

CHAPTER 3 - HOUSING AND POPULATION

INTRODUCTION

Quality housing is not only a basic human need, it attracts and retains workers, drives population growth, forms a major part of a community's image, and provides stability in a community. On an individual level, a home is usually the largest expenditure most residents make in their lifetimes. This chapter will discuss the status of housing in the Town of Mitchell, identify priority issues, and recommend possible ways to address those issues.

66.1001(2)(b)

Housing element. A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit's housing stock. The element shall also identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit's existing housing stock.

SUMMARY OF INVENTORY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town of Mitchell's population has grown more rapidly than its neighboring towns and Sheboygan County as a whole during the period 1980 to 2000. Over the last ten years, the Town has averaged about 7 to 8 new homes per year. Residents have indicated a preference for the single-family homes that make up the majority of the housing stock in the Town. There is some interest in clustering home sites in new conservation subdivisions in the future.

About 32% of the houses in the Town are older than 65 years of age. This is typical for rural communities in the area. Nevertheless, housing values are strong in the Town and continue to increase faster than most other towns in the County.

While the Town of Mitchell loses many of its younger residents when they enter their 20s, the Town is attractive again for people in their 30s with young families. Due to a lack of independent and assisted care options for elderly residents, many elderly residents are relocating from the Town to nearby cities and villages to be closer to facilities and services.

The Town's housing growth rate (about 7-8 new homes per year) is in line with the preferences of residents. The aging housing stock will need likely increasing maintenance during the planning period, but strong property values should make home equity loans a viable option for repairs and improvements. Unless a variety of specialized living options for elderly residents are built in the Town, which is unlikely given the Town's rural nature and limited resources, the Town will continue to see a loss of older residents.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Historical Population Levels

Figure 3.1 displays the change in population the Town of Mitchell has experienced since 1930. From 1930 to 2000, the Town’s growth rate has been slower than the surrounding towns and the County overall, and much slower than towns in the neighboring Milwaukee metro area.

However, over the more recent past (1980-2000) the Town of Mitchell grew at a rate that was more than twice that of Lyndon, Scott, and the County.



Figure 3.1 – Historical Population Levels, Town of Mitchell & Selected Areas				
Year	Town of Mitchell	Town of Lyndon	Town of Scott	Sheboygan County
1930	794	930	1,223	71,235
1940	822	1,032	1,179	76,221
1950	694	1,051	1,207	80,631
1960	727	1,022	1,255	86,494
1970	779	1,198	1,451	96,660
1980	900	1,342	1,625	100,935
1990	944	1,432	1,671	103,877
2000	1,132	1,468	1,804	112,646
Increase 1980-2000	25.8%	9.4%	11.0%	11.6%
Increase 1930-2000	42.6%	57.8%	47.5%	58.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Trends

Based on historical trends, the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WisDOA) projects the Town of Mitchell’s population to increase from 2010 to 2025, at a rate of 19.7%. During this same time period the population in Sheboygan County is projected to increase only 8.9%. (Figure 1.10, Chapter 1). The loss of young workforce age residents who are likely to find more job opportunities in the larger communities of Sheboygan County and elsewhere will offset some of these gains. Also, elderly residents with limited income and needs for specialized services and subsidized housing may begin moving to larger communities better able to meet their needs.

Seasonal Population

The estimated seasonal population was found by multiplying the number of seasonal housing units in Mitchell, according to the U.S. Census, by the average number of persons per household in Mitchell (2.7). In 2000, Mitchell had 8 seasonal housing units, creating an estimated seasonal population of 22 persons, approximately 1.7 percent of the Town’s population. Comparing

Mitchell's seasonal population with surrounding towns, the Town of Scott had a seasonal population of 66, while the Town of Lyndon's was 169.

Decade Population Pyramids

Figures 3.2 and 3.3 represent, the distribution of age and gender from 1990 to 2000 for the Town of Mitchell. When comparing the 1990 chart to the 2000 chart, it is helpful to remember that a particular age group in the 1990 chart shows up 10 years later in the 2000 chart.

