



Together Progress

Sawyer County
Housing Study
2018

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Project Overview

Research for this study was completed between July and November 2018. Primary data sources used in the following analysis include the US Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS), Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Zillow, Wisconsin Realtor's Association, Applied Population Laboratory, University of Wisconsin Madison 2013 study, Department of Administration, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Hayward Community Schools, Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) Housing Authority, Sawyer County Housing Authority, Sawyer County Land Records, Sawyer County Zoning, and interviews with local stakeholders.

The 2010 Census is an accurate benchmark for demographic data. The Census Bureau created the American Community Survey (ACS), an annual sampling of households, as a supplement to the ten year census data. The ACS is an estimate based on a sampling and, therefore, a margin or error exists for each estimate. The most recent ACS estimates for this study were derived over a five year period between 2012 and 2016.

Local resources provided current year data. See a complete listing on page 41.

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Executive Summary

Employment: Sawyer County's largest employers are located in the Northwest quadrant of the county in the City and Town of Hayward and Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO). Many of the available housing units are outside this area. With unemployment at 3.7% in Sawyer County, most individuals who are able and willing to work are employed. Employers who hire qualified workers from outside of the area report that the new hires have difficulty finding affordable, standard housing.

Past Growth: Sawyer County has experienced steady population and household growth since 1980 with a slight dip in population in 2017. Between 2000 and 2016, estimates show the county added 848 households, but only 222 people were added from 2000 to 2017. This has resulted in a reduction in average household size from 2.39 persons per household in 2000 to an estimated 2.15 in 2016.

Construction: Interviews with area contractors confirm that residential construction is booming. Many are booked out through the next building season. From 2016 to October 2018, 287 building permits have been issued by Sawyer County Zoning for new or replacement dwellings. The ratio of new permanent residents to seasonal is about 50/50.

Sawyer County has the potential for future population and household growth without any additional housing unit construction. This would require converting some of the vacant and seasonal use units to permanent occupancy. With seasonal dwellings accounting for 54.7% of the housing units in the county, Sawyer County has more vacant housing than permanent residences. However, since most of the seasonal dwellings are higher-priced lakeshore housing, it is assumed that these units will remain for seasonal use. Any rental of these units is likely to be through Vacation Rentals By Owner and Air B&B rather than for long term lease. Residential housing growth will be more directly linked to new housing unit construction.

Projected Growth: Sawyer County continues to see population growth, mainly in the 65 and older age cohort, as the population ages and people migrate to the area for retirement. Estimates show the county adding 1,592 people between 2017 and 2030 before death rates exceed birth rates and the population begins to decline.

Projections estimate an increase of 1,346 households from 2016 to 2030. Of these households, an estimated 571 will be households with persons 65 and older. With this trend, it is estimated that household size will continue to decline.

With the trend of people working past the age of 65, Sawyer county could see an increase in the labor force by the 65 and older age cohort. Increases in the labor force will be required to meet the needs of an aging population.

The City of Hayward and Joint Review Board voted to create a Tax Incremental District (TID) on the north side of the city as an incentive zone for development in the City of Hayward. A TID is an area in which tax revenues on property improvements within the district are used to repay investments made by the developer. It was created to support a rental housing development in the City of Hayward. Both the TID and LCO have been designated Opportunity Zones by Sawyer County. The Opportunity Zones are designed to spur economic development by providing tax benefits to investors. See Page 37 for a map of the Opportunity Zones.

Housing Tenure Patterns: Between 2000 and 2016, Sawyer County experienced a gain of 405 owner-occupied and 443 renter-occupied households. Growth is expected to continue with an estimated increase of 809 owner-occupied households from 2016 to 2030 and 537 renter-occupied households during the same time period.

Housing Authority and Income-based Housing: Sawyer County Housing Authority, Lac Courte Oreilles Housing Authority and income-based housing entities account for 640 rental units in Sawyer County. These units make up 31% of the total rental housing inventory. Several of these projects were constructed in the 1970s or early 1980s when the federal government was actively involved in producing low income housing.

