

SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 305  
A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF RACINE: 2035

## **Chapter III**

# **TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Basic information regarding the population, housing stock, and economic base of the County is essential to the preparation of a comprehensive plan. This chapter presents current and historic trend data regarding the population and population characteristics of the City of Racine, as well as projections of future population, household, and employment levels. Existing and historic trend data with respect to the housing stock and economic base of the City of Racine are presented in Chapters VIII and IX, respectively.

### **POPULATION**

#### **Population Size and Characteristics**

The population of the City of Racine decreased from about 95,160 persons in 1970 to 85,725 persons in 1980, 84,300 persons in 1990, and 81,860 in 2000—representing an overall decrease of 13,300 persons, or 14 percent loss, over 30 years. This compares to increases of 8 percent, 10 percent, and 21 percent in the population of Racine County, the Southeastern Wisconsin Region, and the State, respectively, during this time. Since 2000, the City’s population is estimated to have increased by 310 persons, or less than one percent, to 82,170<sup>1</sup> persons in 2007. In comparison, the populations of Racine County and the Southeastern Wisconsin Region are both estimated to have increased by 3 percent between 2000 and 2007. The State population increased by 4 percent during that same time period.

The Federal census provides information about basic population characteristics, such as age, race, and educational attainment. Information regarding the characteristics of the population of the City of Racine, drawn from the 2000 census, is presented below:

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<sup>1</sup> This reflects a formal revision to the population estimate made by the U.S. Census Bureau for the City of Racine as of July 1, 2007.

- The age composition of the population of the City of Racine is slightly younger than that of Racine County, the Southeastern Wisconsin Region and the State overall. Persons under 20 years of age—including much of the pre-school and school age population—numbered 26,000 in 2000, representing 32 percent of the City population. Persons between 20 and 64—including much of the workforce age population—numbered 45,800, or 56 percent of the total. Persons 65 years and over numbered 10,000, or 12 percent of the total. The City median age of 33.1 years was lower than that of the County (36.1 years) Southeastern Wisconsin Region (35.4 years) and the State (36.0 years).
- As part of the 2000 census, respondents were given the opportunity to specify more than one race when reporting their racial identity. The vast majority of the City population (97.4 percent) reported only one race. This includes 68.9 percent reporting White; 20.3 percent reporting Black or African American; 0.4 percent reporting American Indian or Alaska native; 0.6 percent reporting Asian; 0.1 percent reporting Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander; and 7.1 percent reporting some other race. In comparison, 83.0 percent of the population of Racine County, 79.4 percent of the population of the Southeastern Wisconsin Region, and 88.9 percent of the population of the State reported their race as White.
- The Federal census includes questions on Hispanic origin independent of questions on race. In the 2000 census, 14.0 percent of the total City population, or about 11,400 City residents, were identified as Hispanic. This is somewhat higher than the proportion of Hispanic population in the County (7.9 percent) and the Southeastern Wisconsin Region (6.5 percent) and significantly higher than the proportion for the State (3.6 percent). About 76 percent of the Hispanic population in the County in 2000 was located in the City of Racine.
- The educational attainment level provides an indicator of the earning potential of the population and of the type of occupations the City workforce is most suited to fill. The educational attainment level of the City population is somewhat lower than that of Racine County, the Southeastern Wisconsin Region, and the State. As reported in the 2000 census, about 77 percent of the City population age 25 years and over had attained a high school or higher level of education—six percentage points less than Racine County, seven percentage points less than the Southeastern Wisconsin Region and eight percentage points lower than the State. Slightly less than 16 percent of the City population age 25 years and over had a bachelor's degree or graduate degree, compared to slightly more than 20 percent for the County, just over 25 percent for the Region and just over 22 percent for the State.

## **PROJECTIONS**

The future demand for land, housing, transportation facilities and services, and other community facilities that the comprehensive plan must address is directly related to future population, household, and employment levels. The projection of future population, household, and employment levels is, therefore, an essential step in the comprehensive planning process. This section presents projections of population, households, and employment through the year 2035 that are intended to serve as a basis for preparing the comprehensive plan.

The selection of projections to the year 2035 was based on a consideration of the following:

- The projections of population, households, and employment for the City of Racine prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) for the year 2035.
- A trend-based projection that takes into account the change in population, households and employment in the City between 1980 and 2006.
- Planned development and redevelopment in the City as identified in local and neighborhood plans.

### **SEWRPC Projections for the City of Racine**

In 2004, the Regional Planning Commission prepared a set of population, household, and employment projections for the Southeastern Wisconsin Region and its seven counties, looking ahead to the year 2035. As in prior projection efforts, the Commission prepared a range of projections: low, intermediate, and high. The intermediate projection is considered to be the most likely to be achieved; it was used as the basis for the preparation of the year 2035 regional land use plan.

#### ***SEWRPC Population Projections***

The SEWRPC intermediate population projection envisions that there will be relatively stable birth rates and a modest increase in life expectancy in the City of Racine, Racine County, and the Region overall in the coming decades. The intermediate projection also envisions that the City of Racine, Racine County and the Region would experience a relatively stable migration pattern, similar to that which is estimated to have occurred during the early 2000s. The migration assumptions for the intermediate projection reflect the conclusion—from a concurrent SEWRPC economic study—that, overall, the economy of the Region would not likely significantly increase or decrease in strength relative to other areas of the State or Nation.<sup>2</sup>

Under the SEWRPC intermediate projection, the City population would decrease by 1,340 persons, or a 2 percent loss, over the 35-year projection period, from 81,850 persons in 2000 to 80,510 persons in 2035. The decrease in

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<sup>2</sup> A detailed description of the methodology used in the projection of population and households is presented in *SEWRPC Technical Report No. 11 (4<sup>th</sup> Edition)*, The Population of Southeastern Wisconsin, dated July, 2004.

population is generally attributable to the continuing decrease in household sizes. SEWRPC projections indicate that changes may be expected in the age composition of the population in the coming decades. Particularly noteworthy is the expected influence of the large baby-boom generation on the future age structure. By 2030, all baby-boomers will be 65 years of age or older. Persons age 65 and over would account for 20 percent of the County population in 2035, compared to 12 percent in 2000. Changes in age composition of the population may be expected to have many impacts, ranging from impacts on housing needs to impacts on the available labor force, particularly as baby-boomers move into their retirement years.