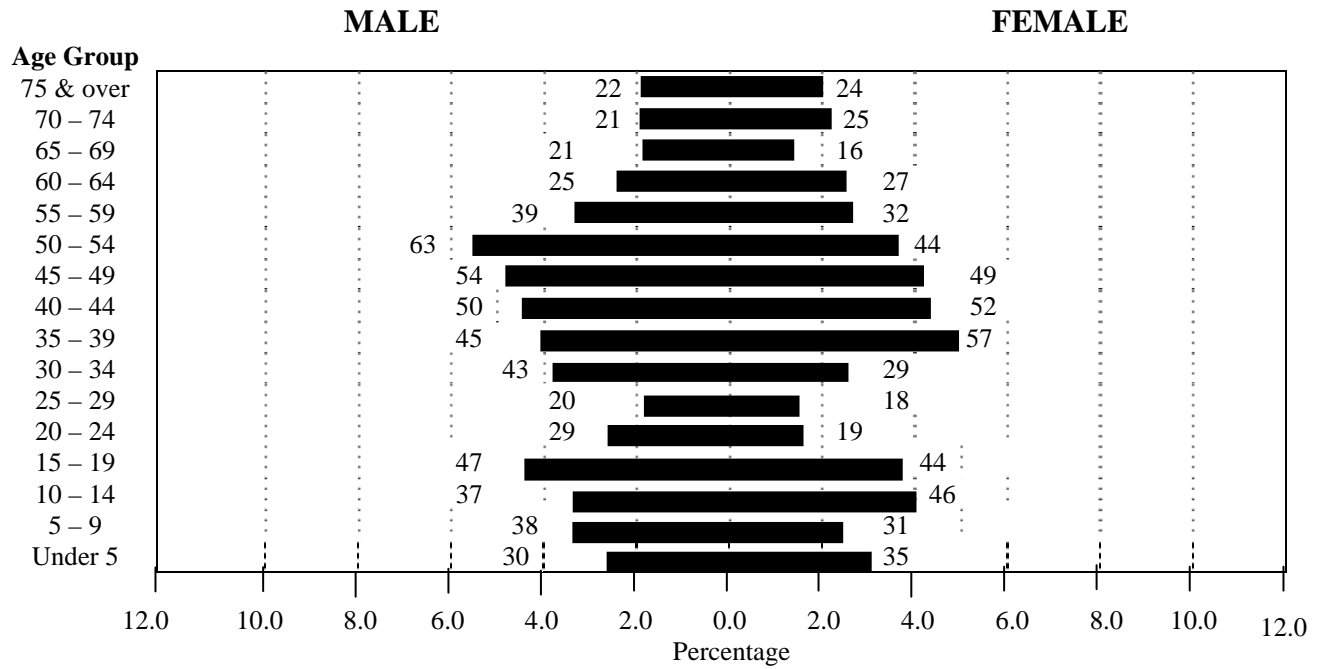
The data shows that those children between the ages of 0 and 9 in 1990 (142 children) remained in the Town over the course of their schooling. Ten years later, when these children were between 10 and 19, their total was 174. As is typical for many rural communities, the Town then saw a substantial drop off when teenagers reached adulthood and were able to move away to college or other opportunities. Those who were between 10 and 19 in 1990 totaled 154. Ten years later, when these individuals were in their 20s, the number of 20 to 29 year olds in the Town had dropped to 86, despite an overall increase in the Town's population.

Though the Town might lose young people in their 20s, it appears to become attractive again when individuals reach their 30s and settle down to raise families. While there were only 106 people in their 20s in 1990, ten years later, the number of residents in their 30s had jumped 64% to 174.

Residents in their 30s in 1990 (155) remained in the Town for their 40s (205). Similarly, 64% of residents in their 40s and 50s in 1990 (253) continued living in the Town for their 50s and 60s (267). Finally, there were 58 residents who were between 60 and 64 years of age in 1990. Ten years later, when they were 70-74, their numbers in the Town had decreased to 46.

