

# **CHAPTER 2: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a summary of the results from four countywide “visioning” meetings held between October 2006 and May 2007 for Door County residents and property owners. It also describes the general issues and opportunities currently facing the county identified in those visioning meetings. Finally, it contains population data required by the Smart Growth legislation and pertinent to all comprehensive planning topics.

## **COUNTY VISIONING RESULTS**

At countywide visioning meetings held in 2006-2007, Door County residents and property owners explored two questions: 1) What are the county's greatest assets? and 2) What words or phrases best capture your vision for the county's future?

Participants wrote on note cards as many responses as they liked for each question; cards were collected and responses later transcribed by Door County Planning Department staff. Participants also verbally shared top response(s) to each question at the meetings; those responses were recorded on flipcharts upon which participants placed six “votes” for their top response choices. Those shared responses and vote tallies were also later transcribed.

Planning staff grouped all of the responses, note card and flipchart, into ten main categories (two of which had subcategories) that generally followed the topical elements described in Wisconsin's comprehensive planning statutes for inclusion in comprehensive plans. Though some responses incorporated multiple themes, each response was placed into only one category.

Based on both the number of responses written on individuals' note cards and the number of votes cast for the shared/flipchart responses given for the question “What are the county's greatest assets?”, residents and property owners value natural resources as the county's greatest assets. Response categories receiving the second and third highest number of responses, respectively, were community character, and utilities and community facilities.

Based on both the number of responses written on individuals' note cards and the number of votes cast for the shared/flipchart responses given to the question “What words or phrases best capture your vision for the county's future?”, residents and property owners value community character as most important to their vision of the county's future. Response categories receiving the second, third, and a close fourth highest number of responses were economic development, utilities and community facilities, and land use, respectively.

The following spreadsheet provides further detail on the visioning session results. Complete results from all four planning meetings are posted on the Door County Planning Department Web site, <http://map.co.door.wi.us/planning>.

## County Visioning Results

Questions: 1) What are the county's greatest assets? and 2) What words or phrases best capture your vision for the county's future?

	NR	C/H	LU	ED	TP	AG	IC	H	I	E	H	SS	P&R	Total UCF	P	V	QOL	Total CC
<b>"Assets" Question - Note Cards</b>																		
Washington Island	31	7	3	4	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	11	12	9	5	24	38
Northern Door	48	23	6	9	1	2	0	0	0	3	0	1	23	27	21	15	6	42
Sturgeon Bay	41	16	2	5	3	7	1	0	0	4	0	0	10	14	23	5	13	41
Southern Door	51	6	2	11	6	18	0	0	2	4	0	0	16	22	9	6	11	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>"Assets" Question - Votes</b>																		
Washington Island	44	12	8	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9	0	2	20	22
Northern Door	47	25	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	18	21	14	22	16	52
Sturgeon Bay	23	19	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	13	16	21	21	16	58
Southern Door	59	3	3	9	0	42	0	0	0	0	0	13	6	19	5	9	8	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>"Vision" Question - Note Cards</b>																		
Washington Island	3	2	23	11	1	5	1	2	0	1	1	2	3	7	1	1	8	10
Northern Door	19	9	24	23	7	2	2	6	7	3	2	0	4	16	1	0	27	28
Sturgeon Bay	16	3	14	13	3	3	2	3	6	3	5	2	3	19	1	0	26	27
Southern Door	13	0	9	13	4	10	1	2	1	2	0	1	2	6	0	7	24	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>"Vision" Question - Votes</b>																		
Washington Island	3	9	26	30	0	5	0	0	0	3	0	10	0	13	0	0	15	15
Northern Door	6	0	24	32	9	5	4	0	16	2	9	0	12	39	5	0	26	31
Sturgeon Bay	12	1	9	7	8	7	1	2	9	4	7	2	0	22	0	0	38	38
Southern Door	19	0	3	26	1	26	0	13	5	0	0	2	4	11	0	11	46	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>141</b>

NR = Natural Resources

C/H = Cultural & Historical

LU = Land Use

ED = Economic Development

TP = Transportation

AG = Agriculture

IC = Intergovernmental Cooperation

H = Housing

UCF = Utilities and Community Facilities (I = Infrastructure, E = Education, H = Health, SS = Social Services, P&R = Parks & Rec.)

CC = Community Character (P = People, V = Visual, QOL = Quality of Life)

This spreadsheet summarizes all responses given, on note cards and flipcharts, to both questions explored during 2006-2007 visioning meetings. For the note card responses, the number of responses written that related to each topic category were totaled. For the flipchart responses, the number of votes cast for all responses within each category was totaled. For example, for the meeting held on Washington Island, 31 responses relating to Natural Resources appeared on individuals' note cards in response to the question "What are the county's greatest assets?" and 44 votes were cast for Natural Resource-related responses to the same question. Also on Washington Island, 3 responses related to Natural Resources appeared on individuals' note cards in response to the question "What words or phrases best capture your vision for the county's future?" and 3 votes were cast for Natural Resource-related responses to the same question.

Italicized numbers indicate the three categories receiving the highest numbers of responses, totaled over all meetings, for each type of response collection (votes and note cards). (Bold numbers simply indicate total responses in each category, for all meetings, for each type of response collection.) For example, looking at responses from all four meetings to the question "What are the county's greatest assets?", there were 171 responses written on individuals' note cards and 173 votes cast on flipcharts related to Natural Resources.

## **GENERAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING THE COUNTY**

The following list of issues is based on input received from Door County residents and property owners during 2006-2007 countywide visioning sessions. Issues facing the county were defined as weaknesses internal to the county and/or existing or potential threats due to external factors or trends originating from outside the county.

### **ISSUES**

#### **Sustainability**

- We need to focus on sustaining and balancing the economy, environment, and social systems so that human needs and desires are balanced with the preservation of the natural environment.
- We are nearly completely reliant on non-renewable energy sources and lack the infrastructure to utilize renewable energy resources.
- We need to manage tourism in a sustainable manner, including developing tourism programs that focus on education and appreciation of the county's unique resources.

