II.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

Population and Housing

The Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Area has continued to experience a steady growth trend. Population calculations by TAZ identify an estimated MPA population of 104,000 for 2000. This represents a 13.8% increase over the 1990 MPA population estimate of 91,415. Since 1980, the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urbanized Area has experienced an average annual population growth rate of approximately 1.1%. However, this 20-year historical population growth trend has slowed during the past decade to just under 1.0% annually. Therefore, the MPO has selected a 1.0% average annual growth rate as the basis for preparing the population forecast for the next 25-year planning time frame. The application of a 1.0% average annual growth rate produces a year 2030 population forecast of approximately 135,000 for the MPA, as depicted in Table 2. Due to differences in the TAZ configurations and data collection processes between the 1990 and 2000 Census-derived data, and the affect of annexations on the modification of municipal boundaries, demographic calculations by minor civil division are difficult to determine accurately, let alone forecast. Therefore, socio-economic forecasts will only be developed by TAZ and presented as MPA totals.

Table 2
Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Area
Population Trends & Projections
1990-2030

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2020	2030
Total Population	91,415	104,005	109,262	114,515	125,025	135,030

Sources: U.S. Census and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

With population growth comes expansion of the urbanized area. The 1990 modified UZA boundary consisted of approximately 86 square miles with a population density of 1,012 persons per square mile. The MPO, under the guidelines prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau, also modified the restricted 2000 UZA boundary to more accurately reflect urban area development patterns. This modification resulted in the expansion of the UZA boundary to include approximately 110 square miles with a population density of 909 persons per square mile. The population projection of 135,030 prepared for the 177 square mile MPA for the year 2030 would result in an urban population density of 763 persons per square mile. The increasing size of the urbanized area and decreasing population density are related to expanding urban development, and to Census requirements affecting urban boundary adjustments.

Population growth also creates a demand for housing. An important factor influencing the housing demand is the size of the average household. The Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area has followed national trends with a decline in household size from 2.6 persons per household in 1990 to 2.5 persons per household in 2000. The smaller household size, combined with a growing overall population tends to stimulate an increased growth in housing demand. Housing unit projections for the MPA for the year 2030, as depicted in Table 3, were developed using the MPA population projections and the most current household size of 2.5 persons per household. The resulting year 2030

Table 3
Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Area
Housing Trends & Projections
1990-2030

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2020	2030
Total Housing Units	35,794	42,413	43,880	45,990	50,211	54,835

Sources: U.S. Census and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

projections identify a need for an additional 12,422 housing units, or approximately 414 housing units per year, to accommodate the population growth projected between 2000 and 2030. Additional confidence in the future forecasts may be garnered from previous analyses. Previous population projections prepared by Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) for the planning period 1990 to 2020 have reached or exceeded their projected levels in 43% of the identified high growth TAZs five years through the previous 30-year planning period. Map 3 depicts those projected high growth TAZs for 2020 and the relative level of population growth attained in comparison to the projected range of population increase. Map 4 presents the projected high population growth areas by TAZ for the current long range planning period of 2000 to 2030. A comparison of Maps 3 and 4 will identify many of the same projected high growth areas, indicating a continuation of earlier residential development trends. However, Map 4 introduces several additional projected high growth areas resulting from recently completed infrastructure improvements, as well as areas with future improvements planned. Appendix A presents the detailed distribution of population and housing by TAZ for 2000 estimates and 2030 projections.

Income and Employment

The principal economic factors that influence an individual's quality of life through choice of transportation options are income and employment. Income is an indicator of an individual's potential for purchasing transportation services and, in turn, achieving a degree of mobility. Median household income for the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area has increased from $31,954 in 1990 to $37,152 in 2000. However, when compared with the other urbanized areas in the state, the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area ranks

Map 3 inserted here
Comparative Population Growth Projections

Map 4 inserted here
Projected Population Growth Areas

Table 4
Wisconsin Urbanized Areas
Median Household Income Compared
2000

Rank	Urbanized Area	Median Household Income
1	Appleton-Neenah	$47,656
2	Madison	$45,952
3	Janesville	$45,927
4	Kenosha	$44,553
5	Racine	$44,437
6	Green Bay	$44,283
7	Milwaukee	$43,727
8	Sheboygan	$43,082
9	Fond Du Lac	$42,138
10	Wausau	$41,995
11	Oshkosh	$40,410
12	Beloit	$40,131
13	La Crosse	$37,516
14	EAU CLAIRE	$37,152
15	Duluth, MN-Superior, WI	$33,452
	State of Wisconsin	$43,791

Source: U.S. Census

second from the bottom in median household income. Table 4 presents this comparison.

In another economic comparison, Table 5 presents the average annual wages in 2002 for Wisconsin's 12 designated metropolitan statistical areas. This comparison also lists the Eau Claire metropolitan area next to the bottom in average annual wages.