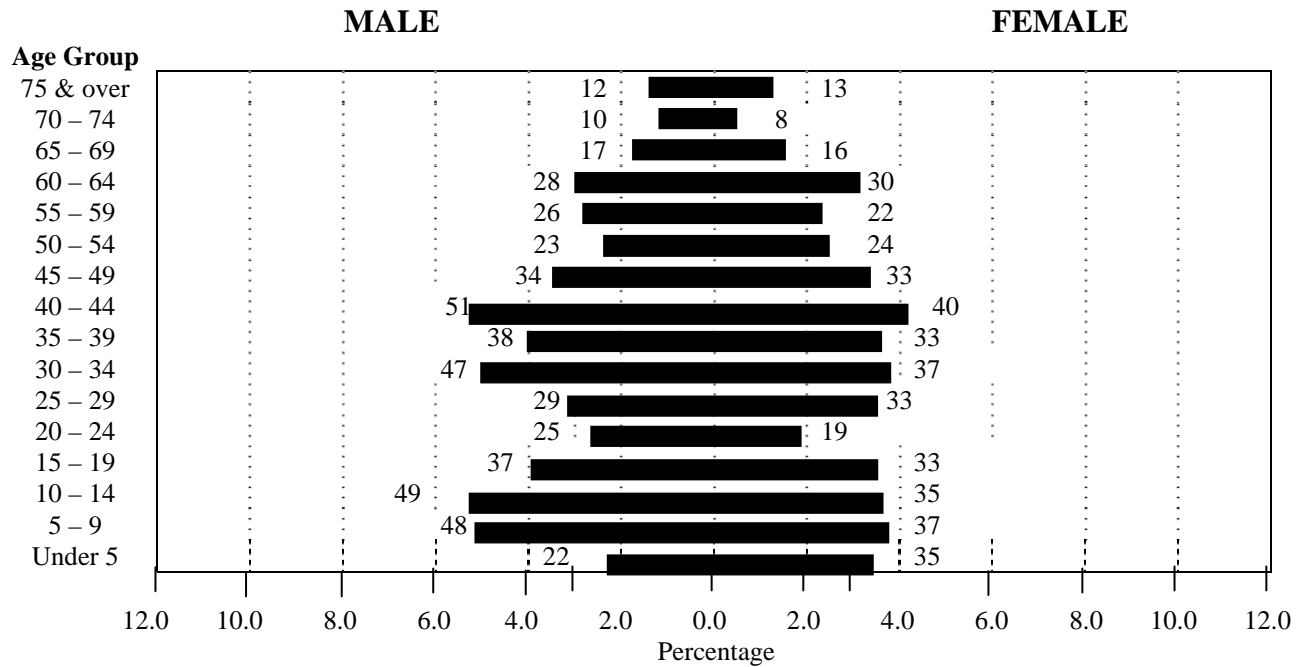
The baby boom births between the years 1946 and 1964, combined with increased life expectancies, are producing a population with a larger percentage of residents over age 65. Will such residents want to remain in the Town? (The data imply they may not.) The Town must realize that as people age, their incomes decline, eventually becoming limited to social security and retirement incomes. The working age residents will comprise a smaller percentage of the population, especially if they move from the Town due to finances or medical care.

Figure 3.2 – Population Distribution by Age and Gender, 2000, Town of Mitchell



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 3.3 - Population Distribution by Age and Gender, 1990, Town of Mitchell



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

School Age, Working Age, and Retirement Age Groups

Figure 3.4 shows the Town of Mitchell has comparable percentages to Sheboygan County overall. Looking at the percentage of 65+ in the Town versus Sheboygan County, this chart is consistent with Figure 3.2, which showed the Town losing retirees.

Figure 3.4 – Population by Age Groups and Gender, 2000, Town of Mitchell					
Age Groups	Mitchell Total	Mitchell Male	Mitchell Female	Mitchell Percent	Sheboygan County Percent
<u>School Age</u>					
5-11	101	52	49	8.9%	10.0%
12-14	56	18	38	4.9%	4.5%
15-17	66	37	29	5.8%	4.7%
<u>Working Age</u>					
16-64	739	397	342	65.3%	63.7%
<u>Retirement Age</u>					
65+	134	69	65	11.8%	14.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Median Age

As shown in Figure 3.5, even with a number of retirees leaving the Town, the median age for the Town of Mitchell has risen from 26.2 in 1980 to 39.9 in 2000, following trends in the County. This is due to the overall aging of the population, especially in the “baby boom” ages.

Figure 3.5 – Median Age, 1980-2000, Town of Mitchell & Selected Areas			
Geographic Area	1980	1990	2000
Town of Mitchell	26.2	34.2	39.9
Town of Lyndon	29.9	34.0	40.2
Town of Scott	29.5	34.0	37.4
Sheboygan County	30.3	33.8	36.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

HOUSING INVENTORY

Total Housing Unit Levels by Decade

Figure 3.6 displays the increase in housing units the Town of Mitchell experienced from 1980 to 2000. From a percentage perspective, the Town’s rate of increase was more than double the rate of Sheboygan County as a whole. Although the number of new homes averaged about 7-8 per year in the Town of Mitchell during the 1990s, this is a slow rate when compared to places in higher growth areas such as the Town of Richfield (located in Washington County adjacent to Waukesha County), which averaged about 80 per year in the same decade.



