

**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 Town of Eden. 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 Town of Eden. The essence of these recommendations is carried out throughout the entire document.

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

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 Town of Eden, 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, 185 to Town of Eden property owners. Sixty-three surveys were sent back, giving the Town a 34 percent return rate. (See Appendix A-1 for complete survey results.)

COMMUNITY VISION

A vision statement identifies where an organization (the Town of Eden) intends to be in the future and how to best meet the future needs of its stakeholders: citizens. 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 Town of Eden’s planning commission utilized the visioning information from these sessions to create a formal vision statement. The vision statement by the Town of Eden is

The Town of Eden will create a development plan that includes commercial opportunities with planned development and growth while working towards addressing and eliminating weaknesses and concerns found in the countywide survey, and striving to achieve the “wants” of the Town of Eden.

VISIONING

In February 2003, the Town of Eden planning representatives were given worksheets designed by SWWRPC to identify issues, opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses specific to the Town of Eden. 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's visioning results.)

Issues:

- The balancing point between the public good and individual rights
- High property taxes and the shared revenues are diminishing
- Aging population
- Little industry
- Few job opportunities
- High land values
- County land regulations limit construction on class 1 and 2 agriculture land
- zoning ordinances enforcement
- What recourse do we have if this commission and the enforcement agency (the county) do not work well together?

Opportunities:

- To work for affordable and elderly housing
- To work from the premise that our land is valuable
- To learn how to protect our resources
- To interact with the public
- To draft appropriate ordinances
- To consider the issues of private property rights

Strengths:

- Long-term residents
- Little poverty
- Natural beauty
- Near family and friends
- Open land
- Not a lot of land designated as recreational
- Good water

Weaknesses:

- Little affordable housing
- No sewer or water infrastructure
- Because this is an agricultural Town, our economy fluctuates not only with Ag costs, tax increases, and fluctuations in the commodity markets but also with weather. To insure our families have health care coverage and reliable incomes, many of our residents are employed off the farm and outside the Town.

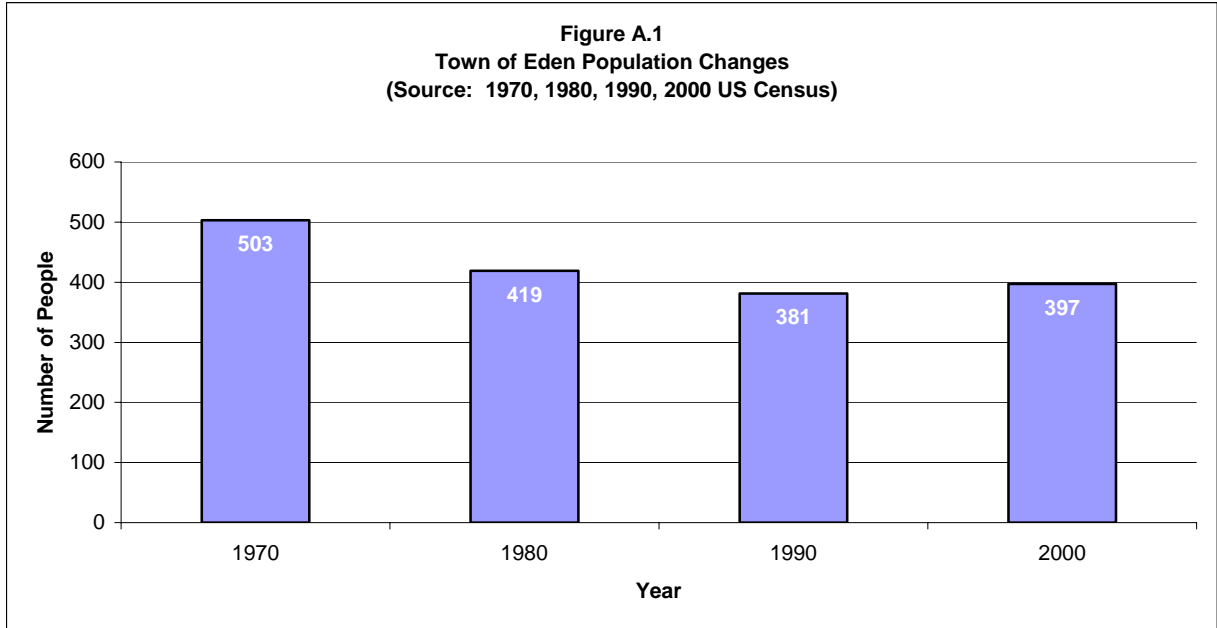
COMMUNITY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

