

**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 Wyoming. 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 Wyoming. The essence of these policies is carried out throughout the entire document.

- **Protect and improve the health, safety, and welfare of residents in the Town of Wyoming.**
- **Preserve and enhance the quality and way of life for the residents of the Town of Wyoming.**
- **Protect and preserve the open spaces, scenic beauty, and rural character of the Town of Wyoming.**

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

### **BACKGROUND**

Iowa County, together with 22 jurisdictions, including the Town of Wyoming, 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 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, 229 to Town of Wyoming property owners. Sixty-six surveys were sent back, giving the Town a 29 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 Town of Wyoming’s Plan Commission utilized the visioning information from these sessions to create a formal vision statement, seen below.

*The Town of Wyoming, in looking out over the next 20 years or so, envisions a community largely unchanged in appearance, as it recognizes and accommodates the transition from dairy based agriculture to land uses that include (1) non-agriculture rural residences that have low visual impact, (2) grain and beef operations and other specialty agriculture, (3) land stewardship in the form of managed forests, prairie restoration and wildlife habitat for hunting and recreation, (4) home based businesses, and (5) tourism. This base would provide for*

*maintaining a rural lifestyle and preserve the open spaces and scenic beauty of the Town, and also provide a suitable setting for the major tourist and cultural attractions that bring in over 500,000 visitors to the Town annually. Incompatible commercial development and residential sub-division development that might detract from the Town's rural character would be directed to nearby incorporated municipalities with existing infrastructure, while leaving highways free of commercial development as scenic corridors.*

## **VISIONING**

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

### **Issues:**

- Transition out of agriculture
- Preservation of open spaces, scenic beauty and rural character and way of life
- Accommodating the 500,000 plus annual visitors to the House on the Rock, Taliesin, American Players Theatre, Tower Hill State Park, Lower Wisconsin Riverway, and House on the Rock Resort (i.e. The Springs Golf Course)
- High percentage of absentee landowners

### **Opportunities:**

- Preserve what we have
- Coordinate land use decisions with adjacent towns and Iowa County
- Direct commercial development and residential subdivision housing to nearby incorporated municipalities with existing infrastructure
- Protect the rural setting for the tourist and cultural attractions in the Town, which would experience a decrease in appeal in an urban setting

### **Strengths:**

- Natural beauty
- Recreation opportunities
- Open spaces, clean air and water
- Agriculture opportunities – traditional, specialty, forestry
- Land stewards, both resident and non-resident, taking care of the land
- Major tourist and cultural attractions that provide a tax base and employment opportunities, and which are enhanced in their appeal by being in a rural setting
- Town people have long been supportive or are tolerant of land use planning
- Services and amenities in nearby municipalities

### **Weaknesses:**

- Low population and not a self-sufficient community, but this is offset by lack of interest in population growth and recognition that services and amenities in the Town would not be economically feasible due to low population

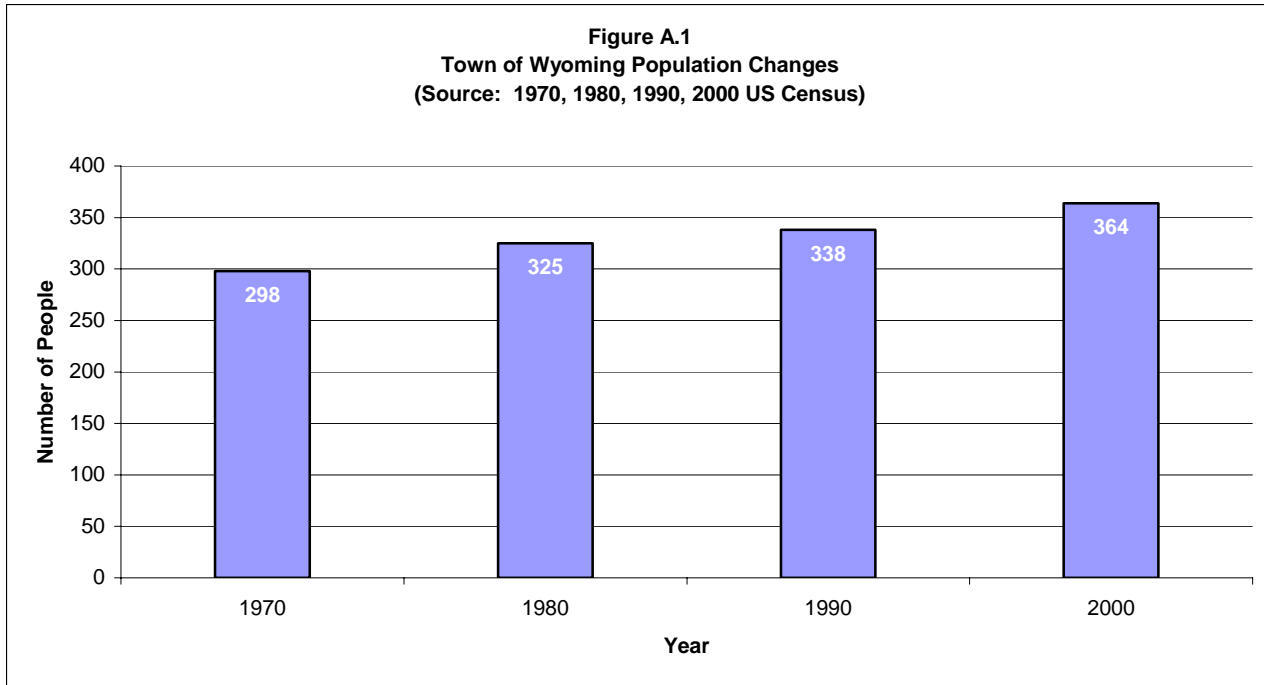
## **COMMUNITY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