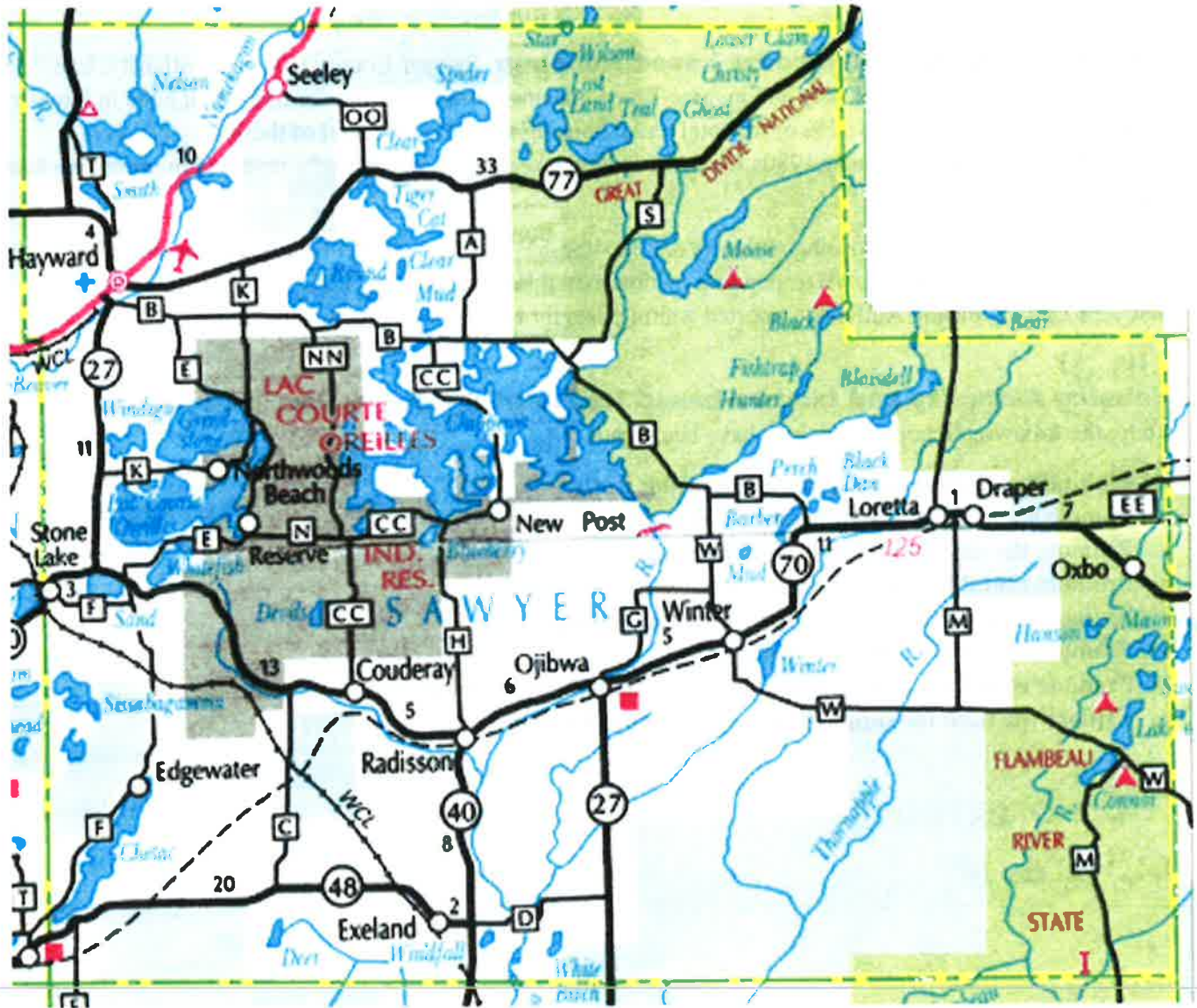
The rental vacancy rate for housing authority and income-based housing is 1.1% with a vacancy rate of 0% in the LCO and Hayward areas. All responding income-based housing entities, LCO Housing Authority and Sawyer County Housing Authority reported waiting lists for their rental units in Hayward and LCO.