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

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

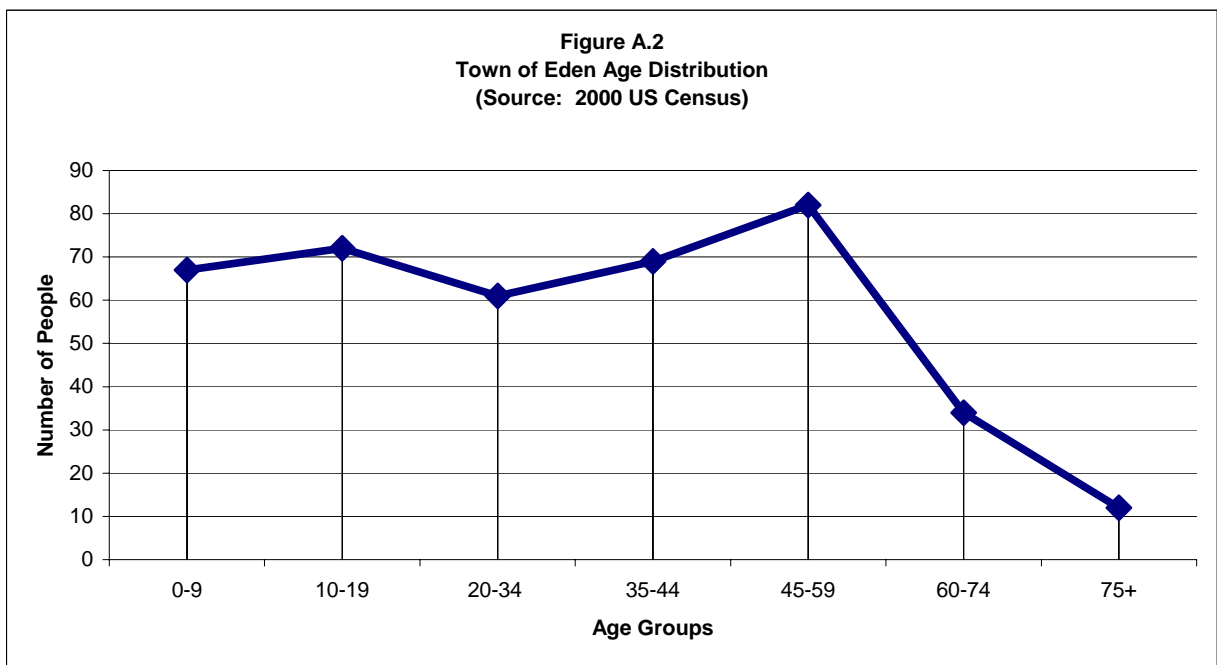
POPULATION CHANGES

The Town of Eden’s population has slowly dropped over the past 30 years. Between 1970 and 1980 there was a 17percent decrease and between 1980 and 1990, a 10 percent decrease. From 1990 to 2000, however, it increased 5 percent.



