



# RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## 1 Demographics and Issues & Opportunities

### Overview

Rusk County's Comprehensive Plan begins with an overview of the county based on information including the past, present, and future projections covering a 20-year planning period. This overview is necessary to understand the changes that are taking place in Rusk County. The information found in this plan is all important and will help assist in achieving the goals and objectives that will guide the future development and policy for the next 20 years in Rusk County.

### 1.2 Population Characteristics

The population in Rusk County increased by 5,243 during the ten year span between 1910 and 1920. Between 1920 and 1950 the population of the county remained steady. The population of the County had increased through 1940. After 1940 a continue decline in population is evident according to Table 1.1:

**Table 1.1:Rusk County:Population 1910-2000**

Year	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Pop.	11,160	16,403	16,081	17,737	16,790	14,794	14,238	15,589	15,079	15,347

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

---

### Population Projections

Table 1.2 shows population projections for Rusk County from 2005 to 2025. These projections shown are based on current and past population trends that took place in Rusk County and are intended to be a baseline guide for any of the county decision makers. In this table it shows that Rusk County will steadily increase through the next 25 years. Figure 1.1 shows the populations levels of 1950-2000 and the projections of 2005-2025.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Rusk County</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>15,564</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>15,854</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>15,996</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>16,124</b>
<b>2025</b>	<b>15,944</b>
<b>Absolute Changes 2005-2025</b>	<b>+ 380</b>

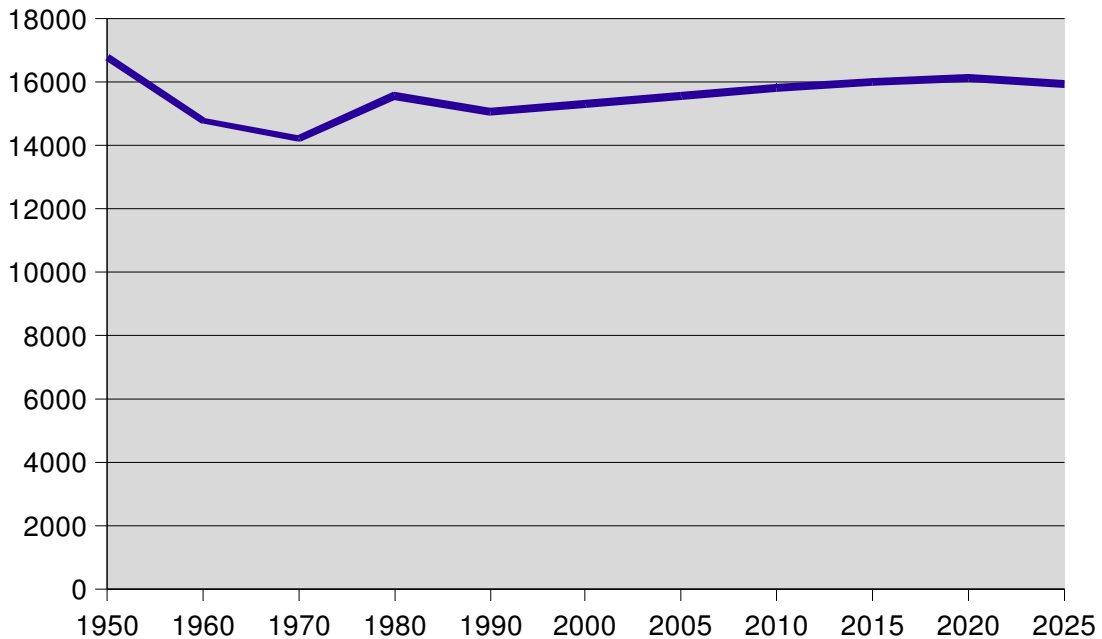


## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

---

**Figure 1.1 Rusk County  
Population 1950-2000, Population Projections 2005-2025**



### **Ethnicity and Ancestral Composition**

An ethnic group consists of those who conceive themselves as being alike. For a lot of them they share a common history, culture, and ancestry. This could in fact include things such as language, values, religion, music, employment patterns, and geographic origins. Table 1.3 below shows the ethnicity for residents of Rusk County. Backgrounds of Polish ancestries and German ancestries appear to be the strongest of Rusk County.