The relatively low median household income in the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area is partially attributable to the changing wage and employment characteristics of the area. An increasing number of lower paying and part-time retail jobs, impacted by a large student population, strongly influence the average household income level.

Income, however, must be viewed in the context of cost of living in order to make a fair assessment of its impact on the quality of life. According to the American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association's (ACCRA) quarterly reports on the cost of living index, the Eau Claire Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) maintains a mid-range total cost of living index, when compared to other similar reporting MSAs in the state. The most recent ACCRA cost of living index data available for the fourth quarter of 2004 lists the Eau Claire MSA (which includes both Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties) with a composite index of 99.9, slightly below the 100% benchmark for the cost of goods and services. Transportation costs, as a component of the

Table 5
Wisconsin Metropolitan Areas
Average Annual Wages
2002

Rank	Metro Area	Average Annual Wage
1	Milwaukee-Waukesha	$36,523
2	Madison	$35,410
3	Racine	$34,368
4	Green Bay	$33,698
5	Appleton-Oshkosh-Neenah	$33,020
6	Janesville-Beloit	$32,837
7	Kenosha	$32,473
8	Sheboygan	$32,148
9	Duluth, MN-Superior, WI	$30,581
10	Wausau	$30,292
11	EAU CLAIRE	$28,760
12	La Crosse	$28,719
	State of Wisconsin	$32,464
	United States	$36,764

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

composite cost of living index, are consistently one of the highest among the items listed for the Eau Claire MSA, exceeded only by health care. Table 6 presents a representative sample of the ACCRA cost of living index for the Eau Claire MSA from 2000 to 2004.

Table 6
Eau Claire Metropolitan Statistical Area
Cost of Living Index
2000-2004

Year	Quarter	100% Composite Index	Groceries	Housing	Utilities	Transportation	Health Care	Miscellaneous
2004	4th	99.9	96.7	95.9	95.8	96.6	113.7	104.7
2003	3rd	99.0	100.3	99.6	87.3	101.4	107.4	99.8
2002	4th	95.7	94.0	97.0	92.9	101.8	107.6	92.4
2001	4th	99.4	94.8	106.9	82.9	103.8	109.0	96.4
2000	4th	95.8	98.8	88.1	100.3	100.5	110.3	96.3

Source: American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association, Quarterly Report, 2000-2004

The population growth experienced in the Chippewa-Eau Claire MPA is influenced by local economic conditions and the availability of employment opportunities. Employment growth has been particularly strong over the past decade, increasing by 21% between 1990 and 2000. As the major employment center in the west central Wisconsin region, it would appear reasonable to assume that the Chippewa-Eau Claire MPA has a significant influence on regional employment trends. The regional employment projections developed by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development take into account the changing demographics which make up the workforce, but still project an average employment growth of 1.5% annually over the planning timeframe. Therefore, the Chippewa-Eau Claire MPO incorporated the Department of Workforce Development's forecast in the preparation of employment projections for the MPA. Table 7 presents the employment trends and projections for the MPA for 1990 through 2030.

Table 7
Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Area
Employment Trends & Projections
1990-2030

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2020	2030
Total Employment	54,732	66,332	71,287	76,242	86,152	95,277

Sources: 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package, Wisconsin Dept. of Workforce Development, and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

5 inserted here
Comparative Employment Growth Projections

Map 6 inserted here
Projected Employment Growth Areas

The use of certain employment categories are required as input into the computer modeling process for traffic forecasting and impact analysis. This employment information, along with the population and housing data by TAZ, identifies where people live, work and shop, and is used in the traffic modeling process to determine the routes people use in their daily travel and the associated traffic impacts.

A review of previous employment projections for the MPA provides a comparative analysis of those earlier forecasts and lends support to the reliability of current projections. Previous MPA employment projections prepared by TAZ for the planning period 1990 to 2020 have reached or exceeded their projected levels in 63% of the identified high growth TAZs five years through the previous 30-year planning period. Map 5 depicts those projected high growth TAZs for 2020 and the relative level of employment growth attained in comparison to the projected range of employment growth. Map 6 presents the projected high employment growth areas by TAZ for the current long range planning period of 2000 to 2030. A comparison of Maps 5 and 6 identifies many of the same TAZs exhibiting high employment growth potential. This would indicate a continuation of earlier employment growth trends. Map 6, however, identifies several additional projected high growth areas that coincide with the recent expansion of infrastructure improvements, or in which future improvements are planned.

Appendix A presents the detailed employment distribution for the MPA by TAZ for 2000 estimates and 2030 projections. The population, housing and employment data presented in Appendix A is derived from the 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP). The year 2030 projections by TAZ are based on the previously described forecasting methodologies for population, housing and employment, and incorporate existing and future land use patterns as prescribed in local land use plans to determine the distribution by TAZ.

