

**ISSUES AND  
OPPORTUNITIES  
ELEMENT**

**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 Ridgeway. 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 Ridgeway. 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 Ridgeway.**
- **Preserve and enhance the quality of life for the residents of the Village of Ridgeway.**
- **Protect and preserve the small community character of the Village of Ridgeway.**

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 twenty-two jurisdictions, including the Village of Ridgeway, 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 twenty-three jurisdictions (Iowa County, Cities, Towns, and Villages) in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001.

Because of the large number of involved jurisdictions 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. 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, 299 to Village of Ridgeway property owners. Fifty-nine surveys were filled out and sent back, giving the Village a 20 percent return rate. (See Appendix A-1 for complete survey results.) The results of two questions in particular surprised the Plan Commission: 54 percent of respondents reported they had no children over the age of 18 in their home and 66 percent gave “no comment” as their answer to whether or not they “owned or rented” their home.

#### **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’s plan commission utilized the visioning information from these sessions to create a formal vision statement. The vision statement for the Village of Ridgeway follows:

1. *Smart, orderly growth throughout the Village*
2. *Infill of undeveloped areas*
3. *Revitalize the downtown area*
4. *Develop business opportunities to increase employment, population, and tax base*
5. *Expand the urban service area as necessary to accommodate growth*

6. *Target underdeveloped areas with the urban service area*
7. *Discourage subdivision development outside of urban service area*
8. *Maintain reasonable housing density*
9. *Explore consolidation with the Township*

## **VISIONING**

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

### **Issues**

- School closing
- Inadequate Industrial Park
- Teen activities
- Senior activities
- Retail/Grocery shops
- Police protection
- Isolation of Industrial Park

### **Opportunities**

- Keep school open, build a new one, there is land available
- Transportation/Access
- Bike trail/Depot

### **Strengths**

- Air quality
- Water
- Parks
- Fire and Ambulance
- Scenic
- Public schools
- Small town atmosphere

### **Weaknesses**

- Street maintenance
- Community services
- Appearance of homes
- Lack of households/children
- Sidewalks

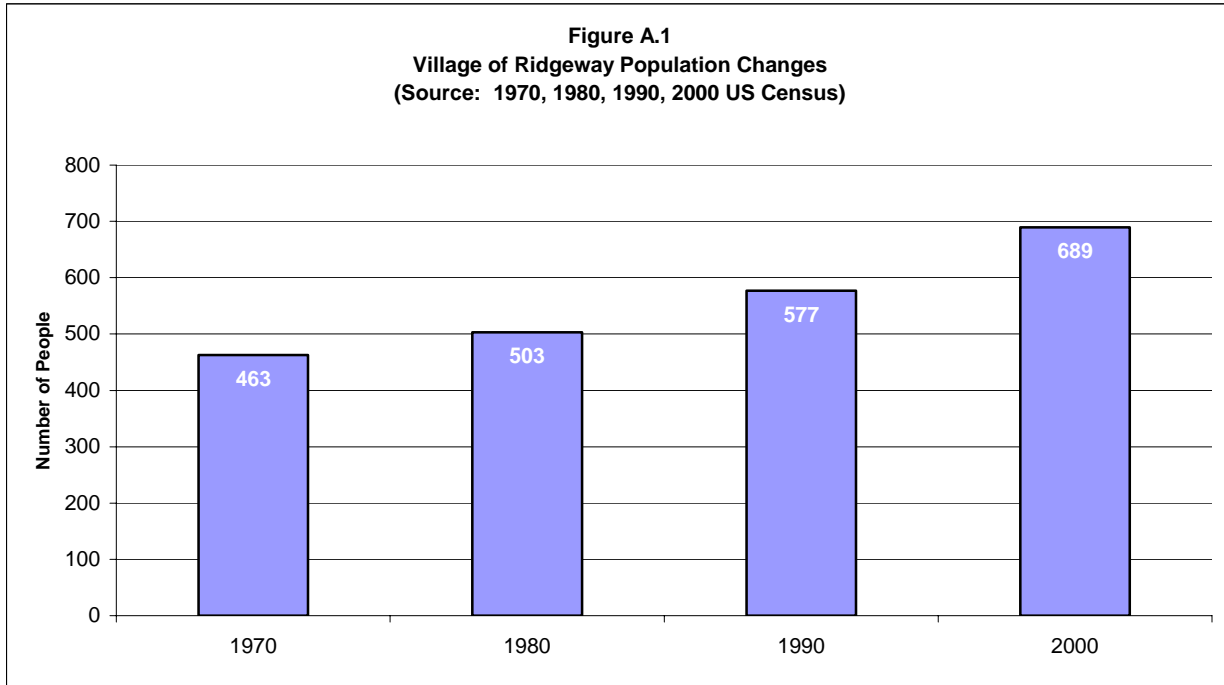
## **COMMUNITY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