### ***SEWRPC Household Projections***

SEWRPC projections of households for the City of Racine to the year 2035 were derived from the population projections described above, along with projections of future household size and the proportion of the total population living in housing units as opposed to group quarters. Commission projections indicate that the average size of households throughout the Region including Racine County and the City of Racine may be expected to continue to decrease in the years ahead, though not as rapidly as in the past. In the City of Racine, the average household size is projected to decrease by 5 percent, from 2.54 persons per household in 2000 to 2.41 in 2035. The decrease in household size is anticipated as a result of a number of factors, including a continued change in household types, as well as the projected increase in the older population age groups for which average household sizes tend to be smaller than for the total population. The proportion of the population living in group quarters, as opposed to the population living in households, is projected to increase slightly.

Under the SEWRPC intermediate projection, the number of households in the City of Racine would increase by 920, or 3 percent, over the 35-year projection period, from 31,450 households in 2000 to 32,370 households in 2035.

### ***SEWRPC Employment Projections***

The Commission used an approach to the preparation of employment projections involving the explicit consideration of employment in major industry groups and the preparation of projections for those groups. The projection for each industry group was developed based upon a consideration of past industry trends and available indicators of future trends nationally and within the State and Region. Still another important consideration in the preparation of the employment projections was the future available labor force in the Region. Regional Planning Commission population projections suggest that a leveling-off in the regional labor force may be expected as much of the baby-boom generation reaches retirement age; this may be expected to moderate the number of jobs

that may be accommodated.<sup>3</sup>

Under the SEWRPC intermediate projection, total employment in the City would decrease by 4,200 jobs, or 10 percent loss, from 44,200 jobs in 2000 to 40,000 jobs in 2035. Commission projections indicate that a change may be expected in the types of jobs available in the years ahead for the City, County, and the Region. The largest increases are projected to be in the service sector (business, health, social, recreational, and other services). Employment in the industrial sector—including manufacturing, wholesaling activities, and construction jobs—is projected to decrease.

### **Trend-Based Projections for the City of Racine**

A set of population, household, and projections, developed based upon a continuation of past trends, was also prepared for consideration by the City. These projections are described below.

#### ***Trend-Based Population and Household Projections***

The trend-based projections assume that the number of households in each community would continue to grow as it has in the past, looking back to 1980. In extrapolating future household levels for each community, the historic change in households between 2000 and 2006 was weighted more heavily than the change during the 1990s; and, similarly, the change in households during the 1990s was weighted more heavily than the change during the 1980s. The related population projection is based upon the projected number of households and the projected household size for the community, along with an allowance for population living in group quarters.<sup>4</sup>

Under the trend-based projection, the City population would decrease by 2,460 persons, or a 3 percent loss, over the 35-year projection period, while the number of households would increase by 490, or 2 percent.

#### ***Trend-Based Employment Projections***

The trend-based projection assumes a continuation of past employment change in the City of Racine between 1980 and 2000. Consistent with the methodology used for the trend-based population and household projections, the change for more recent years weighted more heavily than change for earlier years.

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<sup>3</sup> A detailed description of the methodology used in the projection of employment is presented in SEWRPC Technical Report No. 10 (4<sup>th</sup> Edition), *The Economy of Southeastern Wisconsin*, dated July, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> For this purpose, the projected year 2035 average household size for the City of Racine indicated under the regional land use plan was applied to the trend-based projection of households to obtain the year 2035 household population. The year 2035 group quarters population from the regional land use plan was added to obtain the total population.

Under the trend-based projection, the number of jobs in the City would decrease by 9,700, or a 22 percent loss, over the 35-year projection period.

### **Selected Projections of Population, Households, and Employment for the City of Racine**

The alternative projections described above are intended to provide a frame of reference for the City of Racine in its selection of population, household, and employment projections for the plan. The City was asked to review the alternative projections and to select a set of projections from among the alternatives presented—or, to provide a set of projections of its own. Following a review of the alternative projections presented above, and taking into consideration existing plans for development and redevelopment of areas within the City, the City of Racine chose a set of population and household projections for use in preparing the comprehensive plan based on the SEWRPC intermediate projection. Under these projections, the total City population would decrease by 1,340 persons, or a 2 percent loss, from 81,850 persons in 2000 to 80,510 persons in 2035. The number of households in the City would increase by 920, or 3 percent, from 31,450 households in 2000 to 32,370 households in 2035. As noted earlier, while the number of households is anticipated to increase over the planning period, the population would decrease due to continuing decrease in household sizes within the City.

The employment projection selected by the City of Racine is not based on either of the alternatives presented; rather it corresponds to the potential for significant development/redevelopment of land in commercial and industrial/business uses as identified in local and neighborhood land use plans. The City selected a projected number of jobs in 2035, 44,200 jobs, which is the same number of jobs that existed in 2000. The projected number of jobs represents a substantial recovery from the reduced levels of the early 2000s.

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