Figure 3.6 – Total Housing Units, 1980-2000, Town of Mitchell & Selected Areas

Geographic Area	Year			Percent Change
	1980	1990	2000	1980-2000
Town of Mitchell	274	337	437	59.5%
Town of Lyndon	446	566	630	41.3%
Town of Scott	617	580	700	13.5%
Sheboygan County	36,716	40,695	45,947	25.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Housing Permits

New construction in the Town of Mitchell has averaged about 7 to 8 single family homes per year between 1995 and 2005.

Historic and Projected Household Size

As shown in Figure 3.7, the average household size in the Town of Mitchell, like other communities, has been decreasing and is projected by WisDOA to continue a steady decline. One would expect the square footage of new homes to decrease along with household size, but this is not necessarily the case, as was seen in the 1990s when new homes were built larger despite the drop in household size.

The projected population for the Town of Mitchell by the year 2025 is 1,764. The average household size for the Town is projected to be 2.95 in 2025. The number of housing units needed to support the population of 2025, if household size projections are accurate, will be 598. As of 2000, there were 437 housing units in the Town, which means an additional 161 will need to be constructed by 2025 – about 6 per year. Current rates of new construction would seem more than adequate to provide the housing needs for the projected population.

These projections can change with fluctuations in the economy, government policies, road construction, and migration. The Town should use these projections to help make decisions on desired outcomes. With proper planning, policies can be implemented that guide development and spur or limit growth to reach a desired outcome. Directing growth along desired paths will result in a strong healthy community with adequate services and facilities.

Figure 3.7 – Historic and WisDOA Projected Persons Per Household						
Geographic Area	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025
Lyndon	2.88	2.68	2.63	2.61	2.59	2.57
Scott	3.04	2.74	2.69	2.66	2.64	2.62
Town of Mitchell	3.23	3.06	3.02	2.99	2.96	2.95
Sheboygan County	2.63	2.59	2.54	2.52	2.50	2.48

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

Housing Types - Units in Structure

As shown in Figure 3.8, the percentage of single-family detached units in the Town of Mitchell in 2000 is much higher (90.1%) than the percentage for Sheboygan County (65.0%). Figure 3.9 also shows little mix of housing types, but this is not unusual for a rural farming community.

Question #6 on the 2003 Citizen Input Survey for the Town of Mitchell indicated that slightly over 50% of respondents wanted to see single-family residential and also affordable housing. The Town’s older housing provides some affordable housing. A mix of multi-family units is typically another way to provide affordable housing, but due to the lack of public sewer in the Town and the Town’s rural nature, multi-family is not easily created. Nevertheless, the Town might consider allowing a small number of lots in a new subdivision to have duplexes.

Figure 3.8 – Total Units in Structure, 1990 & 2000						
Structure	Town of Mitchell 1990		Town of Mitchell 2000		Sheboygan County 1990	Sheboygan County 2000
	Units	Percent	Units	Percent	Percent	Percent
1 unit, detached	293	87.7%	374	90.1%	66.0%	65.0%
1 unit, attached	0	0.0%	6	1.4%	1.7%	2.8%
2 unit	16	4.8%	10	2.4%	17.0%	14.1%
3 or 4 unit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3.9%	3.8%
5 to 9 unit	0	0.0%	2	0.5%	1.9%	3.2%
10 to 19 unit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2.7%	2.5%
20 or more unit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3.1%	4.1%
Mobile home	25	7.5%	23	5.5%	2.4%	2.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

(Figure 3.8 above is based on Census data compiled from the long form, which was sent to a random sample of residents. Because of this, the number of units for each structure type are estimates.)

Housing Occupancy and Tenure

In both 1990 and 2000, the Town of Mitchell had a lower vacancy rate and a higher percentage of owner-occupied homes than Sheboygan County (see Figure 3.9).

The Town’s vacancy rate of 4.1% in 2000 is slightly lower than the recommended level of 5%. Vacancy rates are the result of homes in the process of transferring ownership. If few homes are sitting vacant, this may mean there are not enough homes available to satisfy market demand. This can affect the price of homes as well as the ability to purchase a home. If demand is high, prices tend to rise, which can have an adverse affect on housing affordability in a community.