#### **Natural Resources**

- Future growth needs to be balanced with the preservation of natural resources. We need effective and efficient land management, such as concentrating/clustering growth, which would help retain open space and natural beauty.

#### **Economic Development**

- There is a lack of diversity in our economy. The county has few job opportunities with benefits and loses young people to better job opportunities elsewhere. That, combined with our lack of affordable housing options, will continue to keep young people from living and raising families here.
- The Northern Door economy especially is very dependent on tourism. The Southern Door economy offers somewhat more diverse economic activity, but, such as in the case of agriculture, is also limited or threatened by various forces.
- The lack of modern Internet technology prevents local establishment of various business opportunities.

#### **Agricultural Resources**

- We are faced with decreasing agricultural diversity and fewer people making a living in agriculture.
- Fewer local and small family farms means less food security and sustainability.

#### **Community Character**

- Growth may jeopardize our rural character, such as our open land, historic/old buildings, scenic vistas, and small-town flavor.

#### **Community Facilities and Utilities**

- We need more educational opportunities for people of all ages, particularly in the tourism off-season.
- We are faced with an aging population that will greatly increase the demand for senior support and health care services.

- Our trail system outside of our parks is very limited and will become increasingly difficult to develop as the cost of land increases.
- We have good school systems, but several are faced with declining enrollment.

### **Transportation**

- There are a lack of alternative transportation options both within and to-and-from the county.

### **Land Use**

- New development is often not contiguous with existing development and encroaches on ecologically and aesthetically valuable open space.

### **Housing**

- The county is increasingly becoming less accessible to people of all incomes and ages. We lack an adequate supply of housing options for people of all income levels, resulting in less economic, social, and cultural diversity.

### **Culture/History**

- We need more year-round cultural and education activities.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

The following list of opportunities is based on input received from Door County residents and property owners during 2006-2007 countywide visioning sessions. Opportunities were defined as strengths or assets internal to the county or opportunities arising due to external forces or trends.

### **Sustainability**

- We have many socially and environmentally conscientious residents who can promote more sustainable alternatives for the county's economy, environment, and social systems.
- We have unique resources that can be used to shape tourism programs focused on education and appreciation of the county's natural assets.
- We have the capacity to develop some renewable energy resources, which will make us less dependent on outside energy sources and help control costs.

### **Natural Resources**

- We still have a significant quantity of rural character remaining, including agriculture, orchards, scenery, and open space, which we can work to preserve.
- The county has exceptional water resources that we can and should work to protect for its continued usage by humans and wildlife, and for its scenic and recreational value. Our roughly 300 miles of shoreline plus lakes, streams, and wetlands offer tourists and residents high-quality beaches, parks, fishing, and other recreation.
- We have abundant and diverse natural resources that will continue to provide habitat for a variety of wildlife if we protect what remains.
- We have a good base of protected lands to continue to add to through future land protection and acquisition efforts.
- The county is rich in non-metallic mineral resources, which can continue to provide necessary sand and gravel for municipal and construction uses if the extraction process is well-planned and orderly.

## **Economic Development**

- We already have a relatively clean and beautiful environment, with a high quality of living, which can aid in attracting clean and green industries.
- The county's unique geology, including the Niagara Escarpment, is a current focal point for some tourism-based activities and can be further promoted as part of an eco-tourism program.
- We have strong cultural assets, including the arts, music, theatre, history, and architecture, which can grow into year-round education and economic development activities.
- The county is an ideal retirement location that will continue to attract retirees. They will in turn require more services, providing potential business opportunities.
- Internet technology can become more accessible to everyone if we support initiatives to develop high-speed Internet technology options in the county.
- We can work toward keeping the next generation in the county by developing better job and housing opportunities.

## **Agricultural Resources**

- We still have agriculture to preserve.
- We still have the opportunity to support local agriculture and, for the most part, smaller family farms.
- Programs/incentives could be established locally to make organic and naturally-grown food more accessible to residents.

## **Community Character**

- We still have a clean, safe, and tranquil living environment to preserve.
- If we work to retain them, we can continue to have small-town character and a sense of community with the advantage of big city amenities, convenience, and accessibility.

## **Community Facilities and Utilities**

- If we maintain and improve our recreational assets, we can help maintain the long-term health of our residents and promote more recreation-based tourism.
- The existing snowmobile trail system still has the potential to be expanded and developed into a multi-use trail system.
- Our growing senior population could support more specialized health care for seniors.
- There is the potential to establish large medical institutions to serve as both economic development and tourism enhancement.
- Public/private partnership opportunities to offer increased and better services for seniors will arise as the need develops.

## **Transportation**

- We can improve transportation accessibility and options through greater community and government support for transportation initiatives.

## Land Use

- We can still plan for development that will be dense and contiguous to existing development.

## Housing

- We can establish public/private initiatives and programs that will increase the supply of affordable housing, helping keep and attract young people to the area.

## Culture/History

- We have a variety of cultural and historical resources that can be used, expanded, or improved upon to support eco-tourism programs and educational opportunities for both tourists and residents.

## POPULATION DATA

An area's population – actual numbers and composition, as well as growth and trends – affects economic development, housing, transportation systems, community facilities, utilities, land use, and more. This section provides population data for Door County in order to guide planning efforts addressing those and other issues.

First discussed in this section are Door County's historical population levels from 1900 to 2000 and estimates as to the county's 2007 population level. United States Census Bureau data from the year 2000 is then more closely analyzed, providing further insight into the county's population characteristics. Finally, information regarding population trends – at the national, state, and county levels – is presented, along with discussion regarding the county's non-resident population levels and projections as to future population levels for year-round residents.

*Note: Population "estimates" usually refer to present and previous population levels while "projections" refer to anticipated future population levels.*

### **HISTORICAL POPULATION DATA**

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), between 1900 and 1970 Door County's year-round population saw a net increase of only 2,523 people. Then, between the 1970 and 1980 Censuses, the area's year-round population increased by another 4,923 persons, or 24.5%. (See Table 2.1.) This sudden increase in the county's population has been anecdotally attributed to an increase in local shipyard employment/activity in the 1970s and to an article published in *National Geographic* in March 1969 extolling the virtues of Door County; no comparable population growth occurred in that decade at the state or national level (7% and 9.8%, respectively).