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

**DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

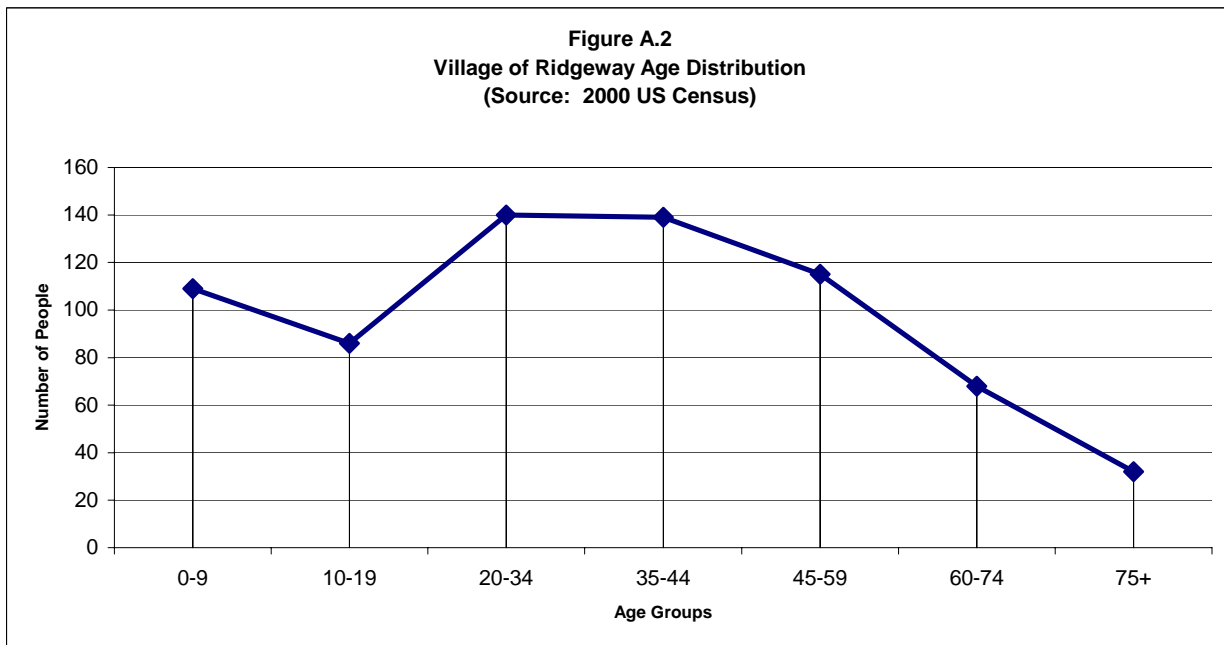
**POPULATION CHANGES**

The Village of Ridgeway’s population has increased by 226 people over the past 30 years. Between 1970 and 1980 the Village grew by 9 percent and between 1980 and 1990 by 15 percent. From 1990 to 2000 the Village grew 19 percent.