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

**DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

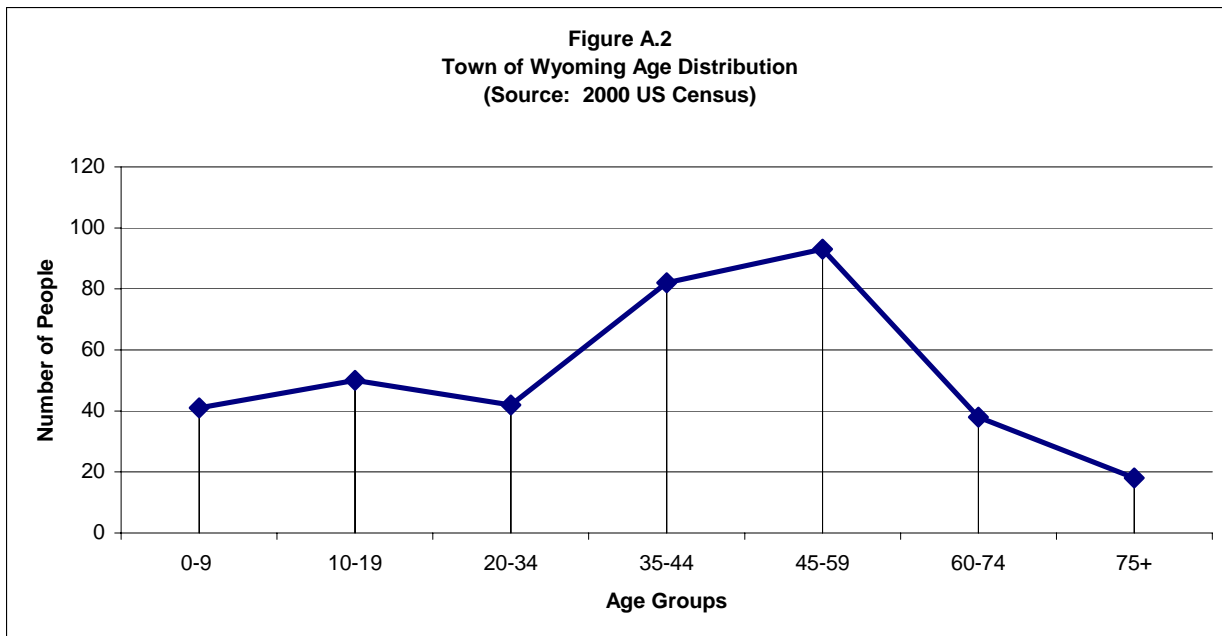
**POPULATION CHANGES**

The Town of Wyoming’s population has increased by 66 people over the past thirty years. Between 1970 and 1980 the Town grew by 9 percent, between 1980 and 1990 by 4 percent and from 1990 to 2000 the Town grew 8 percent.



