

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this section is to provide basic background information for the comprehensive planning process and general population and demographic characteristics for the Village of Avoca. More specifically this section includes information from the community survey and visioning sessions, demographic trends; including population trends, age distribution, housing trends, education levels, income levels, employment characteristics, population projections, housing projections, and labor force projections.

**Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(a)****(a) *Issues and opportunities element.***

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.

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES POLICIES**

The following are the issues and opportunities policies for the Village of Avoca. The essence of these recommendations is carried out throughout the entire document.

- **Protect and improve the health, safety, and welfare of residents in the Village of Avoca.**
- **Preserve and enhance the quality of life for the residents of the Village of Avoca.**
- **Protect and preserve the small community character of the Village of Avoca.**

Note: The above policy recommendations are further explained in other elements of this comprehensive plan. This section provides background information and overall direction. For example, the above recommendations may be carried out by implementing recommendations in other sections such as housing, economic development, and transportation.

### **BACKGROUND**

Iowa County, together with 22 jurisdictions, including the Village of Avoca, applied for a Comprehensive Planning Grant through the Wisconsin Department of Administration in the fall of 2001. In the spring of 2002, the Comprehensive Planning Grant was awarded. Iowa County and the jurisdictions within it contracted with the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) to complete individual comprehensive plans for each of the 23 jurisdictions (Iowa County, cities, towns, and villages) in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001.

Because of the large number of jurisdictions involved and in an effort to streamline planning meetings, individual jurisdictions were grouped into “clusters”, based on their physical proximity to one another, resulting in six cluster groups listed below. Iowa County was a separate cluster.

- “Northwest Cluster” (Towns of Highland and Pulaski, Villages of Avoca and Highland)
- “Northeast Cluster” (Towns of Arena, Clyde, and Wyoming, and the Village of Arena)
- “Central Cluster” (Towns of Dodgeville and Ridgeway, Village of Ridgeway, and City of Dodgeville)
- “Southwest Cluster” (Towns of Eden, Linden and Mifflin, and Village of Linden)
- “South Central Cluster” (Towns of Mineral Point and Waldwick, and City of Mineral Point)
- “Southeast Cluster” (Town of Moscow, and Villages of Blanchardville and Hollandale)
- Iowa County

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

#### **COMMUNITY SURVEY**

In September and October of 2002, the staff from SWWRPC and University of Wisconsin Extension Service-Iowa County (UWEX-Iowa County) developed a countywide survey that was distributed to all property owners in Iowa County. A total of 10,752 surveys were sent out, 301 to Village of Avoca property owners. Fifty-six surveys were sent back, giving the Village a 19 percent return rate. (See Appendix A-1 for complete survey results.)

#### **COMMUNITY VISION**

A vision statement identifies where an organization intends to be in the future and how to best meet the future needs of its stakeholders. The vision statement incorporates a shared understanding of the nature and purpose of the organization and uses this understanding to move towards a greater purpose together. SWWRPC, in conjunction with UWEX-Iowa County, sponsored visioning sessions for each cluster in the autumn and winter of 2002-2003. The Village of Avoca’s planning commission utilized the visioning information from these sessions to create a formal vision statement as stated below:

*The Village of Avoca’s long range vision is to enhance its well-being by continuing to develop business, recreation, parks and industry, maintaining the beauty of the surrounding area, and helping it grow and flourish, without losing the small town atmosphere.*

**VISIONING**

In February 2003, the Village of Avoca planning representatives were asked to identify issues, opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses specific to the Village of Avoca. The following lists are based on the cluster visioning exercise, countywide survey, and local Plan Commission meetings. (See Appendix A-2 for the Southwest Cluster visioning results.)