Figure 3.9– Housing Occupancy and Tenure, 1990 & 2000						
	Town of Mitchell 1990		Town of Mitchell 2000		Sheboygan County 1990	Sheboygan County 2000
Units	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Occupied	321	95.3%	419	95.9%	94.8%	94.8%
Owner	283	88.2%	392	93.6%	70.3%	71.4%
Renter	38	11.8%	27	6.4%	29.7%	28.6%
Vacant	16	4.7%	18	4.1%	5.2%	5.2%
Seas., Recr., Occas. Use Other	8	2.4%	8	1.8%	1.9%	1.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Age of Housing

Looking at Figure 3.10, the Town of Mitchell has 138 housing units that were built before 1940, which is about 32% of its total stock. When compared to the nearby rural towns of Scott, Lyndon, and Greenbush (37.8%) this figure appears normal. Nevertheless, this still means that about three in ten of the houses in the Town of Mitchell are over 65 years old. Older homes generally require more maintenance and repair than newer homes, but maintaining older homes provides a good source of affordable housing and enhances the overall character of a community.

Figure 3.10 – Year Structure Built, Town of Mitchell and Nearby Towns			
Year Structure Built	Number of Units in Mitchell	Percentage of Mitchell Housing	Percentage of Housing in Scott, Lyndon, and Greenbush
1990 to 2000	118	27.1%	18.0%
1980 to 1989	53	12.2%	7.8%
1970 to 1979	84	19.3%	19.7%
1960 to 1969	13	2.9%	8.4%
1940 to 1959	30	6.9%	9.3%
1939 or earlier	138	31.7%	37.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Condition of Housing Stock

Age is often an indicator of the overall condition of the housing stock. Though there are exceptions, it is generally true that older houses are not in as good of a condition as newer ones. The portion of household income set aside for repairs and maintenance may become a burden for some local homeowners. At the same time, an older housing stock could signal a business opportunity for remodeling and repair contractors. Revitalizing older homes or rehabilitating them for multi-family use can help sustain the necessary levels of housing units to support local populations. Homeowners may need help in the form of special financing or programs to rehabilitate or refurbish older homes. Businesses and communities can work together to create new programs or take advantage of existing ones which provide free or subsidized financing to support homeowners in maintaining older homes.

Although the Town of Mitchell is not a city or village, it does have a few residential “neighborhoods.” (These are not official neighborhoods; these designations have been made solely for planning purposes.) These neighborhoods and their 2002 fair market values are identified in Figure 3.11. Based on the values, the neighborhoods would seem to be in relatively good condition.

Figure 3.11 – Neighborhoods in the Town of Mitchell and Median Fair Market Values				
“Neighborhood”	Number of Home Sites	Location	Average Lot Size	2002 Median Fair Market Value
1848 Settlement	12	NE portion of Town	5-6 acres	\$350 – 400,000
Co. Hwys “S” and “F”	25	SE portion of Town	3-10 acres	\$125 – 175,000
The Meadows	16	Center of Town	1-2 acres	\$150 – 200,000
Kettleview Estates	10	NE portion of Town	2-5 acres	\$120 – 350,000

Source: Town of Mitchell

Household Relationship

Figure 3.12 displays the varying household types and relationships that were found in the Town of Mitchell and Sheboygan County in 2000. All of the persons living in the Town lived in households. Except for the group quarters data, the trends for the Town were similar to those in the County.

Figure 3.12 – Household Relationship, 2000, Town of Mitchell and Sheboygan County				
Units	Town of Mitchell 2000		Sheboygan County 2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Persons	1,132		112,646	
In Households	1,132	100.0%	109,080	96.8%
Householder	419	37.0%	43,545	38.7%
Spouse	299	26.4%	25,273	22.4%
Child	360	31.8%	33,625	29.9%
Other Relative	24	2.1%	2,428	2.2%
Non Relative	30	2.7%	2,171	3.7%
In Group Quarters	0	0.0%	3,566	3.2%
Institutionalized	0	0.0%	2,714	2.4%
Non-institutionalized	0	0.0%	852	0.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Housing Values

Besides the *age* and *condition* of the housing stock, *supply* (covered later in this chapter) and *cost* (covered here) determine the overall availability of local housing. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the median value of an owner-occupied home in Mitchell was \$139,900, compared to an average median value in area towns of \$129,200 (Figure 3.13). Mitchell values are higher than values in comparable communities. Mitchell housing values also rose faster than most towns.