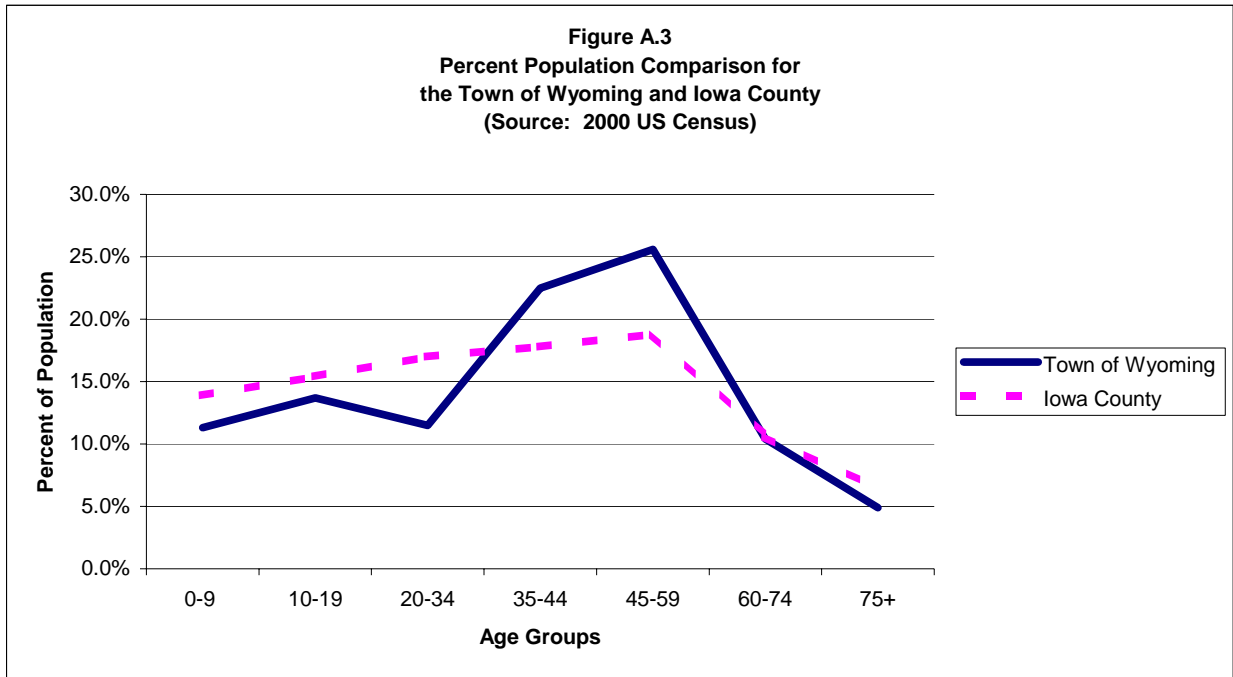
**AGE DISTRIBUTION**

Figure A.2 shows the age distribution of the Town of Wyoming 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 the population in the Town.