Housing Authority and Income-based Housing: Based on the research completed for this study, the following recommendations have been made:

- ♦ **Maintain and preserve the existing housing stock**
- ♦ **Demolish and clear any substandard structures**
- ♦ **Promote the development of rental housing**
- ♦ **Promote rental housing rehabilitation**
- ♦ **Promote affordable rental housing creation when possible**
- ♦ **Promote creation of senior housing**
- ♦ **Promote education and resources to future homeowners and renters**
- ♦ **Explore the need for supportive or transitional housing**

Sawyer County Demographic Data

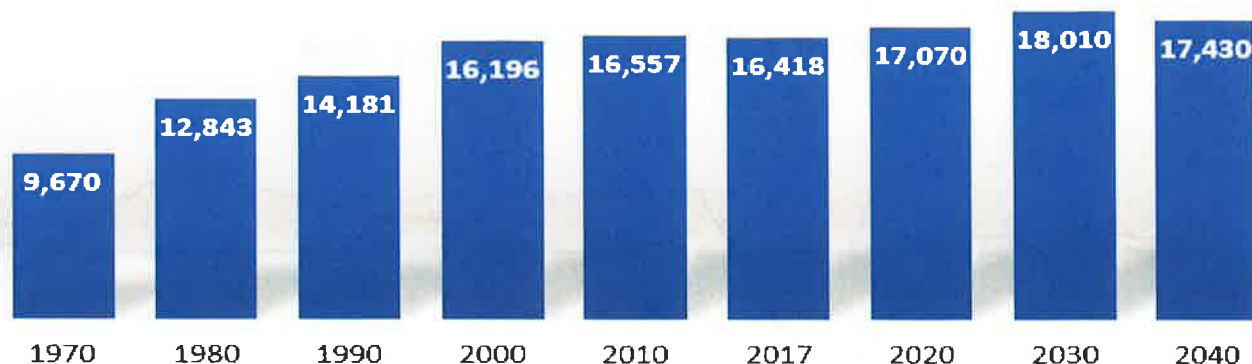
Map 1



Population Trends

Chart 1

Population Estimates over Time



Sawyer County experienced steady population growth from 1970 to 2010. According to the US Census Bureau, Sawyer County's population fell by an estimated 0.8% from April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017, decreasing from 16,557 persons in 2010 to an estimated 16,418 in 2017. Wisconsin's population is estimated to have grown by 1.9% in the same time period.

The Department of Administration estimates that Sawyer County will reach a population of 18,010 in 2030 before declining as the county population ages and death rates exceed birth rates.