Mobility

The mobility of the residents of the Chippewa-Eau Claire MPA is automotive dominated. The MPA parallels national and state trends with increasing reliance on the automobile as the preferred mode of transportation. The 2000 U.S. Census provides information on modal usage through the commuting to work data section. According to this data source for the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area, 89.8% of workers 16 years of age and over use the automobile to commute to work, while 7.7% walked or worked at home, 1.4% use public transportation, 0.6% use a bicycle, and 0.5% use some other means. Of those workers who used an automobile to commute to work, 81.3% drove alone, while only 8.5% carpooled. Automobile preference is directly related to convenience, which is expressed in terms of travel time. In 2000, the mean travel time to work was 16.2 minutes, only two minutes longer than the 14.3 minutes reported in 1990 for the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area.

The convenience of automotive travel within the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area contributes to the regional commuting patterns. Journey to work data compiled in the

2000 Census identifies place of work and place of residence by minor civil division for all employed persons age 16 and older. This data is useful in determining how far the people who work in the urban area travel from their home. The regional commuter shed prepared from the journey-to-work data for the urban area is depicted on Map 7. The arrows on the map depict the number of employed persons living within the identified counties that work within the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area, as well as those workers living in the urban area who commute to work in the surrounding counties.

Census data analysis for the Chippewa-Eau Claire Urban Area reveals a steady increase in the number of automobiles. There were 1.7 vehicles per household in 2000 compared with 1.6 vehicles in 1990. In 2000, the urban area recorded 1.0 persons per vehicle compared to 1.1 in 1990. Both of these statistical comparisons must also be viewed in relationship to increasing population and household numbers, which serve as multiplying factors that result in a substantial net increase in the total number of automobiles in the urban area. A similar comparison for vehicles per housing unit reveals that there were 1.70 vehicles per housing unit in 2000, compared with 1.56 vehicles in 1990. By applying the 2000 urban area vehicle per housing unit ratio to the planning area growth projections for the number of housing units, an estimate of the total number of vehicles available in future years can be determined. Table 8 presents the estimated growth in automobiles in the MPA. It should be noted that these projections are based on 2000 vehicle availability ratios and do not take into consideration future trends that may increase or decrease these ratios.

Table 8
Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Area
Automobile Estimates
1990-2030

	1990	2000	2005	2010	2020	2030
Total Number of Automobiles	55,839	72,102	74,596	78,183	85,359	93,220

Sources: U.S. Census and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

An additional indicator of the growing number of automobiles in the urban area is the decline in the percentage of households without access to an automobile. In 2000, 7.5% of the urban area households reported having no vehicle available, compared with 10.0% of the households in 1990. While this indicates an increasing level of mobility in the urban area, the lack of an automobile to the 7.5% of urban area households may represent a mobility limitation that restricts an individual's freedom of travel. Additionally, the 2000 Census identifies 14% of the planning area population age 5 years and over with a disability that may limit their mobility. The elderly aged 65 and over constitute 13% of the total planning area population, but represent 33% of those individuals identified with a disability, or 37% of the elderly population.

Map 7 **8.5 x 11**
Daily Workplace Commuters

Environmental Justice Considerations

Presidential Executive Order 12898 of 1994 directed every Federal agency to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low income populations. Federal guidance further identified three fundamental environmental principles to fulfilling this charge:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.

- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.

- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

The Chippewa-Eau Claire MPO, as a partner with the FHWA and WisDOT in the use of federal transportation funds, has placed an increased emphasis on accomplishing the goals of environmental justice by striving to better understand and address the unique needs of different socio-economic groups in the development of transportation plans and programs.

A demographic profile by geographic location was developed as part of the assessment of the metropolitan planning area to identify minority, low-income and elderly populations, and persons with disabilities. The results of this exercise identified various concentrations for these segments of the metropolitan planning area's population by TAZ. Map 8 depicts the relative distribution of the minority population within the metropolitan planning area. Similarly, Maps 9, 10, and 11 identify the distribution of the elderly population, persons with disabilities, and low-income population, respectively. The criteria used to identify these target populations included:

- Minorities – all minorities
- Elderly – all persons age 65 and over
- Persons with Disabilities – all persons age 5 and over with any identifiable disability as determined by the U.S. Census
- Low Income – all persons age 5 and over identified as at or below poverty level by the U.S. Census

In addition to the relative percentage distribution for these identified populations depicted by the maps, Appendix B displays both the number and percent of the total population listed by TAZ. The listing of the actual numbers is important to the verification of the size and potential impact upon a selected demographic sub-grouping. The geographic location of these identified target populations will be evaluated later in this planning document for any potential impact by existing and planned transportation projects or services.

Map 8
Minority population distribution

Map 9
Elderly population distribution

Map 10
Persons with disabilities distribution

Map 11
Low income population distribution