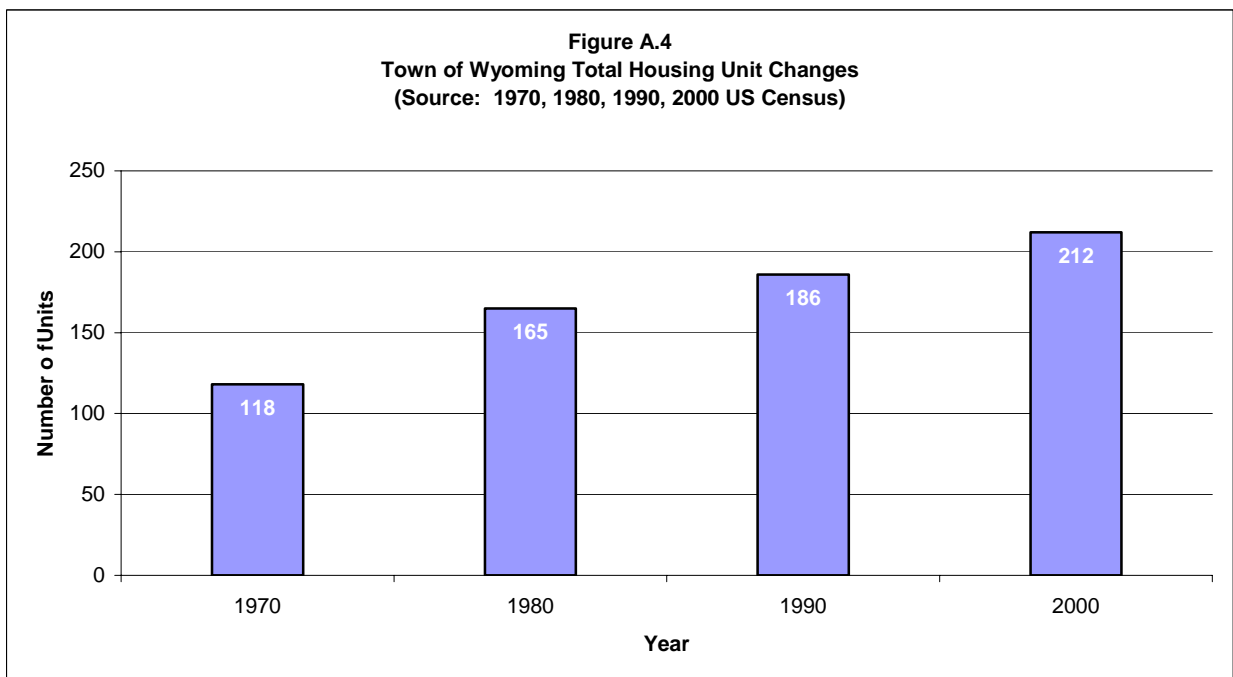
**PERCENT POPULATION**

Figure A.3 compares the Town's population to Iowa County as a whole. The breakdown of the Town population is somewhat similar to the county population, although the Town is much higher than the county in the 45 to 59 year age group.

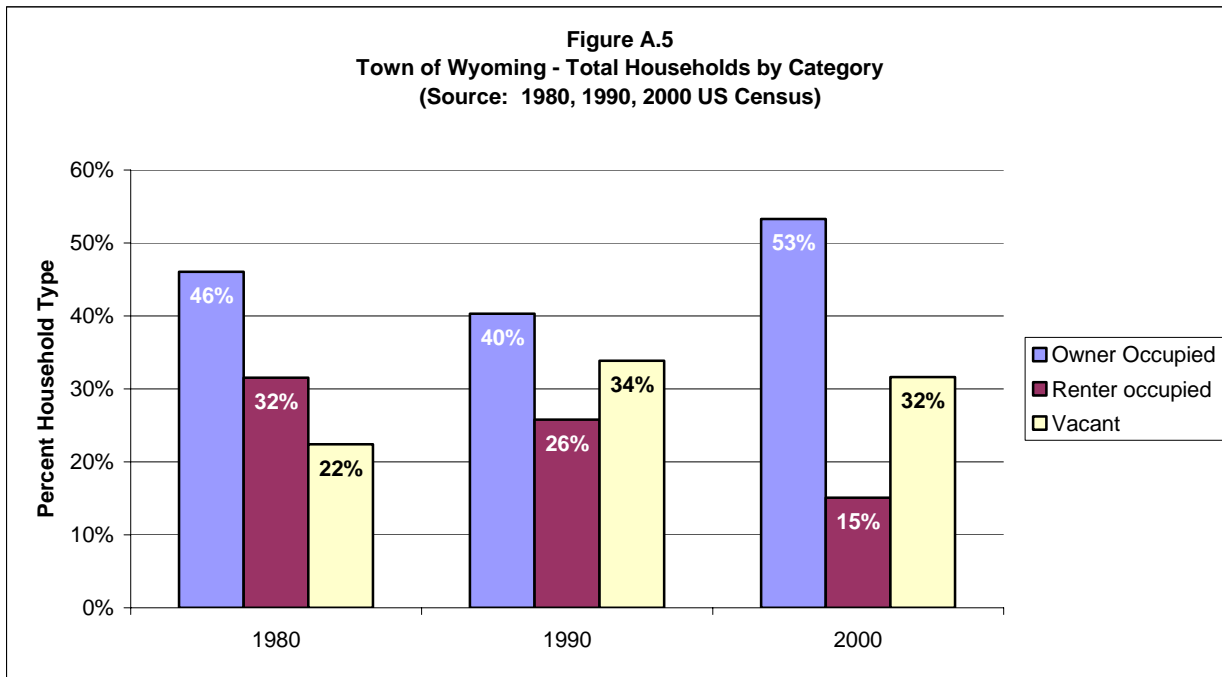


**HOUSING TRENDS**

Historically, the Town of Wyoming 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 Wyoming had an increase of ninety-four 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 212 housing units in the Town in 2000, 53 percent are owner occupied, 15 percent are renter occupied, and the remaining 32 percent are defined as vacant by the US Census, but most are second homes used by non-residents. The average number of persons per household is 2.46 for owner occupied units, 2.50 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 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 Wyoming		Iowa County Percent	State of Wisconsin Percent
	Number	Percent		
< 9th grade	6	2.4%	4.2%	5.4%
9th-12th grade, no diploma	9	3.7%	7.4%	9.6%
HS Grad (incl. Equivalency)	61	24.9%	41.8%	34.6%
Some college, no degree	52	21.2%	19.9%	20.6%
Associate Degree	16	6.5%	8.3%	7.5%
Bachelors Degree	60	24.5%	13.2%	15.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	41	16.7%	5.3%	7.2%
Total population 25 years and older	245	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census