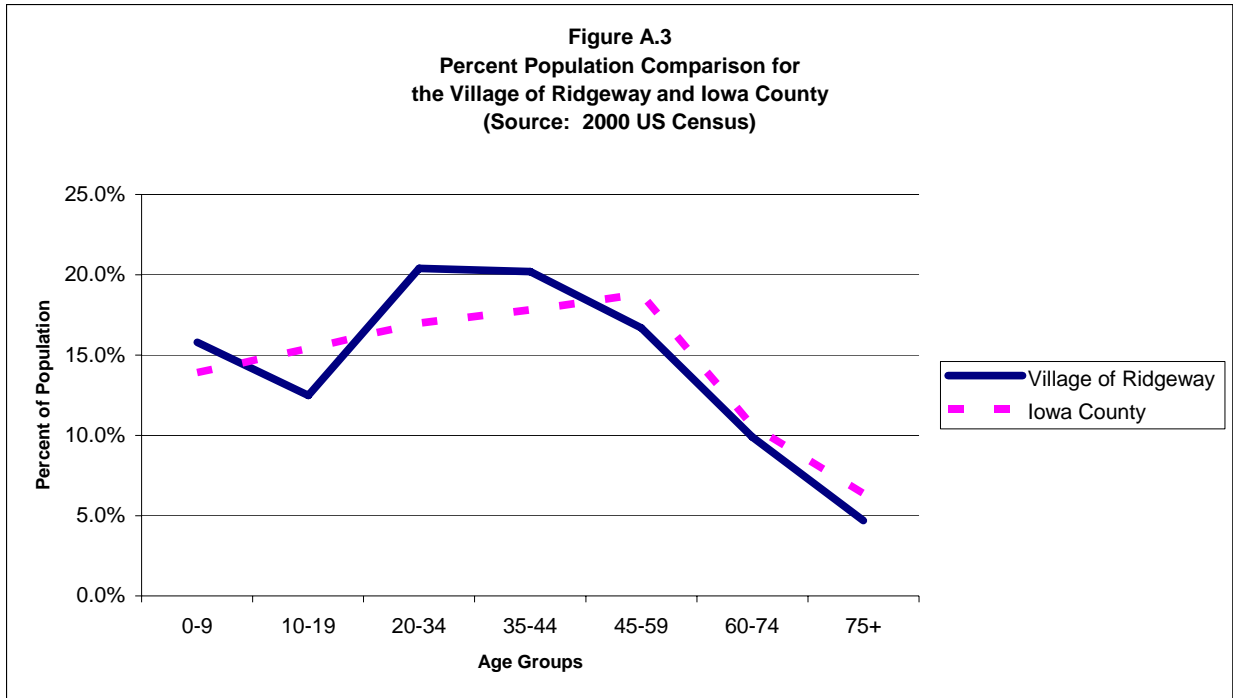
**AGE DISTRIBUTION**

Figure A.2 shows the age distribution of the Village of Ridgeway 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 35 to 44 year olds have the highest concentrations of the population in the Village.



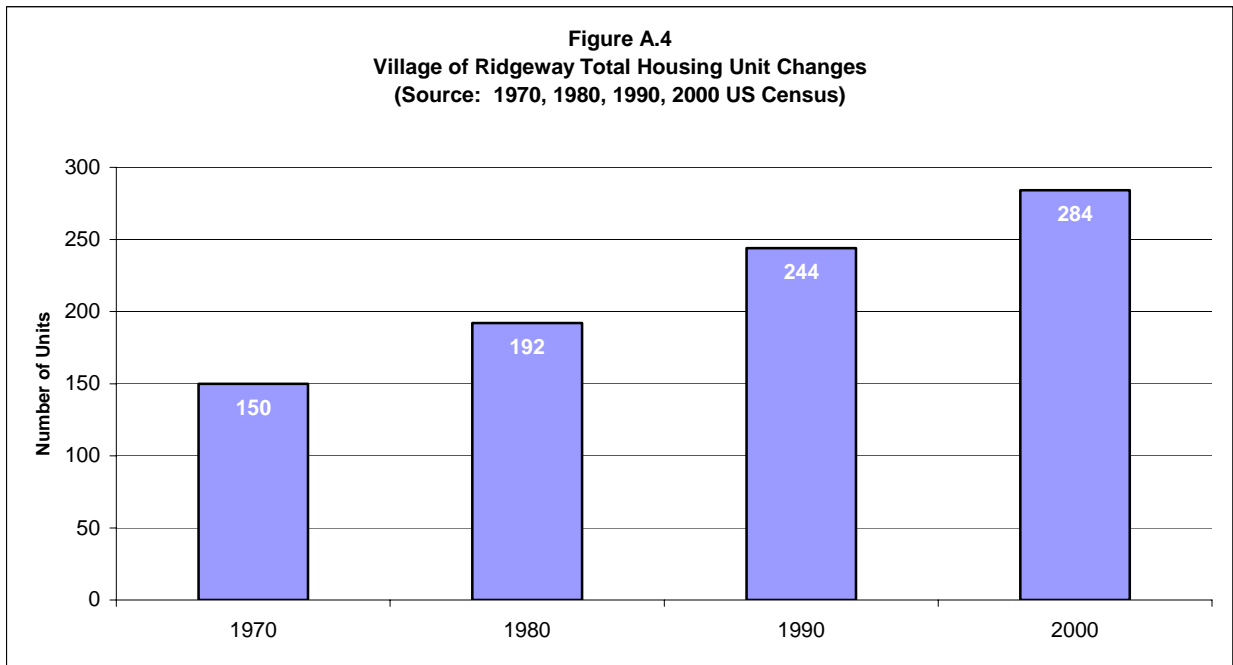
**PERCENT POPULATION**

Figure A.3 compares the Village population to Iowa County as a whole. The breakdown of the Village population is somewhat similar to the county population, although the Village is higher than the County in the 20 to 34 and 35 to 44 year age groups.