Town	1990 Median Home Value	2000 Median Home Value	Percent Change
Greenbush	\$62,300	\$133,500	114%
Herman	\$63,600	\$108,600	71%
Holland	\$72,500	\$148,500	105%
Lima	\$64,300	\$118,500	84%
Lyndon	\$64,700	\$125,300	94%
Mitchell	\$67,500	\$139,900	107%
Mosel	\$67,300	\$114,100	70%
Plymouth	\$81,100	\$150,100	85%
Rhine	\$76,500	\$149,400	95%
Russell	\$60,800	\$98,300	62%
Scott	\$61,300	\$125,000	104%
Sheboygan	\$71,600	\$135,800	90%
Sheboygan Falls	\$64,100	\$122,900	92%
Sherman	\$64,400	\$133,500	107%
Wilson	\$83,300	\$134,600	62%
Town Average	\$68,353	\$129,200	89%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 3.14 breaks down the value of owner-occupied housing units in the Town of Mitchell and compares the Town with other towns and Sheboygan County as a whole. This table can give a community an indication of whether it has the right “mix” of housing for different income levels. When compared to Sheboygan County, and even other towns, the Town of Mitchell somewhat lacks their diversity of housing values. Over 67% of its homes are in the \$100,000 to \$199,000 range.

Cost Range	Town of Mitchell Percent of All Housing	County Towns Percent of All Housing	Sheboygan County Percent of All Housing
Less than \$50,000	0.8%	1.0%	2.2%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	15.4%	23.4%	42.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	42.5%	37.7%	34.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	25.0%	21.4%	12.9%
\$200,000 or more	16.3%	16.5%	8.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Housing Costs - Rent and Mortgage

Nearly every community suffers from a shortage of affordable housing. Affordable housing, however, is *not* the same as low-income housing. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), housing affordability is defined as paying no more than 30% of household income for housing (including utilities). The 2000 Census shows the median household income in the Town of Mitchell was \$56,875. Assuming a household earned the median income in 2000, the maximum monthly mortgage or rent, plus utilities, an average household could afford for housing was approximately \$1,422.

Rent and Income Comparison

According to the 2000 Census, there were 27 renter-occupied units in the Town. The median gross rent for renter-occupied housing units was \$569, which was higher than the Sheboygan County median of \$496. Out of 17 Mitchell households that rented, 11 or 57.9% paid less than 15% of their income for rent, while 21% paid 35% or more for rent.

Owner Costs and Income Comparison

The median gross mortgage for owner-occupied housing units was \$1,103 (U.S. Census, 2000) within the Town of Mitchell, which was the highest in the County among the 15 towns. The 2000 Census indicates that 38 out of 240 (15.9%) of Mitchell owner-occupied housing units paid more than 30% of their income for monthly owner costs, which was the highest among all 15 towns.

Current Housing Supply & Occupancy – Owner Occupied

The supply of housing in Sheboygan County as a whole increased by 13% between 1990 and 2000 (U.S. Census). During the same period, the housing supply in Mitchell increased 30%, from 337 units to 437.

To meet the needs of residents, the local housing market must have an adequate supply of available housing units for sale or rent. The housing supply should be able to provide for new households, newcomers moving into the area, and changes in existing households brought about by growth, aging, and so forth. If it cannot, existing residents and potential residents will look elsewhere to live.

The overall vacancy rate for the Town of Mitchell was 4.1% for owner occupants (U.S. Census, 2000). A 5% vacancy rate, the result of housing units in the process of changing ownership and/or occupancy, is suggested. (“A vacancy rate of 5% or more is generally adequate to meet a short-term increase in housing demand”, p. 99, *The Small Town Planning Handbook, Second Edition*, Daniels, Thomas L., et al.). The Town’s vacancy rate, which is lower than the ideal, indicates there is perhaps not enough of a supply of housing in Mitchell. A shortage of available housing leads to fewer choices and higher costs for consumers; however, it also makes selling a home easier.

Existing Housing Supply & Occupancy – Rental

About 6% of Mitchell’s housing supply in 2000 was classified as rental-occupied housing (U.S. Census). This percentage falls short of the 25% to 33% of a community’s housing supply that should be available as rental housing to ensure affordability and choice. This is less of a concern in a rural community like the Town of Mitchell.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban development, an overall available vacancy rate of 5.0% for rental housing is required to allow for an adequate choice among potential renters. The overall rental vacancy rate for the Town of Mitchell was 0% (U.S. Census). This vacancy rate, which is lower than the ideal, indicates there is not enough of a supply of rentals in Mitchell. If the shortage continues, rental rates may rise, decreasing affordable options within the Town. However, a shortage is sometimes better than a surplus of rental housing, which leads to lower monthly rates and units remaining unrented for long periods of time. This combination can mean thin profits for landlords, who then find it more difficult financially to maintain and improve their properties.