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**ADOPTED -**

<b>Table 1.3: Rusk County Ethnicity</b>			
<b>Czech</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>Polish</b>	<b>2,159</b>
<b>Danish</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>Portuguese</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Dutch</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>Russian</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>1,223</b>	<b>Scotch-Irish</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>French (except Basque)</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>Scottish</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>French Canadian</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>Slovak</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>German</b>	<b>5,545</b>	<b>Swedish</b>	<b>735</b>
<b>Greek</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Swiss</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Hungarian</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>Ukrainian</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Irish</b>	<b>1,732</b>	<b>United States or American</b>	<b>781</b>
<b>Italian</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>Welsh</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Lithuanian</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>West Indian</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Norwegian</b>	<b>1,628</b>	<b>Other ancestries</b>	<b>1,268</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



# RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## ADOPTED -

---

Most of the county residents reported that their race was white (97.7%) in the 2000 U.S. Census for Rusk County. Other racial categories only accounted for almost four percent of of the total population as shown in table 1.4.

<b>Table 1.4: Race in Rusk County, 2000</b>		
<b>Race</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>14,992</b>	<b>97.7%</b>
<b>Black</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>American Indian or Alaskan Native</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>Some Other Race</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>Two or more races</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### **Demographic Change and Age Distribution**

Table 1.5 below shows Rusk County starting to age within ten years. Shifts in the age structure of the population can affect many needs and services within the county which would include housing, elderly care, and schooling. State trends point to an aging population that will need more services. The biggest changes happened in the age groups of 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54.



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

**Table 1.5: Rusk County Population by Age, 1990 and 2000**

Age	1990 Number	% of Total	2000 Number	% of Total	% Change 1990 - 2000
Under 5	1,079	7.1%	829	5.4%	-1.7%
5 - 9	1,184	7.9%	1,057	6.9%	-1%
10 -14	1,182	7.8%	1,151	7.5%	-0.3%
15 - 19	1,118	7.4%	1,189	7.7%	0.3%
20 -24	821	5.4%	787	5.1%	-0.3%
25 - 34	2,123	14.1%	1,572	10.2%	-3.9%
35 - 44	1,980	13.1%	2,237	14.6%	1.5%
45 - 54	1,420	9.4%	2,113	13.8%	4.4%
55 - 59	680	4.5%	822	5.4%	0.9%
60 - 64	734	4.7%	758	4.9%	0.2%
65 - 74	1,515	10%	1,400	9.1%	-0.9%
75 - 84	955	6.3%	1,021	6.7%	0.4%
85 and over	288	1.9%	411	2.7%	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,079</b>		<b>15,347</b>		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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Table 1.6 and Figure 1.2 show the amount of males and females by each age group.

**Table 1.6: Population by Age Groups**

	Male	Female
0-4	434	395
5-9	535	522
10-14	553	598
15-19	644	545
20-24	429	358
25-29	355	333
30-34	442	442
35-39	562	538
40-44	575	562
45-49	576	564
50-54	497	476
55-59	422	400
60-64	367	391
65-69	344	386
70-74	302	369
75+	577	855