Though the county's population growth rate has slowed since the 1970s, population has continued to increase overall. Between 1980 and 2000, Door County's population grew at 11.7%, while the state grew at 14.0%. In total, between 1970 and 2000 the county's population increased by 39.1%, far surpassing the state's increase of 21.4% during that same period. Table 2.1 displays population levels for 1900-2000 for Door County as well as neighboring counties Kewaunee and Brown and the state.

*Note: Historical population numbers – 2007 DOA estimates and 1900 - 2000 Censuses – for individual Door County municipalities may be found in Tables 2.9 and 2.10 at the end of this chapter.*

**Table 2.1: Historical Population Levels, Door County, 1900-2000**

Year	Door County	Decade % Change	Brown County	Decade % Change	Kewaunee County	Decade % Change	Wisconsin	Decade % Change
1900	17,583	-	46,359	-	17,212	-	2,069,042	-
1910	18,711	6.4	54,098	16.7	16,784	-2.5	2,333,860	12.8
1920	19,073	1.9	61,889	14.4	16,091	-4.1	2,632,067	12.8
1930	18,182	-4.7	70,249	13.5	16,037	-0.3	2,939,006	11.7
1940	19,095	5.0	83,109	18.3	16,680	4.0	3,137,587	6.8
1950	20,870	9.3	98,314	18.3	17,366	4.1	3,434,575	9.5
1960	20,685	-0.9	125,082	27.2	18,282	5.3	3,951,777	15.1
1970	20,106	-2.8	158,244	26.5	18,961	3.7	4,417,731	11.8
1980	25,029	24.5	175,280	10.8	19,539	3.0	4,705,642	6.5
1990	25,690	2.6	194,594	11.0	18,878	-3.4	4,891,769	4.0
2000	27,961	8.8	226,778	16.5	20,187	6.9	5,363,715	9.6

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, for the years cited.*

The DOA estimates that between 2000 and 2007 Door County’s year-round population increased approximately 7.4%, from 27,961 to 30,043 persons. Note that the county’s natural population increase (deaths subtracted from births) was actually negative during those years, at approximately -1.3%, but that net migration (the difference between residents moving into the county minus those leaving) increased the population by approximately 8.8%; the net result being the overall 7.4% increase. This in-migration was largely comprised of older persons moving into the county’s northern municipalities. During these same years, the state grew an estimated 3% through natural increase and an additional 2.3% due to net migration, for a total increase of 5.3%. The nation as a whole, according to the U.S. Census, grew 7.2% between 2000 and 2007.

## **MEDIAN AGE**

*Note: A municipality’s median age is that at which one-half of the population is below that age and one-half above.*

Door County’s median age rose from 33.8 years in 1970 to 42.9 years in 2000, another indication that the population of the county as a whole is aging. In addition, the county was older than the state, which was in turn older than the nation in 2000: the state’s median age was 36.0, and the nation’s median age, 35.3. The 2000 census recorded the highest median age ever for the nation.

In Wisconsin, only Burnett, Adams, Iron, and Vilas counties have older median ages than Door (44.1, 45.0, 45.0, and 45.8, respectively).

Table 2.2 displays the median age of the population for Door County and the state for the decades between 1970 and 2000.

*Note: Similar information for individual municipalities within Door County can be found in Table 2.11 at the end of this chapter.*

**Table 2.2: Median Age**

<b>Geographic Area</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
Door County	33.8	31.4	36.5	42.9
State of Wisconsin	27.2	29.4	32.9	36.0

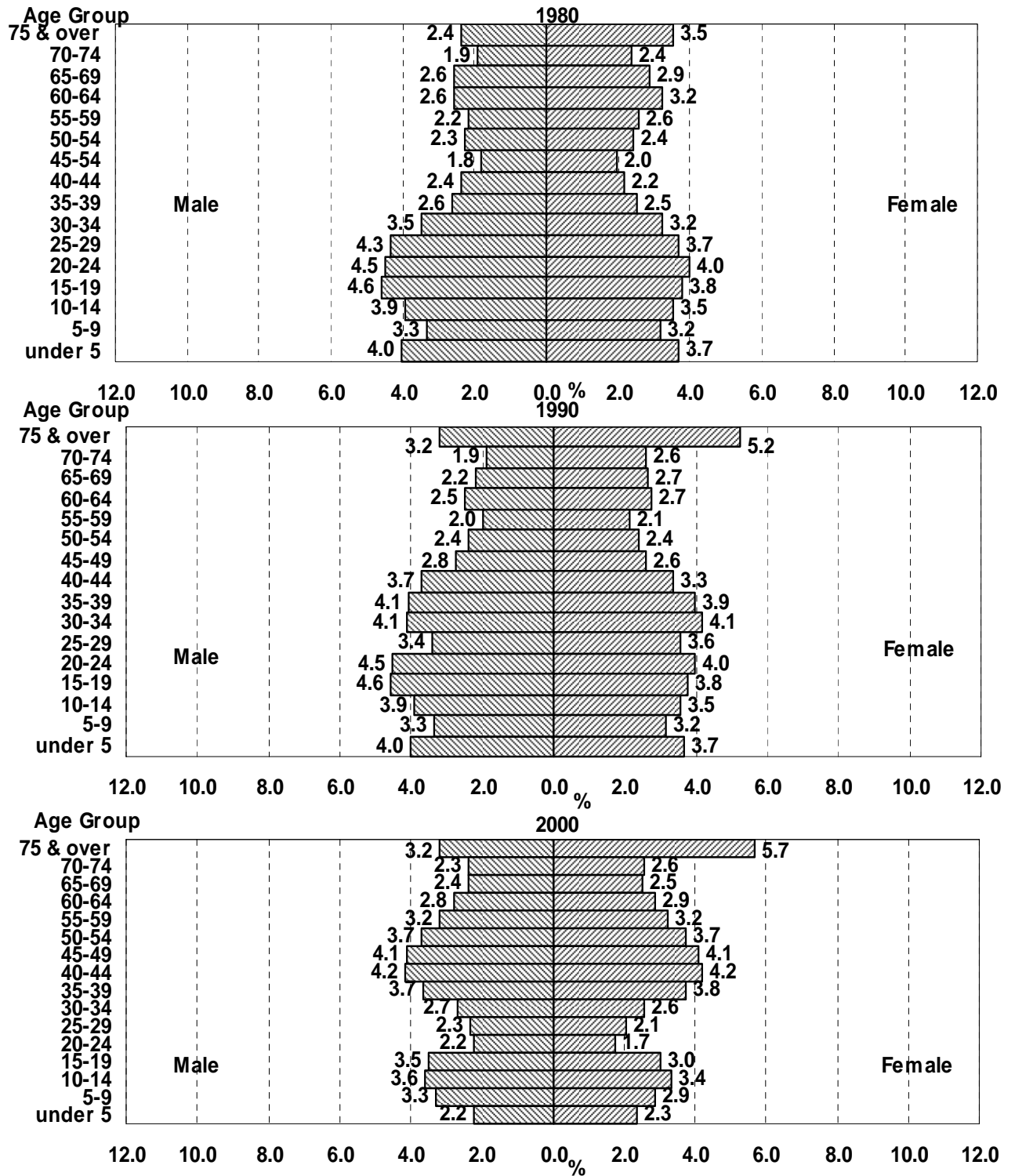
*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, General Population Characteristics, Wisconsin, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000.*