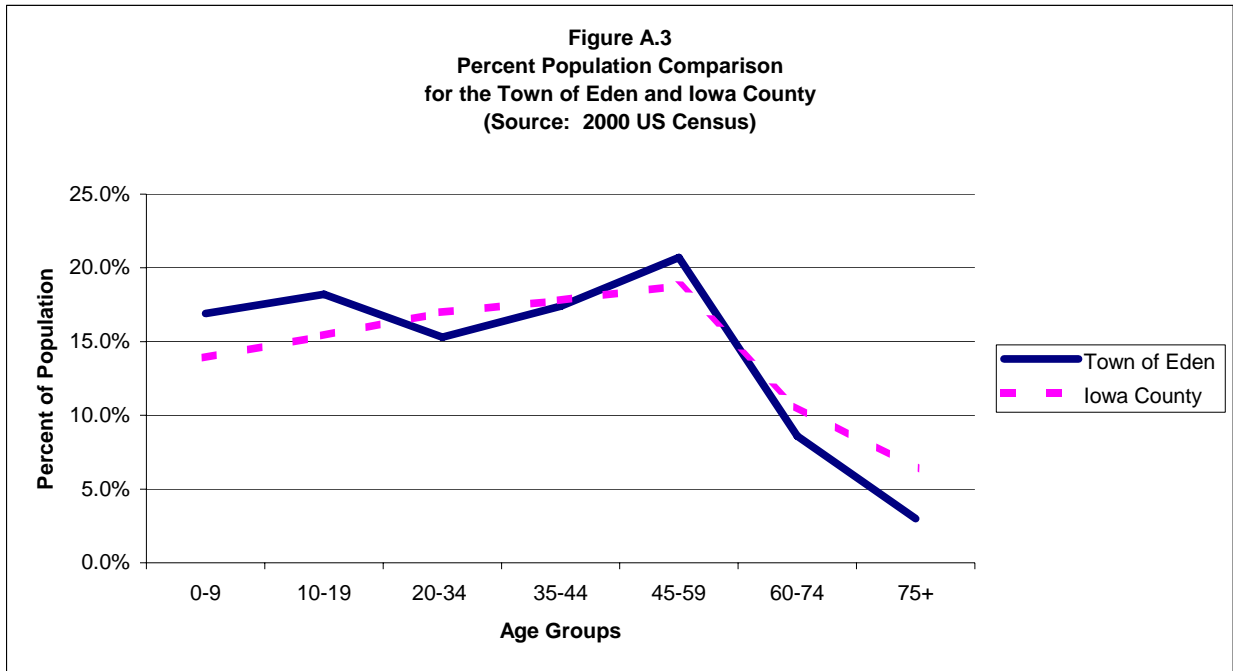
AGE DISTRIBUTION

Figure A.2 shows the age distribution of the Town of Eden residents, according to the 2000 US Census. Overall the population is well distributed among all the various age groups. The age group of 45 to 59 year olds has the highest concentration of population in the Town.



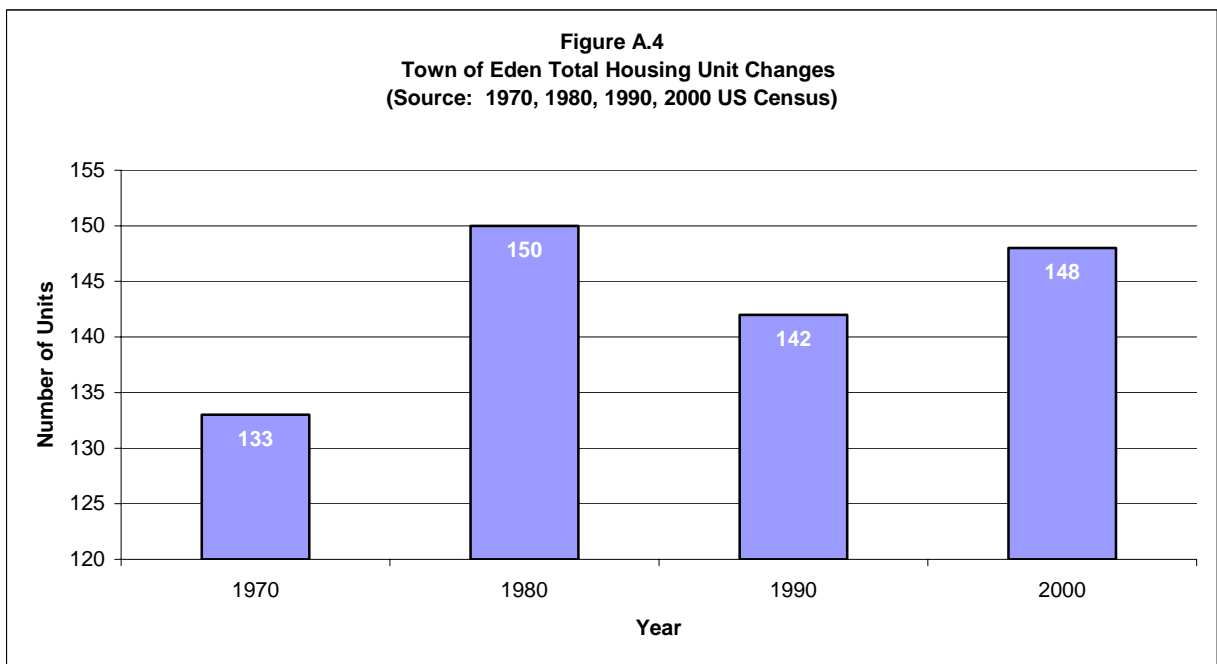
PERCENT POPULATION

Figure A.3 compares the Town population to Iowa County as a whole. The breakdown of the Town population is somewhat similar to the county population, although Iowa County has a lower population percentage in the younger age groups, while Eden has a higher level in the younger population.