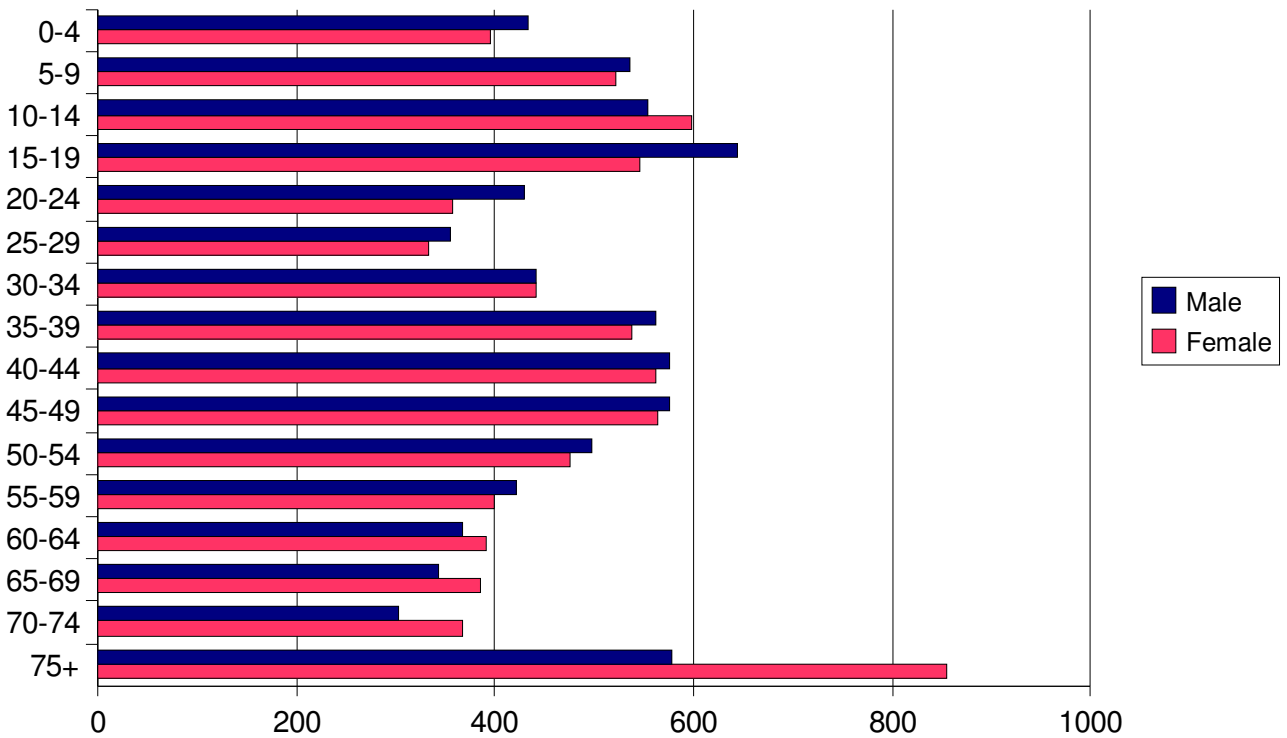


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## Figure 1.2: Age Groups







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### Population of Municipal Divisions

#### Historical Population

Table 1.7 shows the populations of each civil division and their change in population from 1950 to 2000. Of the county's 33 civil divisions, 26 of them sustained loss in population. Some notable municipalities to gain a larger population was the Town of Dewey, which gained 148 people (39.8%), Town of Flambeau who gained 124 people (13.1%) and the Town of Willard who gained 147 people (37.5%).

**Table 1.7: Historical Population, 1950 - 2000**

MUNICIPALITY	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	Absolute Change 1950 - 2000	Percent Change 1950 - 2000
<b>Towns</b>								
Town of Atlanta	661	549	489	586	585	627	-34	-5.1%
Town of Big Bend	445	365	324	398	386	402	-43	-9.7%
Town of Big Falls	175	136	130	122	107	107	-68	-38.9%
Town of Cedar Rapids	43	28	9	30	30	37	-6	-14%
Town of Dewey	375	369	363	399	487	523	148	39.5%
Town of Flambeau	943	895	931	1,086	1,018	1,067	124	13.1%
Town of Grant	983	1049	931	998	847	767	-216	-22%
Town of Grow	644	559	548	560	450	473	-171	-26.6%
Town of Hawkins	317	281	230	184	163	170	-147	-46.4%
Town of Hubbard	227	124	112	185	216	168	-59	-26%
Town of Lawrence	337	219	167	240	240	240	-97	-28.8%
Town of Marshall	725	706	679	697	630	683	-42	-5.7%
Town of Murry	416	324	253	301	291	275	-141	-33.9%
Town of Richland	287	211	196	217	185	206	-81	-28.2%
Town of Rusk	500	387	372	422	443	475	-25	-5%



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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**Table 1.7: Historical Population, 1950 - 2000**