### **POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX**

The population pyramids in Figure 2.1 compare Door County's population by age group, further broken down by sex, between 1980 and 2000. Between 1980 and 2000, the county's population shifted toward older age groups. The most significant indicator of this trend is the decrease in the percentage of the population of individuals between the ages of 20 and 34, which, in 1980, accounted for 23 percent of the county's total population, but by 2000, only 14 percent. During the same time period, the number of individuals between the ages of 40 and 54 increased: in 1980, 13 percent of the county's population could be accounted for by individuals in these age groups, but by 2000, they represented 24 percent of the total population.

The percentage of the county's population age 19 and under declined from 1980 to 2000. In 1980, these combined age groups comprised 30 percent of the total population. Twenty years later, that percentage dropped to 24.2 percent. Finally, in 1980, the retirement age (65 and older) population accounted for 15.7 percent of the total population, but by 2000, these age groups comprised 18.7 percent of the total population.

Figure 2.1: Population Pyramids, Door County



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population and Housing; 1990 Census of Population and Housing; 2000 Census of Population and Housing.

## **POPULATION BY SCHOOL AGE, WORKING AGE, AND RETIREMENT AGE**

Table 2.3 looks at the school age, working age, and retirement age segments of the county's population in the year 2000, comparing them with the state overall. In 2000, those 18 and over in the "working and voting" group accounted for 77.9% of Door County's total population. That figure drops to 59.2% when subtracting out the retirement age group (65+), which comprised 18.7% of the county's population that year. Note that the retirement age group for the state comprised only 13.1% of the total population, and that while approximately 17.5% of the county's total population was school age (5-17), the figure at the state level was 19.1%.

*Note: Similar information for each of the municipalities in Door County can be found in Table 2.12 at the end of this chapter.*

**Table 2.3: Population by Age Groups and Sex, Door County**

Age Groups	Total	Male	Female	Door County Wisconsin	
				%	%
<b>School Age</b>					
5-11	2,492	1,322	1,170	8.9	10.1
12-14	1,171	599	572	4.2	4.5
15-17	1,232	642	590	4.4	4.5
<b>Working and Voting Age</b>					
16+	22,591	11,005	11,586	80.8	77.5
16-64	17,356	8,792	8,564	62.1	64.4
18+	21,789	10,589	11,200	77.9	74.5
18-64	16,554	8,376	8,178	59.2	61.4
<b>Retirement Age</b>					
65+	5,235	2,213	3,022	18.7	13.1
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>27,961</b>	<b>13,773</b>	<b>14,188</b>	--	--

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing.*

## **POPULATION BY RACE**

Table 2.4 (below) shows that while Door County's residents continue to be predominately white, there were increases between 1990 and 2000 in the number of people of color – both single race ("alone") and bi-racial or more – and in the number of persons of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (who may be of any race) residing in the county.

**Table 2.4: Race Composition, Door County**

Race	1990	2000
White (alone)	25,387	27,356
Black (alone)	29	53
American Indian or Aleut (alone)	178	183
Asian or Pacific Islander (alone)	47	81
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	153	267
Two or More Races (not Hispanic or Latino)	49	194

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.*

## **POPULATION BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION**

In examining the composition of households in 1990 and 2000, one finds still further evidence that while Door County's population is increasing, it is aging and increasing primarily due to in-migration rather than in-county births. Between 1990 and 2000, while there was an increase of 805 households in the "family households" category, there was actually a decrease of 581 households with natural-born or adopted children present. (See Table 2.5.)

**Table 2.5: Household Composition, Door County**

<b>Household Composition</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>In family households:</b>		
Householder	7,192	7,997
Spouse	6,262	6,867
Child:		
Natural-born or adopted	7,578	6,997
Step	290	332
Grandchild	112	162
Other relatives	363	161
Nonrelatives	249	373
<b>In nonfamily households:</b>		
Householder living alone	2,529	3,640
Householder not living alone	345	509
Nonrelatives	425	638
<b>In group quarters:</b>		
Institutionalized persons	290	323
Other persons in group quarters	55	58

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000.*

## **POPULATION TRENDS, ESTIMATES, AND PROJECTIONS**

According to the U. S. Census Bureau, the country's population aged significantly between 1900 and 2000 as the growth rate of the elderly population far exceeded that of the total population: the nation's total population more than tripled during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the population segment 65 years and older grew more than tenfold. In 1900, the nation's median age was 22.9 and children under age 5 represented the largest 5-year age group cohort. In 1950, children under age 5 still represented the largest 5-year age group cohort. By 2000, however, the nation's median age was 35.3 and the largest 5-year age groups were ages 35 to 39 years and 40 to 44 years (large segments of the Baby Boom generation). The proportion of the population age 65 and over declined slightly in the 1990s, partly due to the relatively low number of births in the Great Depression era, but by 2000, 12.4% of the population was age 65 or over. Rapid growth of the population aged 65 and over will begin again at the national, state, and local level after 2010, when the first members of the Baby Boom generation reach age 65, and is projected to continue for many years. By the year 2030, 19.6% of the country's population is projected to be 65 or older.