Projected Housing Units

Demographics, migration trends, and population forecasts indicate that change appears to be inevitable. Estimating the *amount* of growth, however, is difficult if not impossible. Demographic trends are influenced by “free will” factors, such as whether to marry or remain single, whether to have children and how many, and so forth. Migration trends can change dramatically if federal policies are altered. Population forecasts for a particular community are subject to a large variety of factors, including highway expansions, plant relocations, and the attractiveness of surrounding communities, which the Town of Mitchell has little or no control over.

There is no guarantee that recent development trends will continue – and even if there were, there is no reason that a community necessarily has to allow past trends to continue if they are not desired. To address these factors, many plans present separate *high growth*, *moderate growth*, and *low growth* scenarios – and the community can choose which scenario it wants to encourage.

About 83% of respondents to the 2003 Citizen Input Survey expressed a preference for the Town’s future housing growth to continue at the same or slower pace as from 1990 to 2000. Consequently, **the Town of Mitchell has chosen a low growth scenario.**

Figure 3.15– WisDOA Household Projections for Town of Mitchell				
Year	Total Households Projected by WDOA	Households Added	Number to be Served by Sanitary District	Number to be Served by Private On-Site Systems
2010	488	37	0	37
2015	525	37	0	37
2020	563	38	0	38
2025	598	35	0	35

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration & Town of Mitchell

To ensure that the low growth scenario has a chance to be realized, this plan will recommend strategies in the Policies and Programs section of this chapter as well as similar sections in other chapters, especially the Land Use Element chapter.

Subsidized and Special Needs Housing

Due to the larger than ever before numbers of aging citizens in the U.S. population, which is slated to continue until dropping off around 2040, many communities have begun to explore how they will meet the housing needs of this group. Options for relatively healthy older citizens currently include: 1) continued independent living in single-family homes, if transportation and other needs are met;

2) independent living in condos or apartments designed and designated for seniors; 3) Subsidized Rental Housing Projects; and 4) Independent Senior Living Units.

1. Many older citizens still live satisfactorily in the single-family homes they have lived in for the past several decades. Mortgages on these homes are often paid off. Seniors are typically comfortable in these homes and not eager to leave, even when health problems begin. These homes are generally well cared for, but in some cases, due to lack of mobility or the loss of a spouse, maintenance can become neglected. As long as property taxes do not become overly burdensome and sufficient transportation options and public services remain available, some senior citizens can live in their homes into their eighties and beyond.
2. Condominiums, townhouses, and apartments have become increasingly attractive options for older citizens. Typically, such housing is smaller and easier to maintain than a single-family house, and when properly sited near bus lines and other amenities, they are more convenient for older lifestyles.
3. Subsidized Rental Housing Projects include Zion Community Apartment in Adell, Hawthorne Woods Apartment and Quit Qui Oc Manor in Plymouth, Cascade Manor in Cascade, Country Harbor in Random Lake, DeGelder Huis in Cedar Grove, and several sites in Sheboygan.
4. Independent Senior Living Units are typically multi-unit apartment style settings that are designed for independent older adults. Room sizes range from studio/efficiency units to one and two bedroom apartments. Most facilities have a recreation room or common area for social gatherings. There is often a manager available to make referrals, organize events, or assist with independent living. Minimum age limits usually apply in these facilities. Some facilities may also require a resident's annual income to fall below certain guidelines. Examples include Briarwood Cottages in Plymouth, 40 units; Colonial Columns in Plymouth, 28 units; Mapledale Village Senior Apartments in Sheboygan, 123 units; Sheboygan Regency House in Sheboygan, 59 units; South Horizon Apartments in Plymouth, 32 units; and Waterview Apartment Homes I & II in Sheboygan, 91 units.

Currently, the primary living option available in Mitchell for seniors is independent single-family housing. There are also a limited number of houses that have been remodeled into two-family dwellings. The number of residents over the age of 75 in Mitchell in 2000 was 46. Population projections and demographic trends point to an increase in this number. While the community values these older residents, it is difficult for a rural town to provide adequate facilities and services to meet the specialized needs of the elderly. Consequently, it is likely that older residents will need to relocate to other nearby communities with more capacity for meeting specialized needs.

Housing Development Environment

The Town of Mitchell has the desire to maintain its rural character. There may, however, be a need for some new housing in order to replace dilapidated housing stock, if any, and maintain an adequate supply of housing for the growth that is anticipated.

An analysis was done to determine the rate at which recent development in the Town has sold. The developments analyzed consisted of single-family lots targeted at middle to upper middle incomes. Figure 3.16 shows the results. The rate of sales have been moderate at best, and more often than not the rate has been slow. For example, it took 20 years to sell 16 lots in the Meadows.