Town of South Fork	197	201	204	146	119	120	-77	-39.1%
Town of Strickland	465	385	262	281	262	300	-165	-35.5%
Town of Stubbs	720	631	633	612	573	587	-133	-18.5%
Town of Thornapple	661	450	543	740	757	811	150	22.7%
Town of True	430	361	360	332	310	291	-139	-32.3%
Town of Washington	323	233	206	318	301	312	-11	-3.4%
Town of Wilkinson	85	49	44	63	51	66	-19	-22.4%
Town of Willard	392	362	380	481	448	539	147	37.5%
Town of Wilson	99	83	75	72	67	84	-15	-15.2%
<b>Village</b>								
Village of Bruce	867	815	799	905	844	787	-80	-9.2%
Village of Conrath	114	121	114	86	92	98	-16	-14%
Village of Glen Flora	91	75	69	83	108	93	2	2.2%
Village of Hawkins	414	402	385	407	375	317	-97	-23.4%
Village of Ingram	146	99	109	61	91	76	-70	-47.9%
Village of Sheldon	271	240	218	292	268	256	-15	-5.5%
Village of Tony	182	162	144	146	114	105	-77	-42.3%
Village of Weyerhaeuser	331	339	285	313	283	353	22	6.6%
<b>City</b>								
City of Ladysmith	3,924	3,584	3,678	3,826	3,938	3,932	8	0.2%
<b>Rusk County</b>	<b>16,790</b>	<b>14,794</b>	<b>14,238</b>	<b>15,589</b>	<b>15,079</b>	<b>15,347</b>	<b>-1,443</b>	<b>-8.6%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



# RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Projected Changes Through 2025**

Table 1.8 shows the population projections for the civil divisions through 2025. Rusk County shows that it will slightly rise through 2025 with a 2.4% increase in population.

**Table 1.8: Population Projections, 2005 - 2025**

MUNICIPALITY	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	Absolute Change 2005 - 2025	Percent Change 2005 - 2025
<b>Towns</b>							
Town of Atlanta	650	676	696	715	721	71	10.9%
Town of Big Bend	410	420	426	432	430	20	4.9%
Town of Big Falls	104	101	98	94	89	-15	-14.4%
Town of Cedar Rapids	36	36	35	34	33	-3	-8.3%
Town of Dewey	550	579	604	627	639	89	16.2%
Town of Flambeau	1,094	1,137	1,170	1,202	1,210	116	10.6%
Town of Grant	748	732	708	684	648	-100	-13.4%
Town of Grow	467	463	455	447	430	-37	-7.9%
Town of Hawkins	175	182	186	191	192	17	9.7%
Town of Hubbard	160	154	145	137	126	-34	-21.3%
Town of Lawrence	252	265	276	286	291	39	15.5%
Town of Marshall	696	713	723	733	728	32	4.6%
Town of Murry	267	261	252	243	229	-38	-14.2%
Town of Richland	209	213	216	217	215	6	2.9%
Town of Rusk	492	511	526	540	544	52	10.6%
Town of South Fork	120	120	120	119	116	-4	-3.3%
Town of Strickland	317	335	350	365	373	56	17.7%



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

**Table 1.8: Population Projections, 2005 - 2025**

Town of Stubbs	601	617	628	638	636	35	5.8%
Town of Thornapple	838	868	891	913	918	80	9.5%
Town of True	282	275	265	254	239	-43	-15.2%
Town of Washington	316	321	323	326	321	5	1.6%
Town of Wilkinson	72	78	84	89	93	21	29.2%
Town of Willard	587	639	684	730	760	173	29.5%
Town of Wilson	88	92	95	99	100	12	13.6%
<b>Village</b>							
Village of Bruce	773	761	743	724	691	-82	-10.6%
Village of Conrath	107	117	126	135	141	34	31.8%
Village of Glen Flora	93	93	92	91	89	-4	-4.3%
Village of Hawkins	347	379	407	436	455	108	31.1%
Village of Ingram	79	82	85	87	88	9	11.4%
Village of Sheldon	253	251	246	241	232	-21	-8.3%
Village of Tony	100	96	91	85	79	-21	-21%
Village of Weyerhaeuser	368	385	398	411	415	47	12.8%
<b>City</b>							
City of Ladysmith	3,913	3,902	3,852	3,799	3,673	-240	-6.1%
<b>Rusk County</b>	<b>15,564</b>	<b>15,854</b>	<b>15,996</b>	<b>16,124</b>	<b>15,944</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>2.4%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

### 1.3 Household Characteristics

A **household** includes all of the people who live in a housing unit. By gathering the data of these households of a community it will help establish an understanding of what the community is like along with that it provides insight into a community life.

The 2000 Census identified 6,095 households in Rusk County. Of this total, 4,158 are family households which makes up almost 70% of all households. What it means by a family household is that there must be two or more people living in that household who are related by marriage, birth, or adoption. There are 1,937 non-family households in Rusk County which means it is a householder living alone or lives with non-relatives only. Table 1.9 gives an understanding of what Rusk County households are like and what the amount for a type of family there is.