**Issues:**

- Declining school enrollment
- Aging population
- Disappearing Main Street businesses
- Getting young people involved
- Lack of public library
- Senior Citizens Center and activities
- Activities for young people
- Tourism
- New homes
- Land use

**Opportunities:**

- Getting families to move into Village
- Elderly housing – assisted living
- Restaurant, motel, and “fast-food” restaurants
- Survey ages 12-19, working at elections
- Have existing reading room
- Village Hall gym
- Ice skating rink, bike, and walking trails, canoe rental, game room/recreation center
- Develop walking trails in river bottoms
- ATV trails
- Habitat for Humanity – starter homes
- Development of an Industrial Park

**Strengths:**

- Natural beauty, near job or employment opportunities, small town atmosphere
- Ambulance service and street and road maintenance
- Condition of local roads, streets, and sidewalks

**Weaknesses:**

- Appearance of homes
- No public school located in Village
- Affordable housing
- Downtown development
- Public transportation

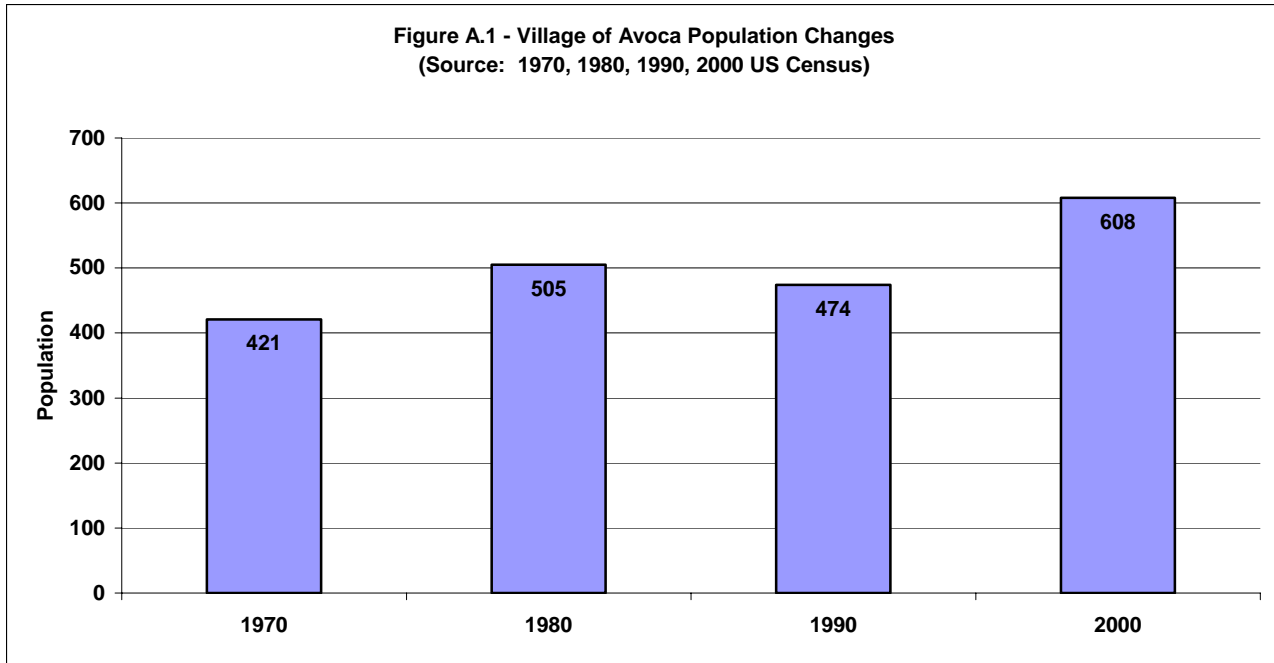
**COMMUNITY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

See Appendix A-3 for the jurisdiction’s public participation plan.

**DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

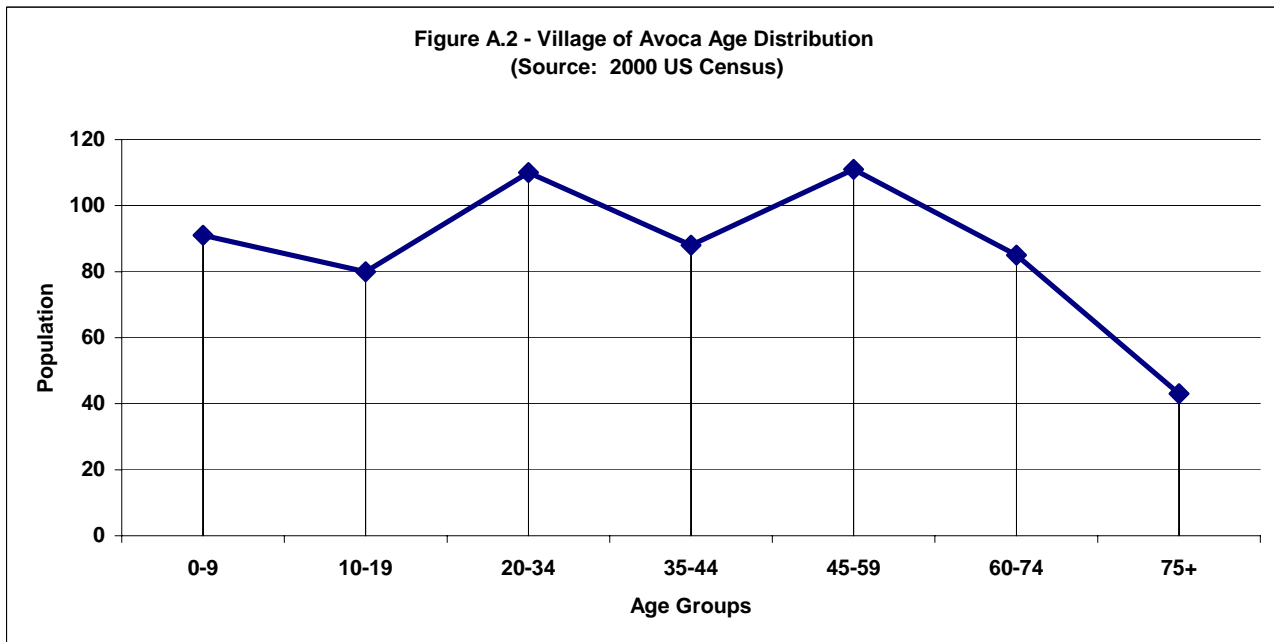
**POPULATION CHANGES**

The Village of Avoca’s population has increased by 187 people over the past 30 years. Between 1970 and 1980 the Village grew by 20 percent, but between 1980 and 1990 it dropped 6 percent. From 1990 to 2000 the Village grew 28 percent.