The State of Wisconsin is currently aging even more than the nation as a whole. Residents 65 years of age and older formed 13% of the state's total population in the year 2000, and are projected to comprise 21% in 2030. The proportion of the state's population aged 85 and over is projected to increase by nearly 66 percent between 2000 and 2030, with the number of centenarians in the state projected to increase almost fourfold during those years. The DOA projects that the number of births in the state will increase through the year 2030, but that the volume of deaths will also increase substantially due to the aging population. The net result will be a decline in natural population increase – more deaths than births – between 2015 and 2030.

Door County's population is significantly older than that of the state or the nation, and is projected to continue to grow older at a faster rate. In 2000, 20% of the county's population was 65 or older; by 2030, that group is projected to comprise 41% of the county's population. In 2003, Door County was in the top one-fifth of U.S. counties in terms of the proportion of its population 65 years of age or over, ranking 494<sup>th</sup> out of 3,141.

At the same time the 65 and older segment of the county's population is increasing as a proportion of the total population, county residents 19 and younger comprise a smaller and smaller proportion of the population. In 2000, county residents 19 years and under were estimated to comprise 24.2% of the population; that number is expected to fall to 16.2% by 2030. Statewide, the 19 and under group is expected to fall from 27% to 25% during the same time period, and nationally, from 28.6% to 26.9%. By the year 2010, Door County residents aged 65 years and over are expected to surpass those aged 19 years and younger. By the year 2030, the number of residents 65 years and over is projected to grow in number by 130% from year 2000 levels, while the 19 and younger population is projected to decrease by 30% from 2000.

### **SEASONAL POPULATION ESTIMATES**

Census data, DOA, and other agency population counts, estimates, and projections only deal with year-round residents. Door County has many seasonal or part-time residents – persons with homes in the county but whose primary residence is outside the county – and hundreds of thousands of tourists who visit the county for overnight stays, utilizing hotel units, campsites, condominium unit rentals, house/cottage rentals, etc. The county also has hundreds of thousands of “day-tripper” tourists each year. The presence of these part-time residents and visitors obviously affects local economic development and housing markets; the use, maintenance, and potential expansion of transportation systems, recreational and other community facilities, and utilities; and land use.

Because of the difficulties in counting, estimating, or projecting seasonal populations, the DOA does not even attempt to do so. Others have used crude methods of estimating Door County's seasonal resident population, such as multiplying the number of housing units counted by the Census as being for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional use” by the average number of persons per household found in the county. Note that there are obvious problems with this method of estimation, including: the assumption that the number of persons per household for a seasonal residence would be equal to that found in a year-round residence; the fact that it excludes all tourists, whether overnight or day-trippers; and the inability to determine when and for how long seasonal units are occupied.

Perhaps the best effort to estimate Door County's “true” population – year-round residents plus seasonal residents and all visitors – was undertaken in 1999 by University of Wisconsin-Extension Door County. In making calculations, the study author developed three other estimates: 1) economic activity attributable to the seasonal population of county; 2) geographic distribution of the seasonal population, based on municipal share of seasonal homes, hotel and motel rooms, and campground sites; and 3) time of the year that the seasonal population is in the county, based on traffic counts. Estimates and methods were meant to include and take into account seasonal residents, overnight tourists, and day-trippers. Note that in developing these figures the author conservatively assumed January to be a “baseline” month: traffic levels and economic activity during that month was presumed to be that of year-round residents.

The study found that the county's “true” total population – counted in “whole” persons, or full-time equivalency residents – was between 20 and 161% higher, depending on the month, than the number of year-round residents counted in Census data for that same year (see Table 2.6 below). While keeping in mind that these numbers are rough estimates and that the population

counts (both the Census and the “true” estimates) are now outdated, the “percent over Census” calculations can provide at least some guidance in thinking about the county’s “true” population levels when looking at current and projected populations.

**Table 2.6: Estimated Monthly Seasonal Population, Door County**

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
People in addition to 2000 Census (27,961)	0	5,634	6,805	11,890	22,943	30,944	44,886	40,999	32,296	26,582	10,243	6,930
Total Population	27,961	33,595	34,766	39,851	50,904	58,905	72,847	68,960	60,257	54,543	38,204	34,891
Percent over Census	0%	20%	24%	43%	82%	111%	161%	147%	116%	95%	37%	25%

Source: University of Wisconsin-Extension Door County Study: “Estimating the Seasonal Population of Door County,” 1999.

### YEAR-ROUND POPULATION ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS

Conducting accurate population projections for any municipality is difficult. Population projections are conducted using birth rates, death rates, and net migration, the first two usually being the most significant predictors. In Door County, however, between 1990 and 2000, the vast majority of the county’s population growth came from net migration, which the DOA notes “is the most elusive in sketching the future population scenario) In fact, the number of deaths in the county during that time period surpassed the number of recorded births. And, it is expected that this trend of in-migration will accelerate as large numbers of Baby Boomers reach retirement age – many people who vacation or have seasonal residences in Door County are already choosing to convert their homes and condominium units into primary or secondary retirement residences. Finally, as discussed above, population projections nearly always only deal with year-round residents, and Door County has many seasonal residents and visitors.

In 2008, the DOA Demographic Services Center prepared population projections for the state and each of its counties and municipalities. Table 2.7, below, compares these DOA projections forward to the year 2030 for Door, Kewaunee, and Brown counties and Wisconsin.

Note: DOA population projections for individual municipalities within Door County can be found in Table 2.13 at the end of this chapter.