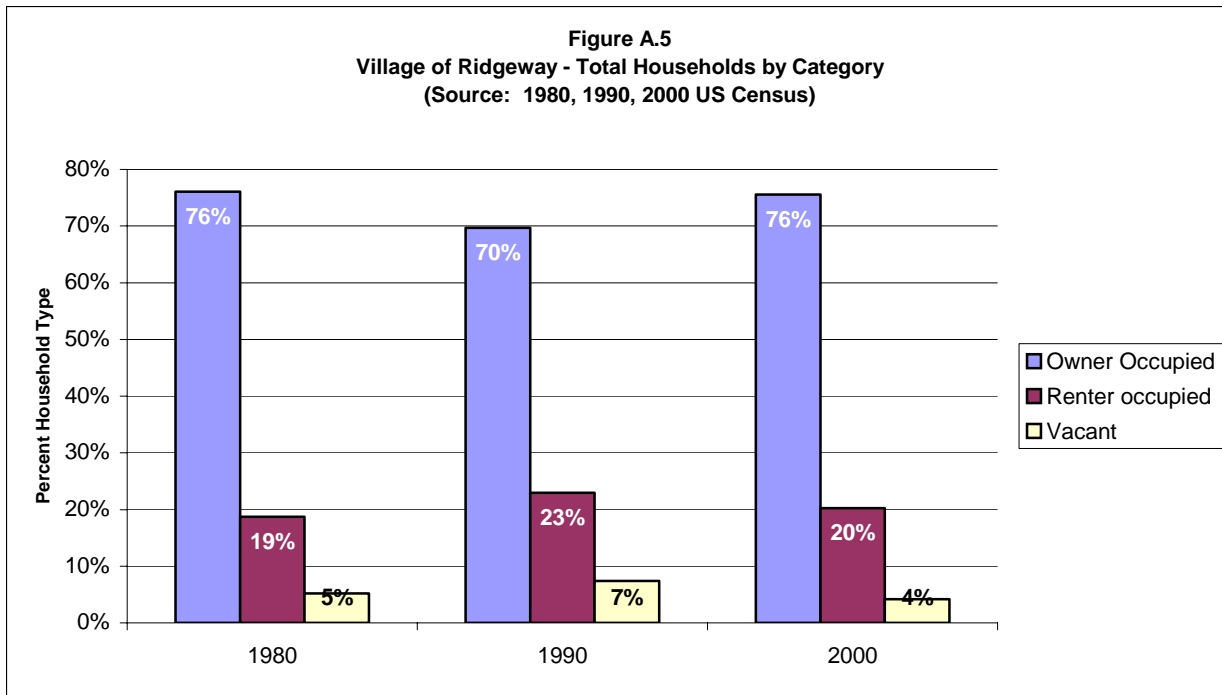


**HOUSING TRENDS**

Historically, the Village of Ridgeway has seen an overall increase in housing. “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 Ridgeway had an increase of 134 units between 1970 and 2000. For more housing information, go to Section B, Housing Element.



“Total Households” refers to occupied (owned and rented) housing units only. Figure A.5 shows of the 284 housing units in the Village in 2000, 76 percent are owner occupied, 20 percent are renter occupied, and the remaining 4 percent are vacant. The average number of persons per household is 2.61 for owner occupied units, 2.03 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 Ridgeway		Iowa County Percent	State of Wisconsin Percent
	Number	Percent		
< 9th grade	37	8.3%	4.2%	5.4%
9th-12th grade, no diploma	43	9.7%	7.4%	9.6%
HS Grad (incl. Equivalency)	202	45.5%	41.8%	34.6%
Some college, no degree	93	20.9%	19.9%	20.6%
Associate Degree	22	5.0%	8.3%	7.5%
Bachelors Degree	40	9.0%	13.2%	15.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	7	1.6%	5.3%	7.2%
Total population 25 years and older	444	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census

**INCOME COMPARISONS**

Table A.2 compares the income levels of the Village of Ridgeway 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 Ridgeway	Iowa County	State of Wisconsin
Median household income	\$41,548	\$42,518	\$43,791
Median family income	\$50,795	\$49,972	\$52,911
Per capita income	\$17,887	\$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 Ridgeway, 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, go to Section F, Economic Development Element.