**Table 1.9: Household Characteristics**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent of all Households</b>
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>6,095</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Family Households (families)</b>	<b>4,158</b>	<b>68.2%</b>
<b>With own children under 18 years</b>	<b>1,743</b>	<b>28.6%</b>
<b>Married-couple family</b>	<b>3,407</b>	<b>55.9%</b>
<b>With own children under 18 years</b>	<b>1,331</b>	<b>21.8%</b>
<b>Female householder, no husband present</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>7.9%</b>
<b>With own children under 18 years</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>Non-Family Households</b>	<b>1,937</b>	<b>31.8%</b>
<b>Householder living alone</b>	<b>1,645</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Householder 65 years and older</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>14.3%</b>



# RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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**Table 1.9: Household Characteristics**

Households with individuals under 18 years	1,871	30.7%
Households with individuals 65 years and older	1,968	32.3%
Average household size	2.45	(X)
Average family size	2.97	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Household Projections

Household projections for Rusk County to the year 2025 are shown on table 1.10. From 2000 to 2025, the county is projected to gain 1,054 households (Approximately 42 households per year). That would be an increase of 17.3%.

**Table 1.10: Household Projections 2000 - 2025**

Rusk County	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
U.S. Census	6,095					
Projections		6,334	6,649	6,888	7,115	7,149

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## 1.4 Employment Characteristics

According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau figures, the Rusk County population who are employed is at 6,997 people. Manufacturing employed the most from Rusk County reaching 2,043 with educational, health, and social services coming in second with 1,310 people hired. The figure displays employment of Rusk County by percentage of industry sector.

