburg Labor Force by Age: 2000- 2030

Age Group	2000	2010	2020	2030
Population				
18 to 24 years	2,556	3,057	3,442	4,045
25 to 44 years	7,621	8,512	10,286	11,433
45 to 64 years	4,372	6,606	7,586	7,951
65 or older	1,053	1,516	2,678	4,575
Total	15,602	19,691	23,992	28,004
Labor Force				
18 to 24 years	2,136	2,555	2,876	3,380
25 to 44 years	6,240	6,969	8,422	9,361
45 to 64 years	3,697	5,586	6,415	6,724
65 or older	267	384	679	1,160
Total	12,340	15,495	18,392	20,625
Male Labor Force				
18 to 24 years	1,135	1,358	1,528	1,796
25 to 44 years	3,234	3,612	4,365	4,852
45 to 64 years	1,832	2,768	3,179	3,332
65 or older	161	232	409	700
Total	6,362	7,970	9,481	10,679
Female Labor Force				
18 to 24 years	1,001	1,197	1,348	1,584
25 to 44 years	3,006	3,357	4,057	4,510
45 to 64 years	1,865	2,818	3,236	3,392
65 or older	106	153	270	461
Total	5,978	7,525	8,911	9,946

Source: U. S. Census Bureau and Dane County RPC

Housing. The housing production forecasts represent the number of housing units that will be required to meet the basic components of growth. They are not intended to be forecasts of the effective demand for housing, which is affected by many other factors such as consumer income, tastes and preferences, price, and financing. All forecasts, including the ones presented in this section, must be used with great caution. Forecasts cannot take into account unpredictable events that could have a significant effect on the housing market, especially for individual small cities.

Since the late 1970s, average household sizes have been decreasing. Households are decreasing in size primarily due to an increase in the divorce rate, a decrease in the birth rate, the postponement of marriage, and an increase in the proportion of the population age 65 and older. As households decline in size, the need for additional housing increases. Household size is a key production factor. Fitchburg's population

Issues and Opportunities

per housing unit size was 2.34 in 1990 and 2.37 in 2000. Utilizing the most recent housing trends, the City will have a population per housing unit size of 2.31 by 2010, 2.27 by 2020 and 2.30 by 2030. Household sizes have been decreasing for both owner-occupied and renter-occupied households. In 2000, owner-occupied households averaged 2.79 persons per household and renter-occupied households averaged 2.05 persons per household. Figure 3 - 17 shows forecasted households by tenure and age of the head of household.

Figure 3 - 17: City of Fitchburg Housing Forecast by Tenure: 2000 -2030

Age Group	2000	2010	2020	2030
Population				
18 to 24 years	2,556	3,057	3,442	4,045
25 to 44 years	7,621	8,512	10,286	11,433
45 to 64 years	4,372	6,606	7,586	7,951
65 or older	1,053	1,516	2,678	4,575
Total	15,602	19,691	23,992	28,004
Housing Units	8,662	11,048	13,388	15,366
Vacant Units	292	376	455	522
Vacancy Rate	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
Households				
18 to 24 years	831	994	1,119	1,315
25 to 44 years	4,263	4,761	5,754	6,395
45 to 64 years	2,811	4,247	4,878	5,112
65 or older	465	669	1,183	2,020
Total	8,370	10,672	12,933	14,843
Owner Households				
18 to 24 years	7	8	9	11
25 to 44 years	1,502	1,678	2,027	2,253
45 to 64 years	2,003	3,027	3,476	6,643
65 or older	281	405	715	1,221
Total	3,793	5,117	6,227	7,128
Renter Households				
18 to 24 years	824	986	1,110	1,304
25 to 44 years	2,761	3,084	3,726	4,142
45 to 64 years	808	1,221	1,402	1,469
65 or older	184	265	468	800
Total	4,577	5,555	6,706	7,715