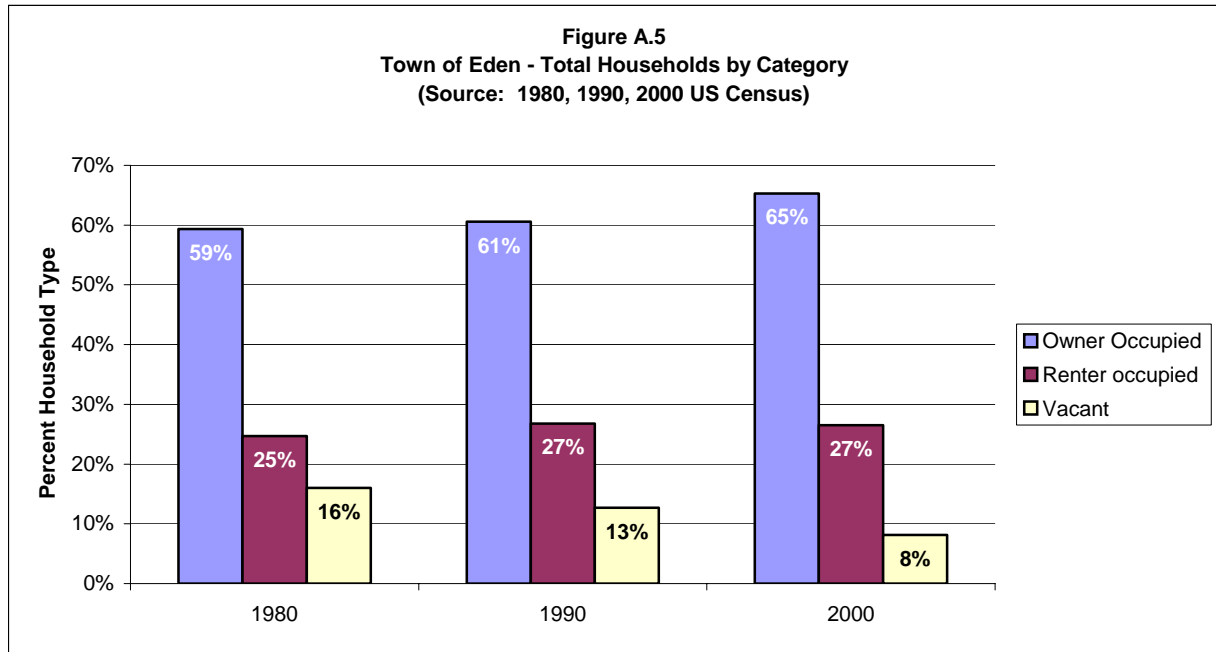


HOUSING TRENDS

Historically, the Town of Eden 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 Town of Eden had an overall increase of fifteen units between 1970 and 2000. For more housing information, go to Section B, Housing Element of this plan.



“Total Households” refers to occupied housing units only, owned and rented. Figure A.5 shows of the 148 housing units in Town of Eden in 2000, 65 percent are owner occupied, 27 percent are renter occupied, and the remaining 8 percent are vacant. The average number of persons per household is 2.93 for owner occupied units, 2.97 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 below reflects the educational attainment of the Town 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	Town of Eden		Iowa County Percent	State of Wisconsin Percent
	Number	Percent		
< 9th grade	4	1.7%	4.2%	5.4%
9th-12th grade, no diploma	11	4.6%	7.4%	9.6%
HS Grad (incl. Equivalency)	89	37.6%	41.8%	34.6%
Some college, no degree	72	30.4%	19.9%	20.6%
Associate Degree	25	10.5%	8.3%	7.5%
Bachelors Degree	27	11.4%	13.2%	15.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	9	3.8%	5.3%	7.2%
Total population 25 years and older	237	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census

INCOME COMPARISONS

Table A.2 compares the income levels of the Town of Eden 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	Town of Eden	Iowa County	State of Wisconsin
Median household income	\$42,813	\$42,518	\$43,791
Median family income	\$48,250	\$49,972	\$52,911
Per capita income	\$18,084	\$19,497	\$21,271

Source: 2000 US Census

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Table A.3 below is reflective of the 2000 US Census for employed persons 16 years and over and their respective occupations in the Town of Eden, 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 of this plan.