**Table 2.7: Population Projections, 2000-2030**

Geographic Location	2000	DOA Population Projection						# Change 2000-2030	% Change 2000-2030
	Census Pop.	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030		
Door Co.	27,961	29,402	30,204	31,110	31,832	32,193	32,090	4,129	14.8%
Kewaunee Co.	20,187	21,102	21,841	22,705	23,587	24,399	25,084	4,897	24.3%
Brown Co.	226,658	240,978	254,040	268,255	282,409	295,423	306,931	80,273	35.4%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,589,920	5,772,370	5,988,420	6,202,810	6,390,900	6,541,180	1,177,505	22.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, 2000; Wisconsin Department of Administration, for years cited; Wisconsin Department of Administration, Official Population Projections, 2008.

According to the DOA projections, Door County is expected to have a year-round population of 32,090 persons by 2030. This represents an increase of 4,129 persons, or 14.8%, from the 2000 Census count of 27,961. Note, however, as discussed earlier in this chapter, that the DOA has estimated the county’s January 1, 2007 population at 30,043 persons, already ahead of the interpolated mid-point DOA population (2005 – 2010) of 29,803.

As stated previously, the DOA has difficulty projecting net migration and, in particular, migration that is not related to job growth. In-migration of retirees, historically a major contributor to Door County's population growth, is the most difficult population to predict. Though the DOA discusses the possibility that from 2010 through 2035 the impact of retiring workers born in the Baby Boom era (1946 – 1964) will potentially create a huge population shift in the country, they have moderated its potential effect for Wisconsin. The agency asserts that Wisconsin, like many other states in the northeastern and midwestern United States, will find it harder to draw domestic migrants (e.g., retirees) because of increased competition from other states. In light of this, the DOA moderated its population projection numbers for the state, numbers which were then applied to individual counties. While the total state net migration figure was apportioned to each county based on its portion of migrants from 1990 – 2000, county-level migration numbers projected still rise and fall parallel with the predicted change in those moderated overall state-level migration numbers, regardless of an individual county's potential to increase its share of in-migration.

In 2007, Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (BLRPC) developed a "growth trend" population projection for Door County to the year 2030. This growth trend projects a much greater increase in Door County's population for the years 2020, 2025, and 2030 than the DOA projections. The BLRPC growth trend projection predicts that Door County's population in the year 2030 will be 38,317 people, an increase of 10,356 people (37%) from the 2000 Census population count of 27,961. This growth trend reflects the predictions of many that Door County will continue to be a popular retirement destination and is therefore likely to receive a greater proportion of the retiring Baby Boomers than the state has predicted. As such, Planning Department staff members have deemed these BLRPC growth trend projection numbers to be the most accurate predictors for Door County. In addition, as noted above, the DOA projections for the county's population are already proving to be too low, based on estimated January 1, 2007 population levels.

Table 2.8 displays for comparison purposes the county's actual 1970 – 2000 U.S. Census counts, the 2008 DOA projections from the table above, and the BLRPC growth trend projection.

**Table 2.8: Population Figures and Projections, Door County**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
US Census	20,106	25,029	25,690	27,961	--	--	--	--	--	--
DOA Projections	--	--	--	27,961	29,402	30,204	31,110	31,832	32,193	32,090
BLRPC Projections -										
Growth Trend	--	--	--	27,961	28,975	29,988	31,943	33,898	36,108	38,317

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000;  
 Wisconsin Department of Administration, Official Municipal Population Projections 2005-2030, 2003;  
 Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2007.

## RESOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

### **Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission** (<http://www.baylakerpc.org/>)

441 South Jackson Street  
Green Bay, WI 54301  
Phone: (920) 448-2820

The Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission (BLRPC) was created in 1972 by Governor Lucey under s. 66.945, Wis. Stats., as the official area-wide planning agency for northeastern Wisconsin and currently serves eight counties: Brown, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Oconto, and Sheboygan. BLRPC provides planning services on area-wide issues, represents local interests on state and federal planning program activities, and provides local planning assistance to communities in the Bay-Lake Region.

### **Door County Economic Development Corporation** (<http://www.doorcountybusiness.com/>)

185 East Walnut Street  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
Phone: (920) 743-3113

The Door County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC) is a public/private partnership dedicated to improving the economic vitality of the county and its residents. Founded in 1989, DCEDC has a variety of programs and initiatives working to attract new businesses to the area and helping existing businesses create and retain jobs.

### **Door County Planning Department** (<http://map.co.door.wi.us/planning/>)

421 Nebraska Street  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
Phone: (920) 746-2323

The department's primary functions are administration and enforcement of the county's zoning and land division ordinances and other land use management ordinances; preparation and updating of the county comprehensive plan; and giving advice to local public officials on a variety of community development plans or projects.

### **Door County Visitor Bureau** (<http://www.doorcounty.com>)

1015 Green Bay Road  
Sturgeon Bay WI 54235  
Phone: (920) 746-6663 or 868-3521

The Door County Visitor Bureau is the official tourism marketing organization whose mission is to generate incremental economic impact for the Door County Peninsula and Washington Island by attracting visitors with strategies that ensure sustainable tourism marketing and management principles.

### **University of Wisconsin – Extension, Door County** (<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/door/>)

421 Nebraska Street  
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235  
Phone: (920) 746-2260

The Door County UW-Extension Office works to bring knowledge of the University to Door County citizens and help people apply this information. Contact the Door County Planning Department (listed above) for a copy of the study "*Estimating the Seasonal Population of Door County*" by Greg Lamb, University of Wisconsin-Extension, 1999.

**Wisconsin Department of Administration – Demographic Services** (<http://www.doa.state.wi.us/>)

101 East Wilson Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703  
Phone: (608) 266-1927

The Demographic Services Center's primary responsibility is to develop annual total population estimates for all Wisconsin towns, villages, and cities. In addition, the Demographic Services Center develops population projections by age and sex for the counties; population projections of total population for all municipalities; and estimates of total housing units and households for all counties.

**U.S. Bureau of the Census** (<http://www.census.gov/>)

4600 Silver Hill Road  
Washington, DC 20233

Phone: See for telephone information.

The Census Bureau serves as the leading source of quality data about the nation's people and economy. The Census Bureau is the largest statistical agency of the federal government. While best known for the decennial census, it conducts numerous surveys and censuses that measure changing individual and household demographics and the economic condition of the nation.