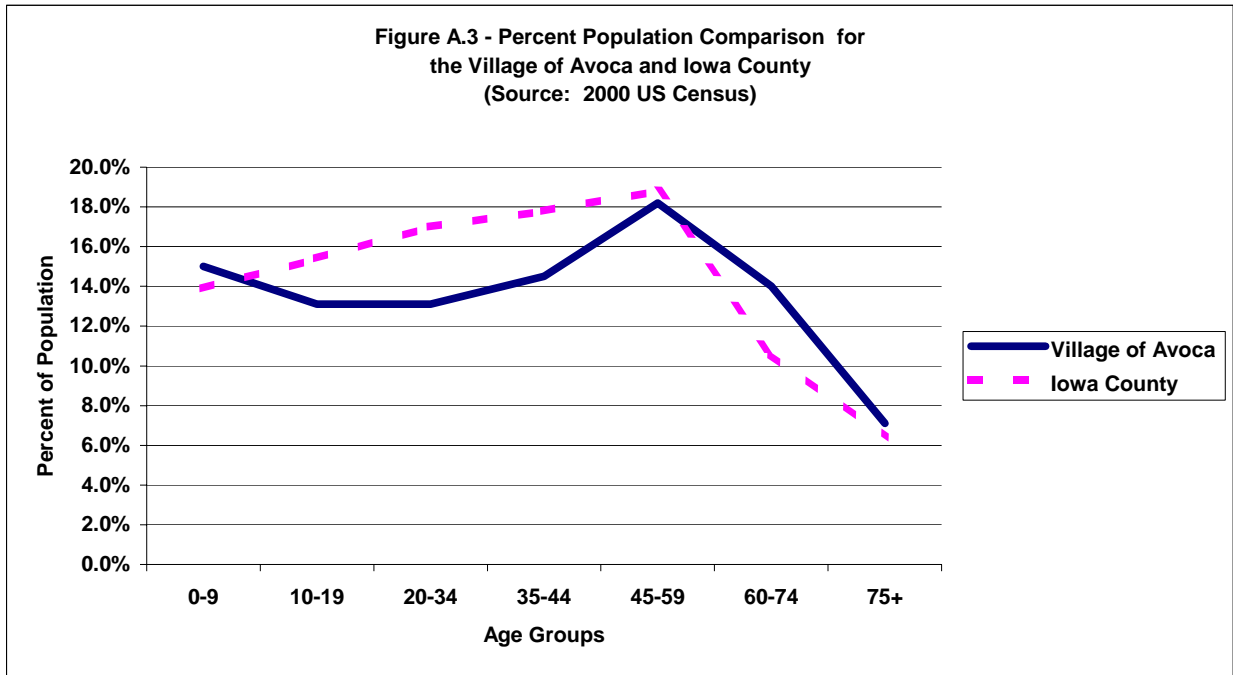
**AGE DISTRIBUTION**

Figure A.2 shows the age distribution of the Village of Avoca residents, according to the 2000 US Census. Overall the population is well distributed among all the various age groups. The age groups of 20 to 34 and 45 to 59 year olds have the highest concentration of the population in the Village.