**INCOME COMPARISONS**

Table A.2 compares the income levels of the Town of Wyoming 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 Wyoming	Iowa County	State of Wisconsin
Median household income	\$48,438	\$42,518	\$43,791
Median family income	\$56,607	\$49,972	\$52,911
Per-capita income	\$23,253	\$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 Town of Wyoming, 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**

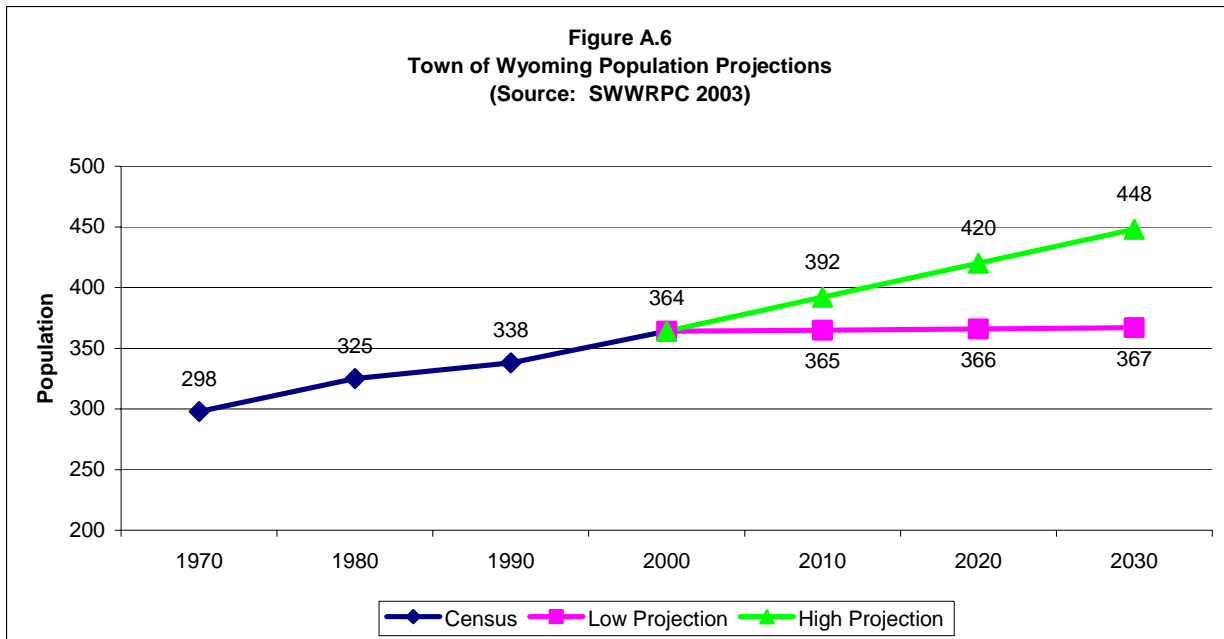
Occupation	Town of Wyoming		Iowa County Percent	State of Wisconsin Percent
	Number	Percent		
Management, professional and related	89	45.6%	30.9%	31.3%
Services occupations	18	9.2%	12.8%	14.0%
Sales and office occupations	30	15.4%	25.5%	25.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations			2.5%	0.9%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	21	10.8%	10.9%	8.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	37	19.0%	17.4%	19.8%
Total employed civilian population 16 years and older	195	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census

**DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS**

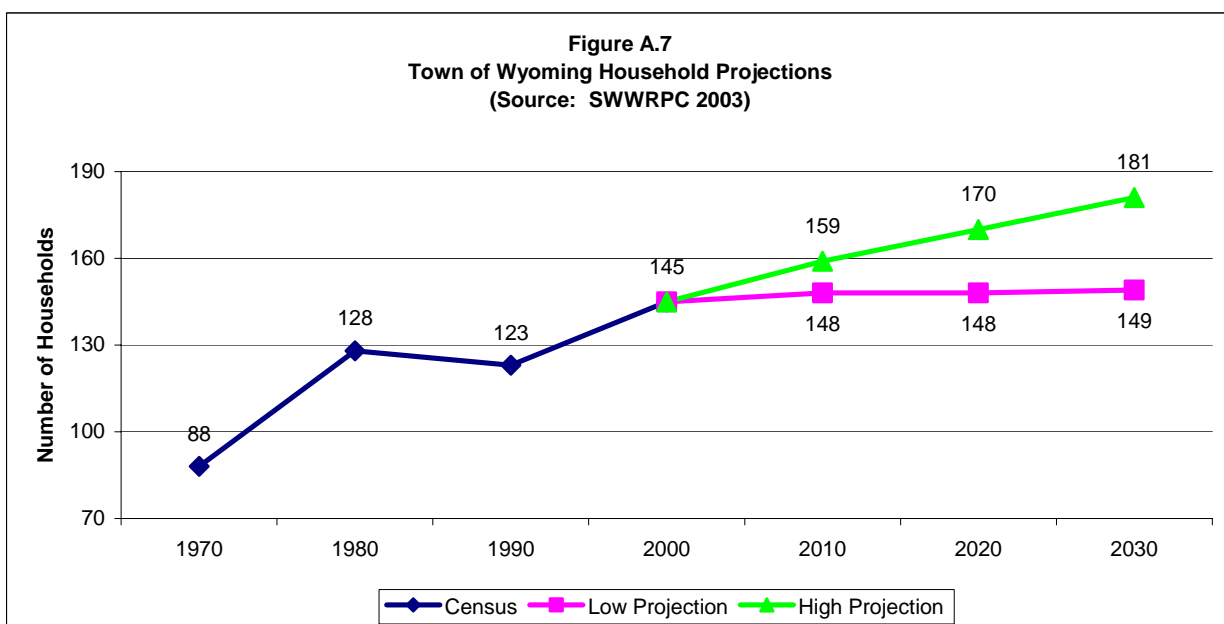
**POPULATION**

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.



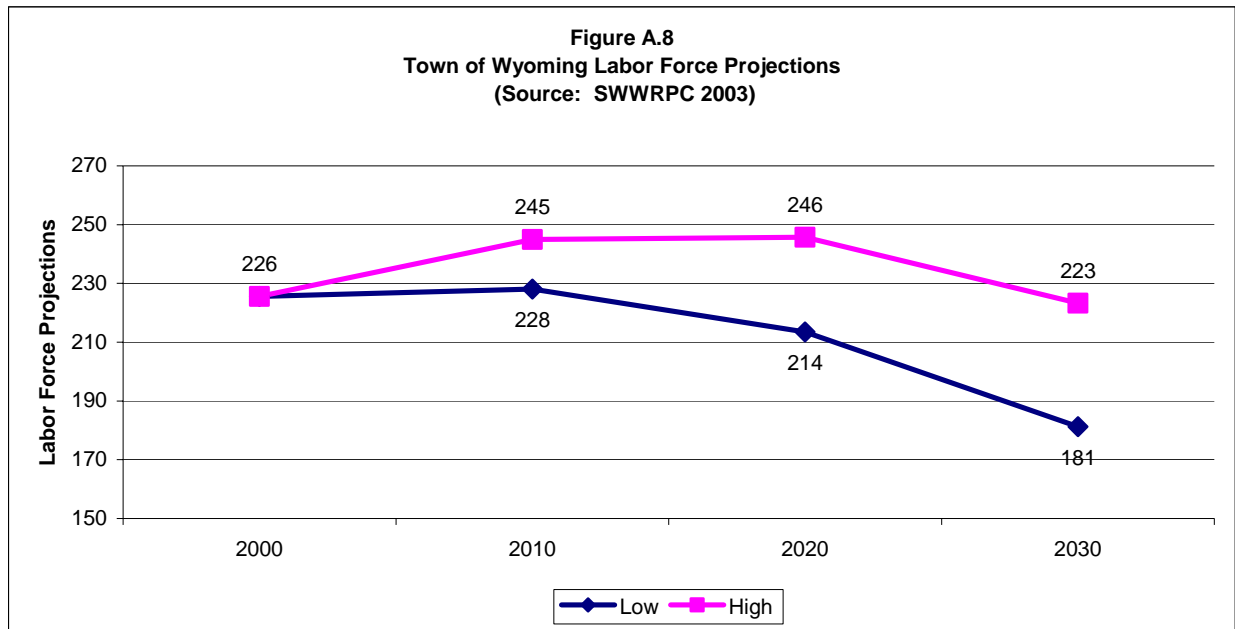
**HOUSEHOLD**

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 Town of Wyoming. 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 Wyoming. 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.