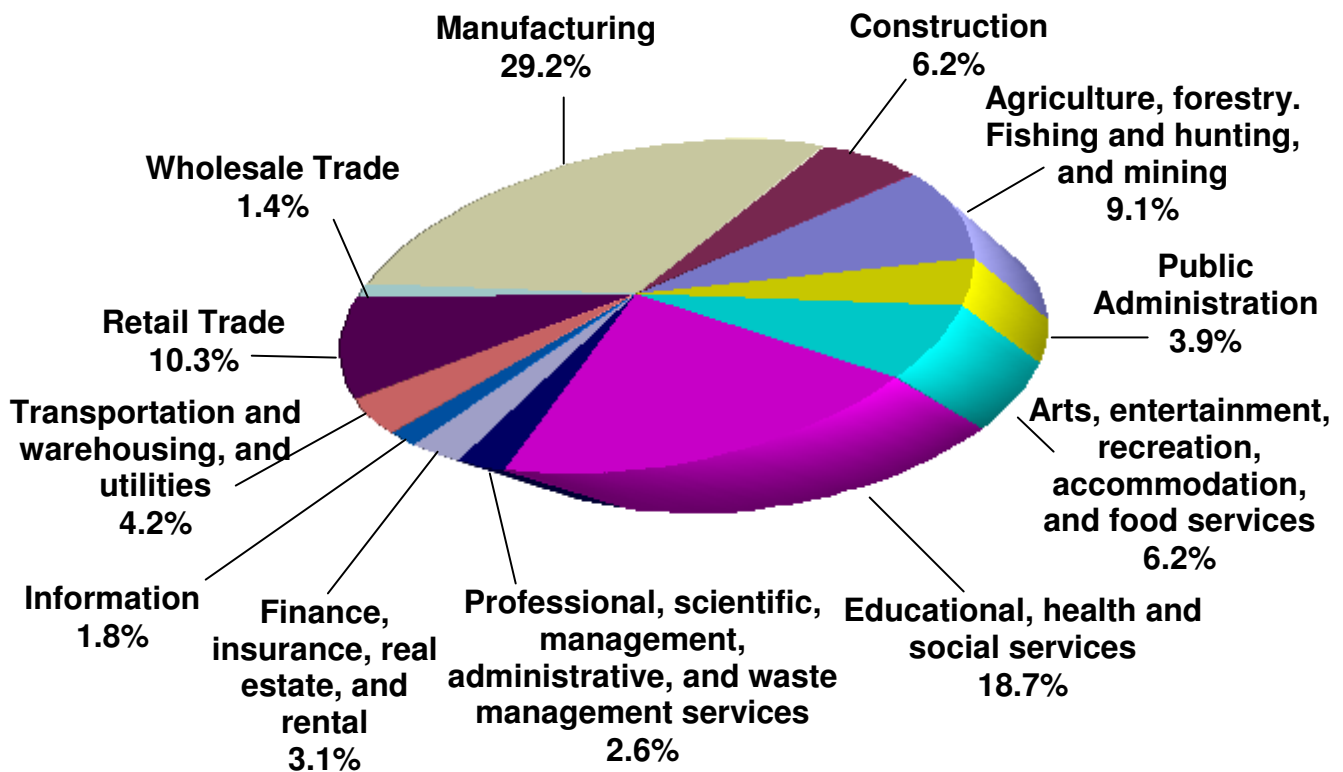


## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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Figure 1.3: Employment by Industry



\*Other Services (except public administration) – 3.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Rusk County Labor Force

A community's labor force is that portion of the population that is employed or seeking employment. The table below lists Rusk County labor force statistics for the last ten years on an average annual basis. According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the unemployed has gradually gone up and was at it's highest in 2007 in the ten years shown.



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

**Table 1.11: Rusk County Labor Force Data**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Labor Force	7,167	7,199	7,941	7,973	7,927	7,829	7,825	8,021	7,913	7,728
Employed	6,748	6,861	7,532	7,504	7,403	7,320	7,324	7,511	7,387	7,190
Unemployed	419	338	409	469	524	509	501	510	526	538
Unemp. Rate	5.8%	4.7%	5.2%	5.9%	6.6%	6.5%	6.4%	6.4%	6.6%	7.0%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, LAUS

## 1.5 Income Levels and Poverty Rates

### Median Household Income

The 2000 U.S. Census reports that the median household income for Rusk County is \$31,344. Wisconsin's median household income is \$43,791, making Rusk County falling short of the average income. The table shown here gives the detailed averages of annual incomes for Rusk County.





## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

Table 1.12: Rusk County Household Income		
Annual Income	Number of Households	Percent of Households
Less than \$10,000	670	10.9%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	506	8.3%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,186	19.4%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,006	16.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,159	18.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,065	17.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	334	5.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	143	2.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	20	0.3%
\$200,000 or more	30	0.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Per Capita Income

Per capita *money* income (PCI) is defined as all resident income divided by the population and is reported by census data. It is gathered from traceable income from interest, welfare program payments, dividends, wages, etc. Per capita personal income (PCPI) is the same as PCI except that it includes moneys received from insurance payments, refunds, and gifts. Since that happens, PCPI figures will always be higher than that of PCI.

Table 1.13: Rusk County and the State of Wisconsin: Income and Poverty Levels		
	Rusk County	Wisconsin
Per Capita Personal Income (2002)	\$20,859	\$30,050
Per Capita Income (1999)	\$15,563	\$21,271
Percent of Population below Poverty Level (1999)	15.4%	12.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

### 1.6 Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is the highest degree or level of schooling a person can complete, and is a variable used when assessing a community's labor force potential. According to the 2000 Census data of Rusk County's population age 25 and older, 79.1 percent attained a high school education or higher, while Wisconsin's percentage was a little higher at 85.1. Table 1.14 details educational attainment for Rusk County and Wisconsin.

<b>Table 1.14: Educational Attainment 2000</b>		
	<b>Rusk County</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>
<b>Less than 9<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>186,125</b>
<b>9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade, No Diploma</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>332,292</b>
<b>High School Graduate</b>	<b>4,468</b>	<b>1,201,813</b>
<b>Some College, No Degree</b>	<b>1,901</b>	<b>715,664</b>
<b>Associate Degree</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>260,711</b>
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>530,268</b>
<b>Graduate or Professional Degree</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>249,005</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,296</b>	<b>3,475,878</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



## RUSK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED -

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### **1.7 Survey Data Summary**

The Rusk County Comprehensive Planning Survey included questions relating to importance of various County assets, i.e., farming, forests, rivers, schools, etc.. The results indicated that pertaining to Quality of Life, lakes and rivers are very important to respondents along with a safe environment from crime and keeping the natural environment clean. It seems that of lesser importance was public outdoor motorized recreation.

Overall Quality of Life was graded Good or Excellent by 55.8% of survey respondents 24.8% graded it Average, and 19.3% felt that it was Fair or Poor.