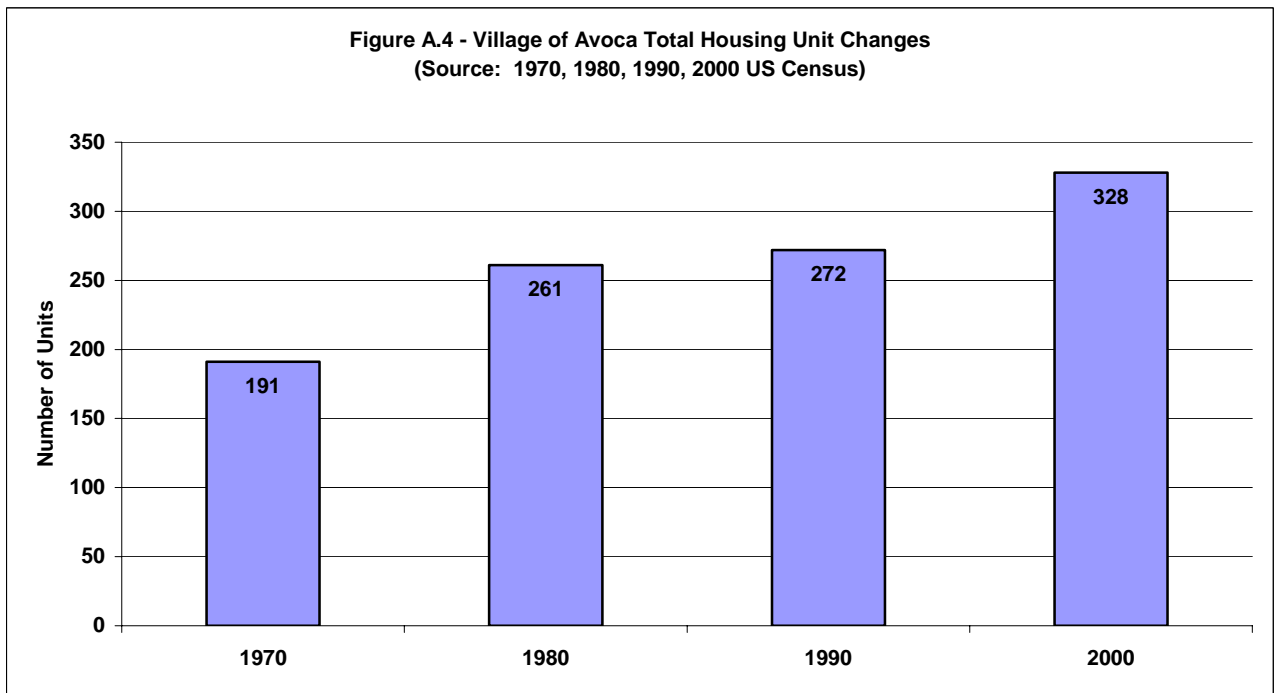
**PERCENT POPULATION**

Figure A.3 compares the Village’s population to Iowa County as a whole. The breakdown of the Village population is somewhat similar to the county population in the older age groups, but the Village is much lower than the County in the 10 to 19, 20 to 34, and 35 to 44 year age groups.

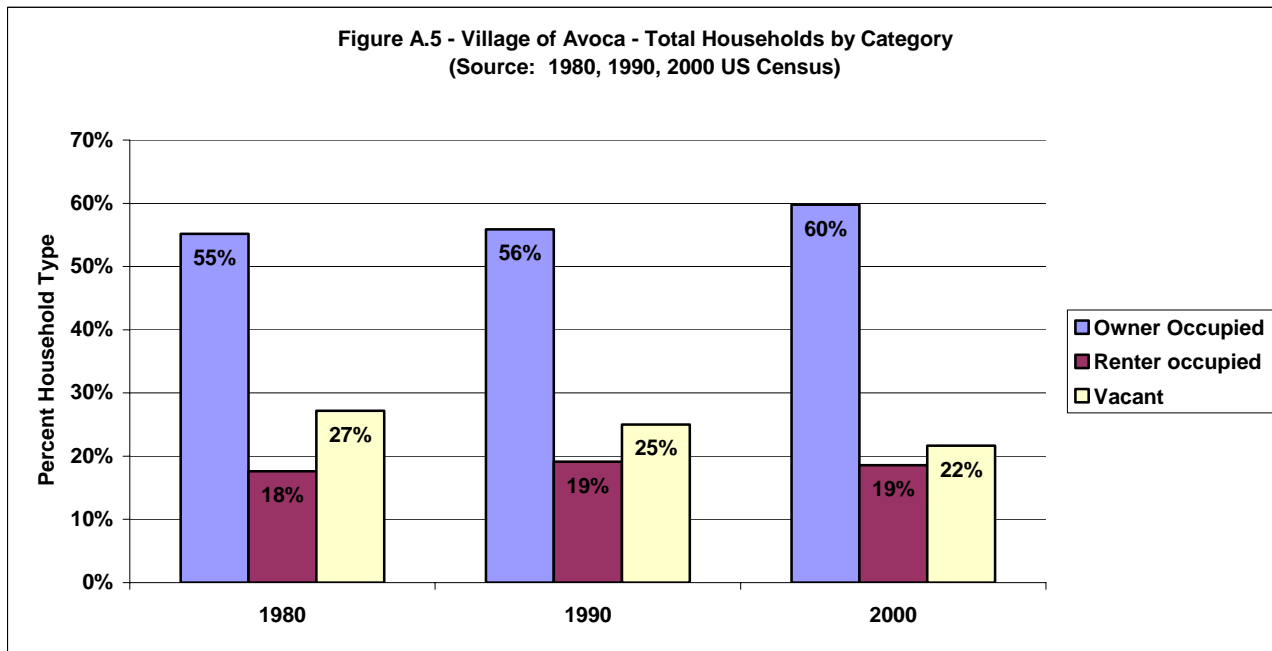


**HOUSING TRENDS**

Historically, the Village of Avoca has seen an overall increase in the housing supply. “Total Housing Units” refers to the total number of units available for habitation: owned, rented, and vacant. As indicated by Figure A.4 the Village of Avoca had an increase of 137 units between 1970 and 2000. For more housing information, go to Section B, Housing Element of this plan.