**Table A.3: Employment Characteristics**

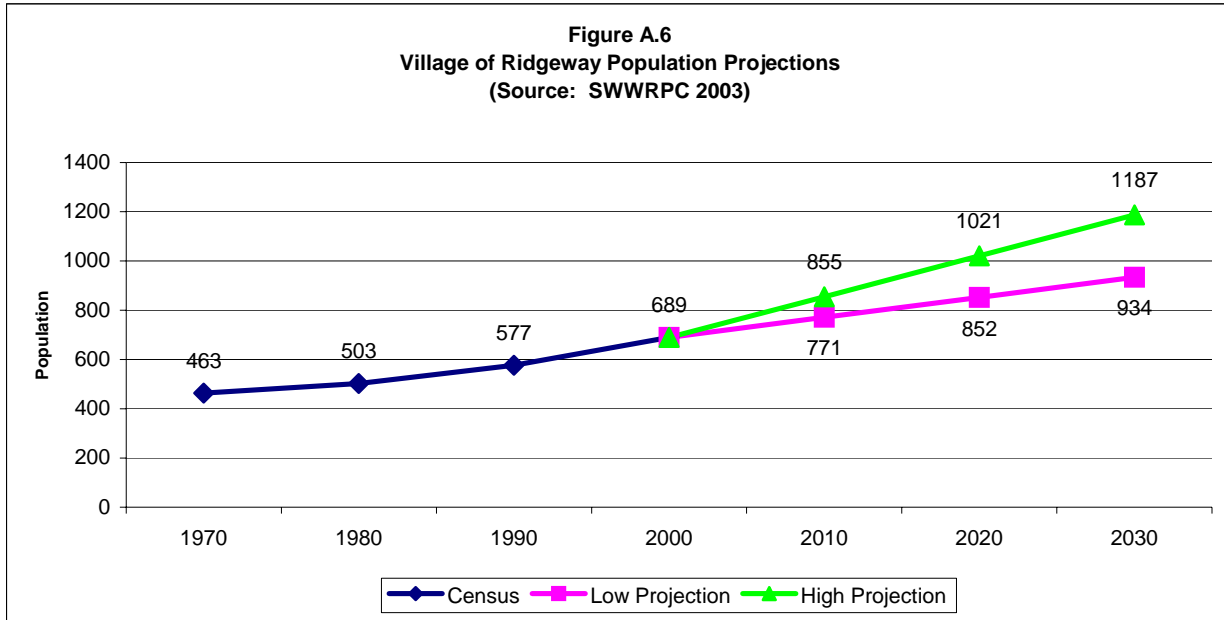
Occupation	Village of Ridgeway		Iowa County	State of Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Management, professional and related	52	13.2%	30.9%	31.3%
Services occupations	45	11.5%	12.8%	14.0%
Sales and office occupations	119	30.3%	25.5%	25.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	4	1.0%	2.5%	0.9%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	62	15.8%	10.9%	8.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	111	28.2%	17.4%	19.8%
Total employed civilian population 16 years and older	393	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census

**DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS**

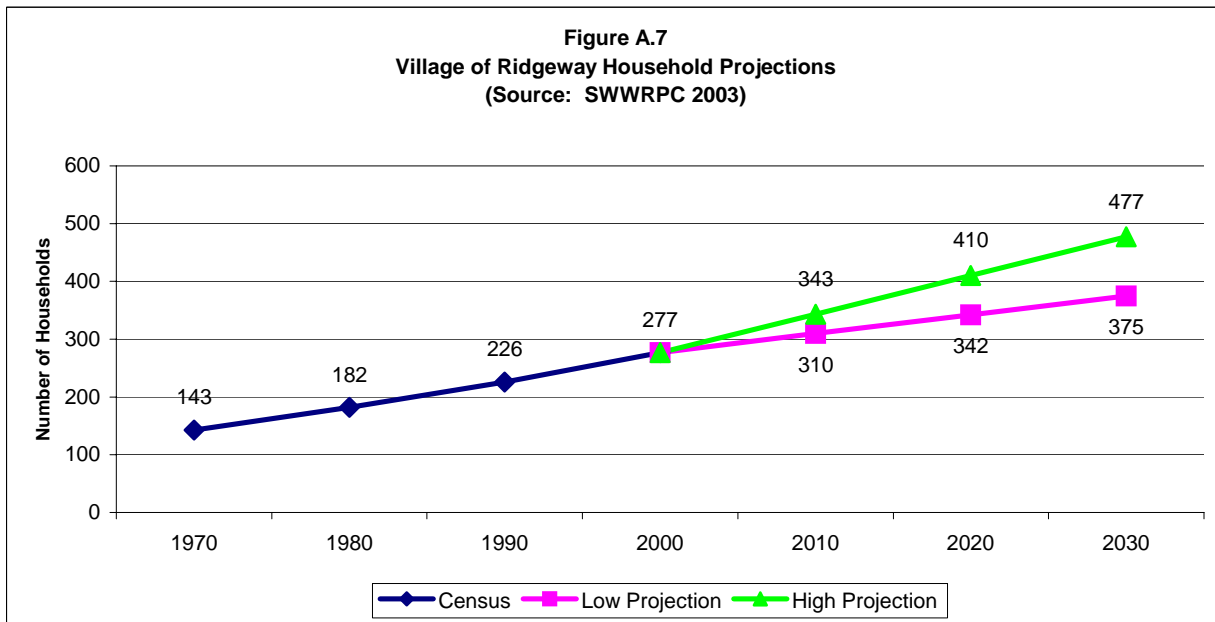
**POPULATION**

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.



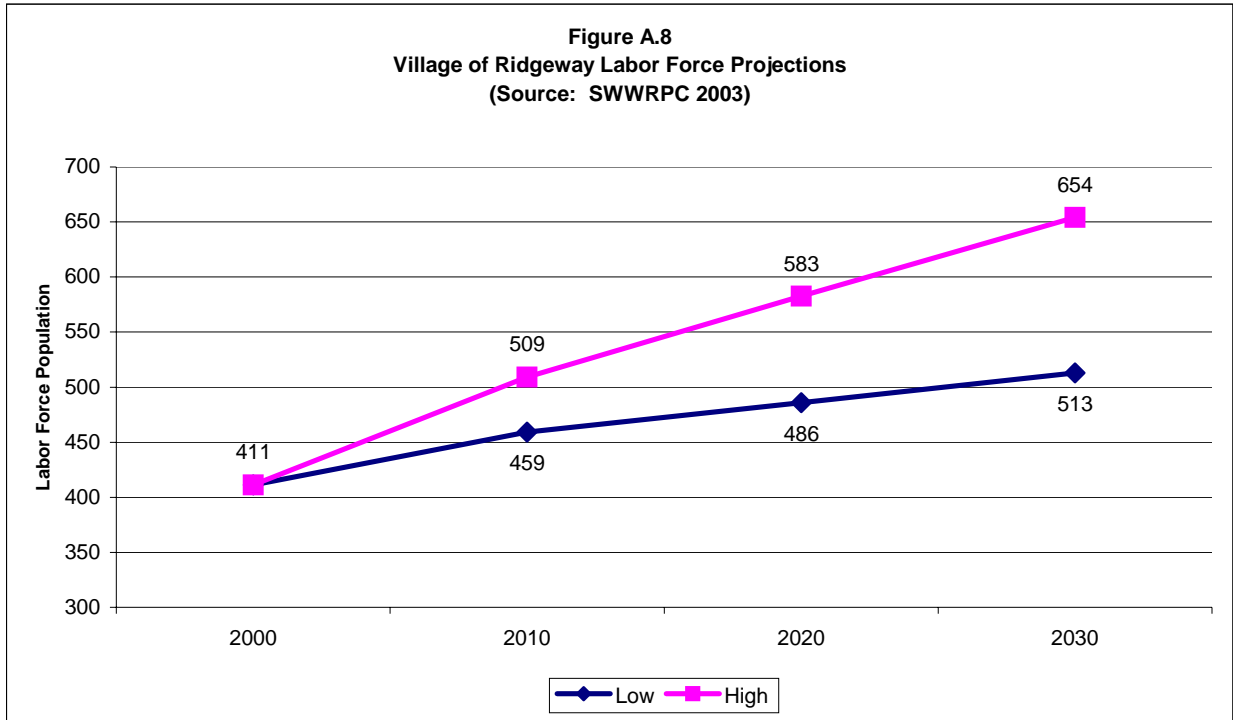
**HOUSEHOLD**

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 Ridgeway. 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 Ridgeway. For more information, go to Section F, Economic Development Element.



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.