Source: U. S. Census Bureau and Dane County RPC

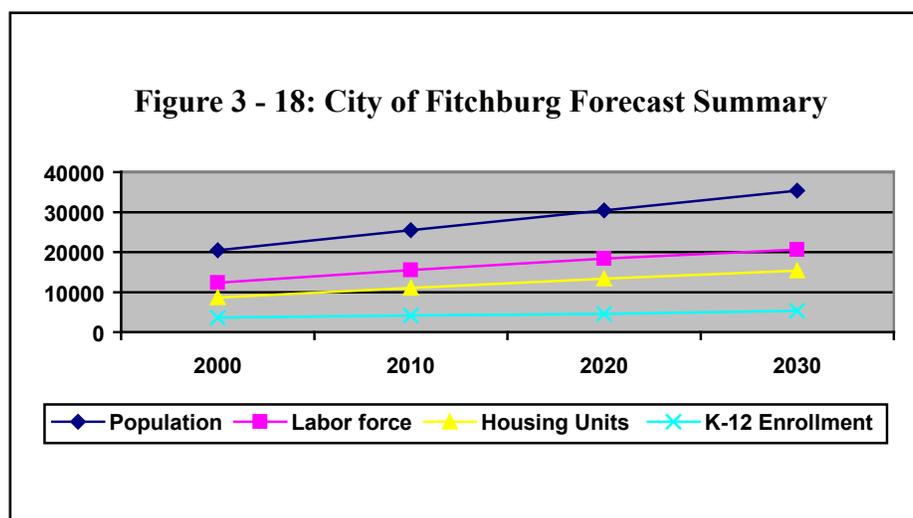
Long-Range Market Trends

It is apparent that the expected national population shifts resulting from the baby boom generation, those born between 1946 and 1964, and their children, the “baby-boom-let” or “Y” generation will have drastic effects on the Dane County housing and labor markets and school enrollments during the next 30 years. A substantially smaller population group (the X Generation) follows the baby-boomers. Their impact already has been demonstrated, with large numbers of smaller classroom sizes in the early 1980s, and a lack of young workers in the labor force in the 1990s. In addition, the numbers of elderly are growing and will continue to grow at a steady pace. This will place new demands on housing, economic development and public facilities.

Although this report identifies demographic trends and develops projections estimating future markets, public policy, economic forces and people’s response to those forces also influence the markets. Therefore, even though the demographic shifts are bound to have a major impact, it is also likely that people’s behavior will adapt to these shifts. Overall, the housing and labor markets have been quite responsive to changing times. The years just ahead will probably be no exception. Following are the main impacts of these changing demographic forces on the Dane County housing and job markets and schools going into the next century, based on the long-range population forecasts by age group. Decade by decade, these trends in Dane County can be illustrated.

1990. Population counts for 1990 showed an increase of 14% since 1980; 87% of the county’s population occurred in cities and villages over 4,000 persons. The number of households increased by 17%. Employed labor force increased by 21%, while employment grew by 30%. School enrollment decreased by 14%.

1. Three-fourths of the baby boomers were over age 30 in 1990 and their entrance into the house-buying market led to brisk real estate sales in the early 1990s. The typical first-time home buyer group (ages 25 to 34) grew by more than 5,000 persons and favorable interest rates helped to fuel this market. The middle-age group (ages 35 to 44) experienced the largest numerical shift since 1980, which continued to fuel the move-up market. In 1990 the baby boomers were between the ages of 25 and 44.
2. The pool of renters was reduced during this period because slightly fewer people in the typical renter age group (20 to 24) and favorable interest rates stimulated home ownership.
3. Dane County’s strong economy fueled rapid increase in job production. Although baby boomers supplied to most of the labor force needs, migration filled the gap.
4. School construction was limited to repair or replacement since enrollment was declining.



2000. The population grew by more than 16% between 1990 and 2000. The major changes were due to the aging of the baby boomers, which were between the ages of 36 and 54 in 2000. Large increases in the middle age and empty nester categories were realized, with correspondingly large decreases in the categories between the ages of 25 to 34. The number of households increased by 17 %. Employed labor force increased by only 18 %, while job growth continued to grow at a faster pace. Nearly all school districts saw major construction projects because K-12 enrollments increased by 37 %.

1. The size of the typical renter group grew much slower than owner groups, such that twice as many new owner households were created as new renter households. Move-up housing age groups continued to increase; also increasing demand for condominiums.

2010. The baby boomers will be between the ages of 46 and 64 and their children will be entering the housing and job markets and leaving the K-12 system. Projected population is expected to increase by a slower rate than the 1990's. Migration will likely make up an even larger portion of growth. The number of households, likewise, are projected to increase but at a much slower rate than in prior decades. The developing suburbs are less likely to experience rapid growth and may be facing issues similar to those of the City of Madison.

1. The projected minor increases in the number of youth ages 0 to 18, while not directly affecting any segment of the housing market. The large increases expected in the empty-nester age category and continued decline in the typical first-time home buyer age group may create a very tight market for sellers and a loose market for buyers. Senior housing and condominiums are expected to make up a larger segment of the housing market.
2. The labor force should get some relief as the baby boom-let enters the job market.
3. Increasing enrollment will place pressure on some new high school construction.

2020. The baby boomers will be between the age 56 and 74 in 2020. Population is projected at a slower rate than the 2010s. The number of households will increase at a similar rate. Population age 5 - 17 will increase faster than the previous decade.

1. Half of the baby boomers will be retired and one out of seven persons in the county will be over age 65. This will place increasing pressure on the construction of housing for the elderly; about a third is expected to be condominiums. Older seniors will make up more than five percent of the county's population, causing increased need for housing with supportive services for frail elderly.
2. The typical first-time home buyer age group will increase, refueling that housing market.
3. Unless migration increases, slow growth in the labor force will cause labor shortages.
4. Increasing K-12 enrollments will cause school construction in faster growing districts.

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