# **CHAPTER 2: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ADDITIONAL TABLES**

**Table 2.9: January 1, 2007 Final Population Estimates, Door County Municipalities**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2000 Census</b>	<b>2007 Estimate</b>	<b>Numeric Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Voting Age 2000</b>	<b>Voting Age 2007</b>
Town of Baileys Harbor	1,003	1,186	183	18.2	832	1,005
Town of Brussels	1,112	1,161	49	4.4	807	861
Town of Clay Banks	410	420	10	2.4	308	322
Town of Egg Harbor	1,194	1,412	218	18.3	931	1,125
Town of Forestville	1,086	1,160	74	6.8	785	857
Town of Gardner	1,197	1,296	99	8.3	936	1,035
Town of Gibraltar	1,063	1,343	280	26.3	892	1,151
Town of Jacksonport	738	797	59	8	565	623
Town of Liberty Grove	1,858	2,102	244	13.1	1,502	1,736
Town of Nasewaupee	1,873	1,971	98	5.2	1,480	1,591
Town of Sevastopol	2,667	2,862	195	7.3	2,059	2,258
Town of Sturgeon Bay	865	882	17	2	691	720
Town of Union	880	932	52	5.9	650	703
Town of Washington	660	715	55	8.3	501	555
Village of Egg Harbor	250	274	24	9.6	225	252
Village of Ephraim	353	353	0	0	286	292
Village of Forestville	429	429	0	0	332	339
Village of Sister Bay	886	985	99	11.2	789	896
City of Sturgeon Bay	9,437	9,763	326	3.5	7,218	7,630
<b>Door County</b>	<b>27,961</b>	<b>30,043</b>	<b>2,082</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>21,789</b>	<b>23,951</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2007.

**Table 2.10: Historical Population Levels, Door County Municipalities**

Geographic Location	U.S. Census										
	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Town of Baileys Harbor	645	628	679	641	677	715	654	615	799	780	1,003
Town of Brussels	1,287	1,410	1,505	1,260	1,215	1,177	1,139	1,050	1,097	1,042	1,112
Town of Clay Banks	557	581	499	405	384	383	373	345	409	379	410
Town of Egg Harbor	882	1,031	1,011	947	926	916	852	693	825	1,019	1,194
Town of Forestville	1,364	1,423	1,501	1,327	1,308	1,301	1,256	902	1,035	999	1,086
Town of Gardner	785	902	1,001	839	844	833	847	875	1,084	1,025	1,197
Town of Gibraltar	1,185	1,119	1,011	771	880	764	606	590	742	939	1,063
Town of Jacksonport	913	876	769	627	719	789	707	622	707	689	738
Town of Liberty Grove	1,550	1,529	1,420	1,275	1,358	1,332	1,190	1,174	1,313	1,506	1,858
Town of Nasewaupée	1,349	1,301	1,202	1,220	1,223	1,184	1,319	1,470	1,899	1,798	1,873
Town of Sevastopol	1,607	1,578	1,613	1,562	1,588	1,791	1,950	2,035	2,520	2,552	2,667
Town of Sturgeon Bay	585	527	506	414	522	584	502	641	863	853	865
Town of Union	639	641	691	698	695	598	586	620	755	721	880
Town of Washington	863	903	932	784	754	776	610	446	558	623	660
Village of Egg Harbor	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	184	238	183	250
Village of Ephraim	NA	NA	NA	191	254	244	221	236	319	261	353
Village of Forestville	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	349	455	470	429
Village of Sister Bay	NA	NA	190	138	309	429	520	483	564	675	886
City of Sturgeon Bay	3,372	4,262	4,553	4,983	5,439	7,054	7,353	6776	8,847	9,176	9,437
<b>Door County</b>	<b>17,583</b>	<b>18,711</b>	<b>19,073</b>	<b>18,182</b>	<b>19,095</b>	<b>20,870</b>	<b>20,685</b>	<b>20,106</b>	<b>25,019</b>	<b>25,690</b>	<b>27,961</b>
<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>2,069,042</b>	<b>2,333,860</b>	<b>2,632,067</b>	<b>2,939,006</b>	<b>3,137,587</b>	<b>3,434,575</b>	<b>3,951,777</b>	<b>4,417,731</b>	<b>4,705,642</b>	<b>4,891,769</b>	<b>5,363,715</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, General Population Characteristics, Wisconsin 1840-1970; Censuses 1980, 1990 & 2000.

**Table 2.11: Median Age, Door County Municipalities**

<b>Geographic Area</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
Town of Baileys Harbor	42.5	39.7	40.9	47.0
Town of Brussels	29.7	28.7	32.6	36.3
Town of Clay Banks	34.9	31.7	38.4	42.3
Town of Egg Harbor	28.8	27.2	32.5	42.6
Town of Forestville	28.3	27.1	32.6	37.3
Town of Gardner	34.2	29.3	36.1	41.5
Town of Gibraltar	38.6	36.0	39.9	48.5
Town of Jacksonport	36.3	37.1	38.6	43.4
Town of Liberty Grove	43.9	42.3	42.2	49.1
Town of Nasewaupée	30.5	29.9	36.2	43.3
Town of Sevastopol	29.9	30.3	35.3	43.3
Town of Sturgeon Bay	27.5	28.8	35.5	43.8
Town of Union	27.3	28.1	32.6	38.2
Town of Washington	45.3	42.6	43.7	48.7
Village of Egg Harbor	48.6	46.5	45.2	55.0
Village of Ephraim	42.5	48.3	52.2	52.8
Village of Forestville	32.3	28.2	35.3	40.6
Village of Sister Bay	40.1	41.2	51.5	61.4
City of Sturgeon Bay	34.3	30.4	35.0	40.3
<b>Door County</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>42.9</b>
<b>Bay-Lake Region</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>38.6</b>
<b>State of Wisconsin</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>36.0</b>

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, General Population Characteristics, Wisconsin, 1970, 1980, 1990; Census 2000.*