“Total Households” refers to occupied (owned and rented) housing units only. Figure A.5 shows of the 328 housing units in Village of Avoca in 2000, 60 percent are owner occupied, 19 percent are renter occupied, and the remaining 22 percent are vacant. The average number of persons per household is 2.43 for owner occupied units, 2.16 for rental units.



**EDUCATION LEVELS**

An important factor tied to a community’s economic well being, as well as its potential for economic growth, is the link between education levels of residents and employment opportunities. Table A.1 reflects the educational attainment of the Village residents 25 years and older compared with Iowa County and the State of Wisconsin.

**Table A.1: Educational Attainment of Residents 25 Years and Older**

Education	Village of Avoca		Iowa County Percent	State of Wisconsin Percent
	Number	Percent		
< 9th grade	36	8.9%	4.2%	5.4%
9th-12th grade, no diploma	51	12.6%	7.4%	9.6%
HS Grad (incl. Equivalency)	221	54.6%	41.8%	34.6%
Some college, no degree	57	14.1%	19.9%	20.6%
Associate Degree	25	6.2%	8.3%	7.5%
Bachelors Degree	11	2.7%	13.2%	15.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	4	1.0%	5.3%	7.2%
Total	405	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census

**INCOME COMPARISONS**

Table A.2 compares the income levels of the Village of Avoca with those of Iowa County and the State of Wisconsin. Median household income is based on every unit of occupancy with one or more unrelated individuals. Median family income is based on units of occupancy with individuals related by blood (children, grandparents, etc.) or law (marriage, adoption, etc.). Per capita income is based on each individual wage earner.

**Table A.2: Income Comparisons**

Income Type	Village of Avoca	Iowa County	State of Wisconsin
Median household income	\$28,625	\$42,518	\$43,791
Median family income	\$31,786	\$49,972	\$52,911
Per capita income	\$16,758	\$19,497	\$21,271

Source: 2000 US Census

**EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS**

Table A.3 is reflective of the 2000 US Census for employed persons 16 years and over and their respective occupations in the Village of Avoca, compared by percentage to Iowa County and the State of Wisconsin. By definition of the Census, occupation is referred to as the type of work a person does on the job. For more information, see Section F, Economic Development Element of this plan.