Table A.3 Employment Characteristics

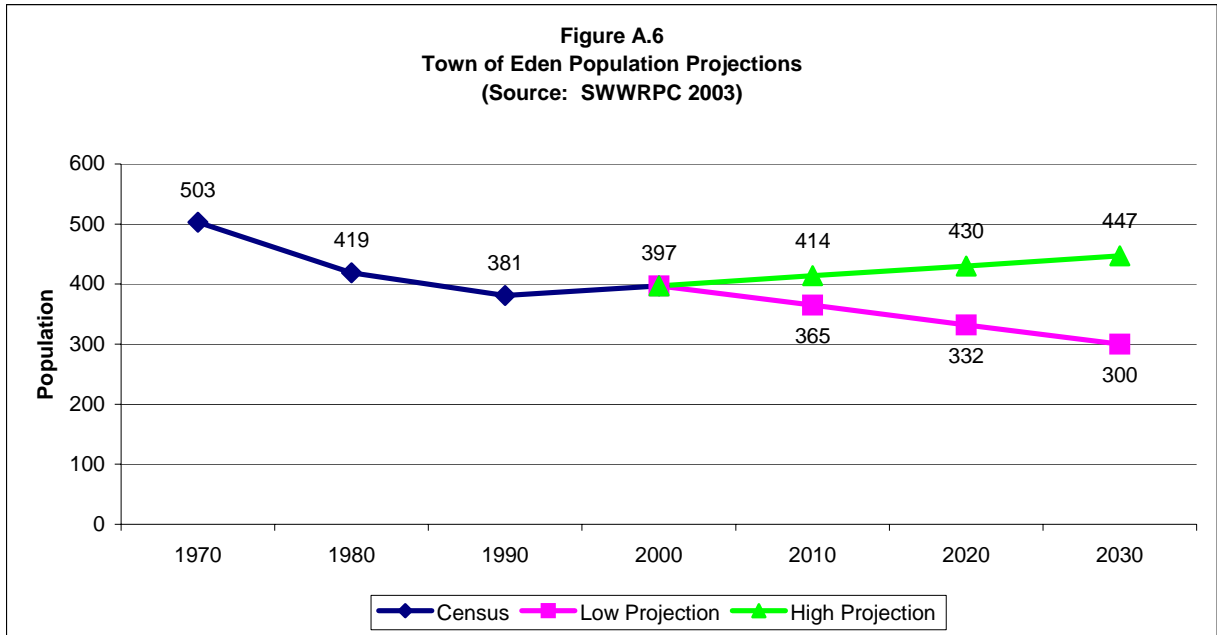
Occupation	Town of Eden		Iowa County	State of Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Management, professional and related	75	36.6%	30.9%	31.3%
Services occupations	13	6.3%	12.8%	14.0%
Sales and office occupations	38	18.5%	25.5%	25.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	26	12.7%	2.5%	0.9%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	34	16.6%	10.9%	8.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	19	9.3%	17.4%	19.8%
Total employed civilian population 16 years and older	205	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census

DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS

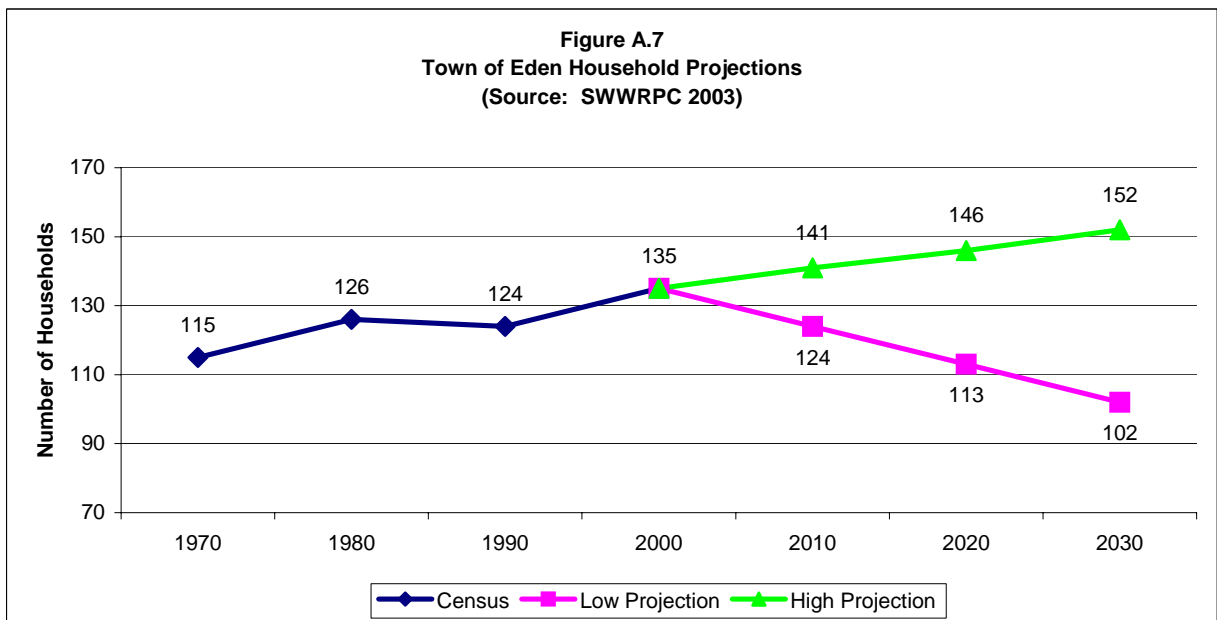
POPULATION

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.



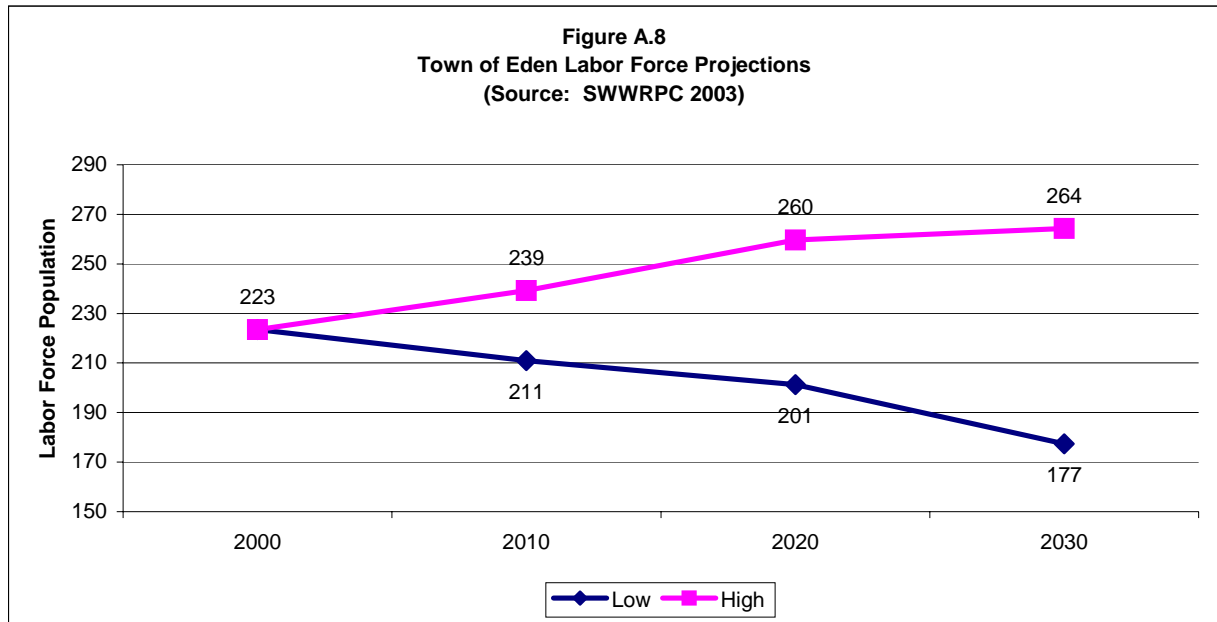
HOUSEHOLD

Figure A.7 shows household projections based on the Town’s population projections and the average household sizes from the 2000 US Census.



LABOR FORCE

Figure A.8 shows labor force projections for the Town of Eden. 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 Town of Eden. For more information, go to Section F, Economic Development Element of this plan.



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.