**Table 2.12: Population by Age Groups, Door County Municipalities**

Geographic Location	School Age						Working and Voting Age								Retirement Age		Total Population
	5-11		12-14		15-17		16+		16-64		18+		18-64		65+		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
T. of Baileys Harbor	77	7.7	33	3.3	37	3.7	859	85.6	646	64.4	832	83.0	619	61.7	213	21.2	1,003
T. of Brussels	129	11.6	47	4.2	57	5.1	844	75.9	731	65.7	807	72.6	694	62.4	113	10.2	1,112
T. of Clay Banks	47	11.5	16	3.9	17	4.1	322	78.5	239	58.3	308	75.1	807	196.8	83	20.2	410
T. of Egg Harbor	99	8.3	54	4.5	54	4.5	965	80.8	794	66.5	931	78.0	760	63.7	171	14.3	1,194
T. of Forestville	118	10.9	49	4.5	64	5.9	827	76.2	700	64.5	785	72.3	658	60.6	127	11.7	1,086
T. of Gardner	110	9.2	46	3.8	50	4.2	969	81.0	796	66.5	936	78.2	763	63.7	173	14.5	1,197
T. of Gibraltar	62	5.8	31	2.9	37	3.5	918	86.4	713	67.1	892	83.9	687	64.6	205	19.3	1,063
T. of Jacksonport	77	10.4	31	4.2	41	5.6	593	80.4	464	62.9	565	76.6	436	59.1	129	17.5	738
T. of Liberty Grove	141	7.6	75	4.0	62	3.3	1,544	83.1	1,104	59.4	1,502	80.8	1,062	57.2	440	23.7	1,858
T. of Nasewaupee	139	7.4	85	4.5	102	5.4	1,540	82.2	1,232	65.8	1,480	79.0	1,172	62.6	308	16.4	1,873
T. of Sevastopol	233	8.7	132	4.9	138	5.2	2,150	80.6	1,694	63.5	2,059	77.2	1,603	60.1	456	17.1	2,667
T. of Sturgeon Bay	59	6.8	45	5.2	43	5.0	715	82.7	568	65.7	691	79.9	544	62.9	147	17.0	865
T. of Union	111	12.6	34	3.9	35	4.0	672	76.4	563	64.0	650	73.9	541	61.5	109	12.4	880
T. of Washington	74	11.2	28	4.2	34	5.2	522	79.1	380	57.6	501	75.9	359	54.4	142	21.5	660
V. of Egg Harbor	12	4.8	7	2.8	4	1.6	228	91.2	152	60.8	225	90.0	149	59.6	76	30.4	250
V. of Ephraim	28	7.9	9	2.5	9	2.5	290	82.2	191	54.1	286	81.0	187	53.0	99	28.0	353
V. of Forestville	44	10.3	24	5.6	14	3.3	338	78.8	264	61.5	332	77.4	258	60.1	74	17.2	429
V. of Sister Bay	34	3.8	15	1.7	30	3.4	806	91.0	397	44.8	789	89.1	380	42.9	409	46.2	886
City of Sturgeon Bay	898	9.5	410	4.3	404	4.3	7,489	79.4	5,728	60.7	7,218	76.5	5,457	57.8	1,761	18.7	9,437
<b>Door County</b>	<b>2,492</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>1,171</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>1,232</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>22,591</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>17,356</b>	<b>62.1</b>	<b>21,789</b>	<b>77.9</b>	<b>16,554</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>5,235</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>27,961</b>
<b>State of Wisconsin</b>	<b>541,735</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>241,367</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>241,367</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4,156,879</b>	<b>77.5</b>	<b>3,454,232</b>	<b>64.4</b>	<b>3,995,968</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>3,293,321</b>	<b>61.4</b>	<b>702,647</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>5,363,715</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing.

**Table 2.13: DOA Population Projections, Door County Municipalities**

Geographic Location	2000 Census	DOA Population Projection						# Change	% Change
	Population	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2000-2030	2000-2030
Town of Baileys Harbor	1,003	1,103	1,177	1,255	1,324	1,378	1,408	405	40.4%
Town of Brussels	1,112	1,165	1,186	1,211	1,230	1,234	1,221	109	9.8%
Town of Clay Banks	410	414	415	416	416	411	402	-8	-2.0%
Town of Egg Harbor	1,194	1,357	1,458	1,563	1,657	1,731	1,775	581	48.7%
Town of Forestville	1,086	1,153	1,185	1,221	1,250	1,265	1,261	175	16.1%
Town of Gardner	1,197	1,257	1,298	1,344	1,380	1,401	1,403	206	17.2%
Town of Gibraltar	1,063	1,194	1,280	1,369	1,449	1,512	1,549	486	45.7%
Town of Jacksonport	738	770	784	801	813	816	808	70	9.5%
Town of Liberty Grove	1,858	1,985	2,099	2,218	2,324	2,401	2,440	582	31.3%
Town of Nasewaupée	1,873	1,964	1,986	2,011	2,026	2,018	1,984	111	5.9%
Town of Sevastopol	2,667	2,811	2,867	2,934	2,983	3,000	2,974	307	11.5%
Town of Sturgeon Bay	865	890	893	899	900	892	873	8	0.9%
Town of Union	880	921	956	994	1,026	1,046	1,050	170	19.3%
Town of Washington	660	696	716	739	757	767	766	106	16.1%
Village of Egg Harbor	250	270	285	302	317	327	333	83	33.2%
Village of Ephraim	353	351	358	366	372	374	371	18	5.1%
Village of Forestville	429	429	425	421	416	407	392	-37	-8.6%
Village of Sister Bay	886	947	1,010	1,076	1,136	1,181	1,207	321	36.2%
City of Sturgeon Bay	9,437	9,725	9,826	9,970	10,056	10,032	9,873	436	4.6%
<b>Door County</b>	<b>27,961</b>	<b>29,402</b>	<b>30,204</b>	<b>31,110</b>	<b>31,832</b>	<b>32,193</b>	<b>32,090</b>	<b>4,129</b>	<b>14.8%</b>
<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>5,363,675</b>	<b>5,589,920</b>	<b>5,772,370</b>	<b>5,988,420</b>	<b>6,202,810</b>	<b>6,390,900</b>	<b>6,541,180</b>	<b>1,177,505</b>	<b>22.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, 2000; Wisconsin Department of Administration, Official Population Projections, 2008.