**Table A.3: Employment Characteristics**

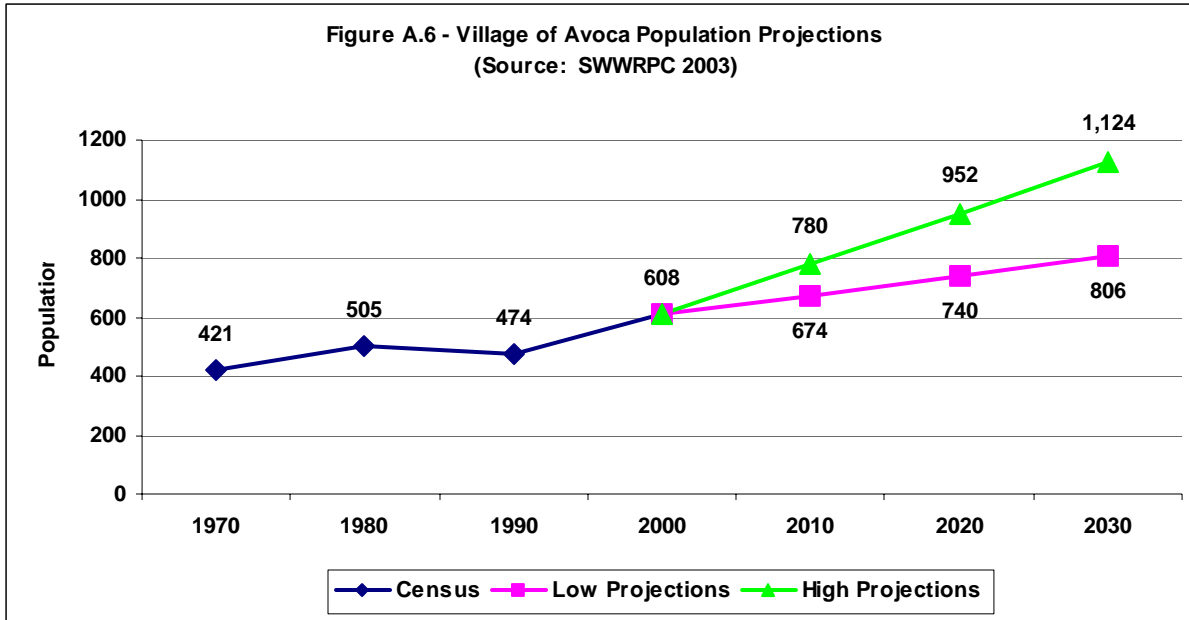
Occupation	Village of Avoca		Iowa County	State of Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Management, professional and related	33	12.2%	30.9%	31.3%
Services occupations	35	12.9%	12.8%	14.0%
Sales and office occupations	67	24.7%	25.5%	25.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	3	1.1%	2.5%	0.9%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	38	14.0%	10.9%	8.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	95	35.1%	17.4%	19.8%
Total employed civilian population 16 years and older	271	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census

**DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS**

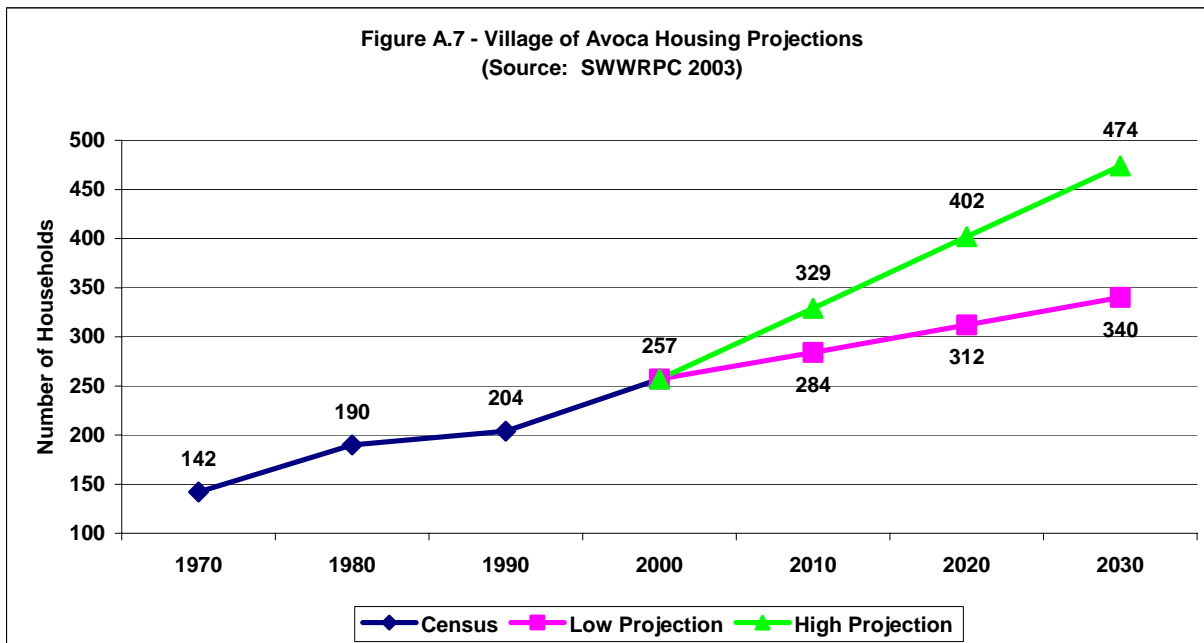
**POPULATION**

Preparing population projections is necessary to provide planners, developers, and others with expected increases or decreases in given base years. Reliable projections of population are needed for all kinds of planning or policy decisions whether involving the need for extending utilities, building a new highway, or starting a business. All these require some notion of probable demand for such facilities. Figure A.6 shows past population trends as well as projections to the year 2030. The figure gives both low and high projections, showing an overall population increase in the next 30 years.



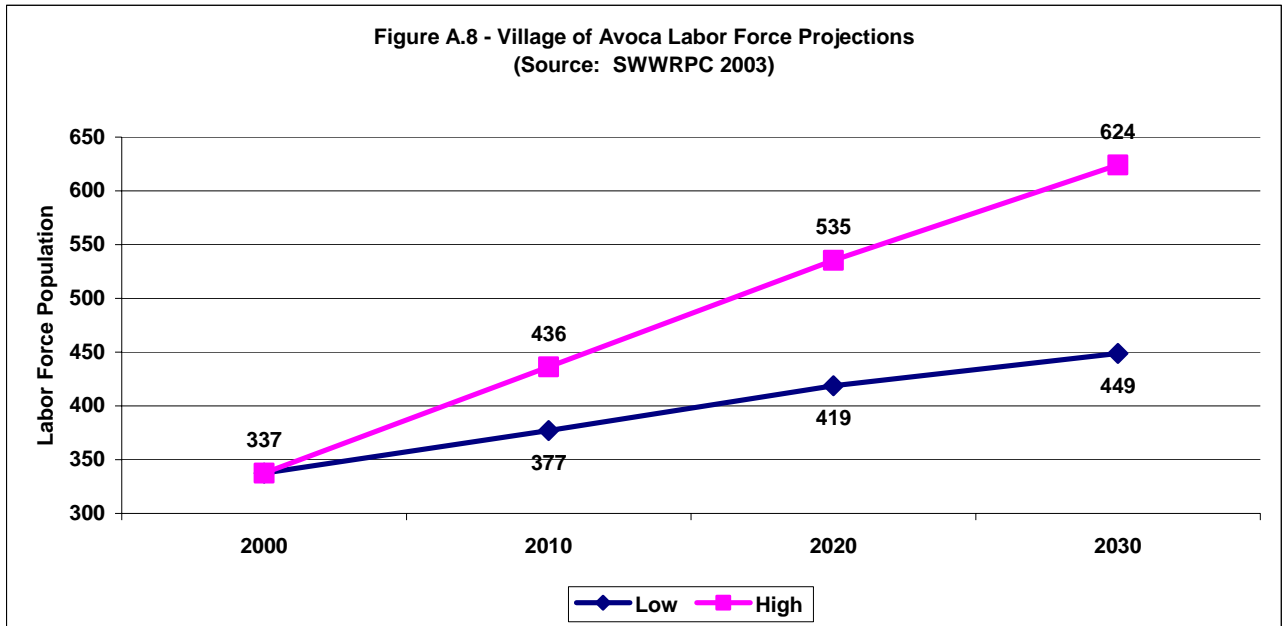
**HOUSEHOLD**

Figure A.7 shows household projections based on population projections and average household size from the 2000 US Census.



**LABOR FORCE**

Figure A.8 shows labor force projections for the Village of Avoca. These available workers will not necessarily find employment in the Town: many will work in nearby towns and cities. The figure merely indicates the available labor pool residing in the Village of Avoca. For more information see Section F.



All of the projections presented in this section are based on past trends. The projections are intended as a guide. A sudden change, such as the creation of a large industry in an outlying area may dramatically impact these projections.