Figure 3.16 – Recent Developments in Town of Mitchell and Rate of Lot Sales	
Development	Lot Sales
1848 Settlement	15 years – 12 lots
Kettle View	25 years – 8 lots
The Meadows	20 years – 16 lots

Source: Town of Mitchell

ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Housing programs

There are a variety of programs available to communities to help provide housing for residents of limited income or special needs. Resources for such programs include USDA Rural Development and the State of Wisconsin Website at www.doa.state.wi.us/dhir. Such programs include, loans and grants, funding for waste/water systems, programs for home improvement, repair and development, and support for economic development. The Lakeshore Community Action Program has an assistance program available to residents in Sheboygan County. This program is the Section 8 Voucher Housing Assistance program, which provides rental subsidies to low income families, senior citizens, handicapped, and disabled individuals who reside in rental housing. Each community must decide which program or combination of programs will enable them to reach their housing goals and maintain the desired housing environment.

Housing plans

There are currently no stand-alone housing plans for the Town of Mitchell, Sheboygan County, or the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. The housing chapter of the Bay-Lake RPC’s comprehensive plan, however, does identify issues and make broad recommendations for housing in the region. Issues identified include: 1) The need for more housing for all segments of population; 2) Affordable housing for young families; 3) Ensuring that municipal ordinances do not deter or prevent the development of affordable housing; and 4) Affordable living for the elderly.

HOUSING STRATEGY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town of Mitchell will seek direction for this element from the vision and goals identified through the public participation process:

Vision

“The Town of Mitchell will continue a slow, planned development as a mixed residential/farm community with limited commercial and industrial development. Growth of residential development is expected to be on larger lots, lots not served by municipal sewer or water, and to result in the loss of some farmland. Agricultural uses are expected to move away from the traditional dairy farming towards niche/specialty farming or hobby farms. Commercial development in the Town is expected to be primarily from home based businesses that while generally unobtrusive can come into conflict with their neighbors. The Town of Mitchell is desirous of establishing the minimum amount of regulations that would balance private property rights with the overall community’s health and welfare including a farmer’s right to farm. ”

Strategy

The Town of Mitchell’s housing strategy is based largely on desires expressed by residents from the town survey. Most survey participants favored single-family homes on lots of three acres or larger. A majority of survey participants indicated they would prefer similar or slower rates for new home construction that the Town experienced between 1990 and 2000 (about ten homes per year). Most survey participants preferred homes scattered throughout the Town rather than being concentrated in a subdivision, although a significant number of survey participants expressed interest in cluster development or conservation subdivisions.

Recommendations

1. The Town will favor single-family residential development with a minimum lot size of three acres.
2. Future residential development should maintain the rural character/natural views within the Town of Mitchell.
3. Existing farming uses should be allowed to remain in residential area.
4. Future residential developments should be sensitive to natural features.
5. Cooperation with adjacent units of government on future developments adjacent to the Town boundaries should be maintained.
6. If subdivisions are allowed in the Town, the Town should require detailed site plans in order to guide any development within these residential areas.
7. The Town should require site plans for all development.
8. Residential development should be done in a manner that will minimize potential conflicts and preserve existing scenic views.

Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs

Goal 1) The Town of Mitchell prefers single-family, owner-occupied housing.

In the 2003 Citizen Input Survey, the vast majority of respondents favored single-family housing. While there was some support for other housing types, the Town is rural and without public sewer. In general, multi-family and specialized housing types are better sited in nearby cities and villages.

- a) *Policy/program:* The Town will favor single-family housing, but some provision may be made for a limited number of other housing types.

Goal 2) The Town of Mitchell favors a low growth scenario.

In the 2003 Town of Mitchell Citizen Input Survey, 83% of respondents favored growth at the same or slower rate as it had occurred from 1990 to 2000.

- a) Policy/program:* The Town of Mitchell will utilize an objective points system to steer residential development away from prime agricultural areas.
- b) Policy/program:* The Town of Mitchell will explore a combination of controls and growth management ideas listed in the Recommendations section of Chapter 2 to encourage a low growth rate.

Goal 3) The Town of Mitchell will continue to explore legal ways of managing growth.

About 33% of respondents to the 2003 Citizen Input Survey said yes to a purchase of development rights program and another 41% indicated they needed more information about such a program. Exploring programs such as this and those listed in the Recommendations section of Chapter 2, along with traditional zoning, should help the Town retain its rural character.

- a) Policy/program:* The Town of Mitchell will explore a variety of growth management options.