Chart 2

Projected Population Change based on Natural Increase & Net Migration

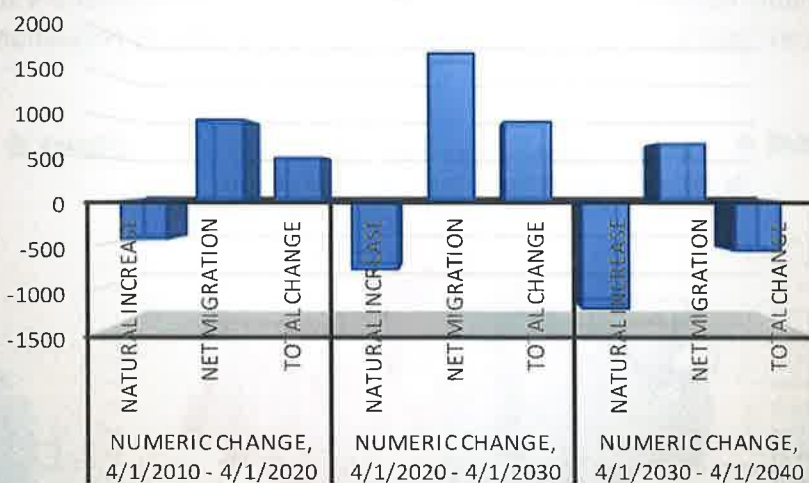
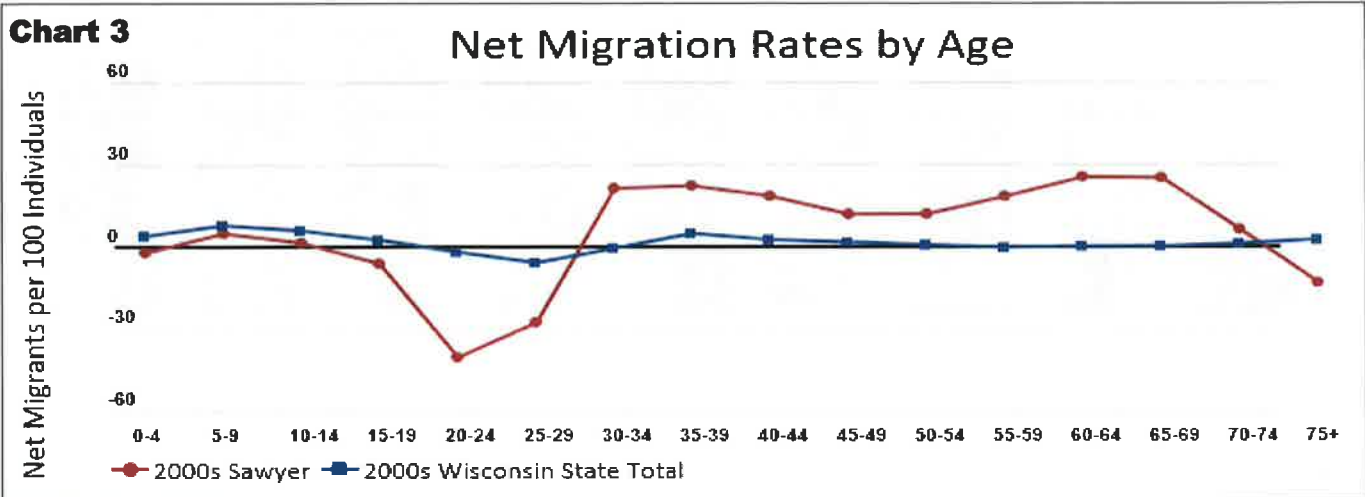


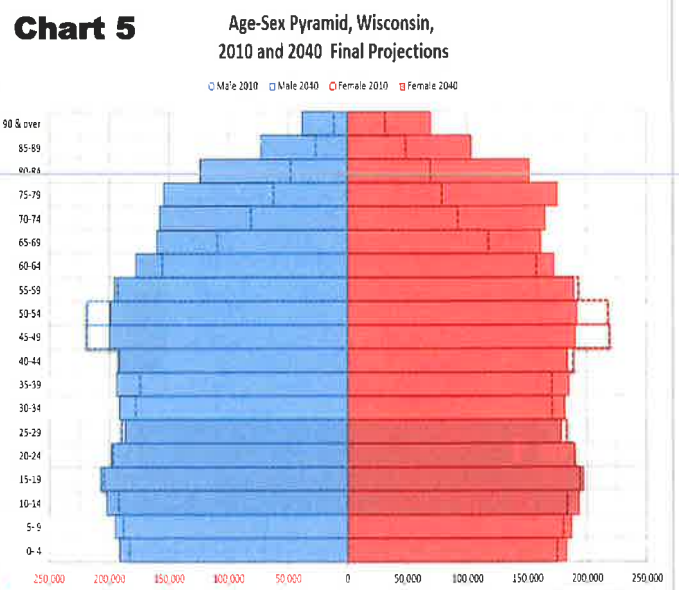
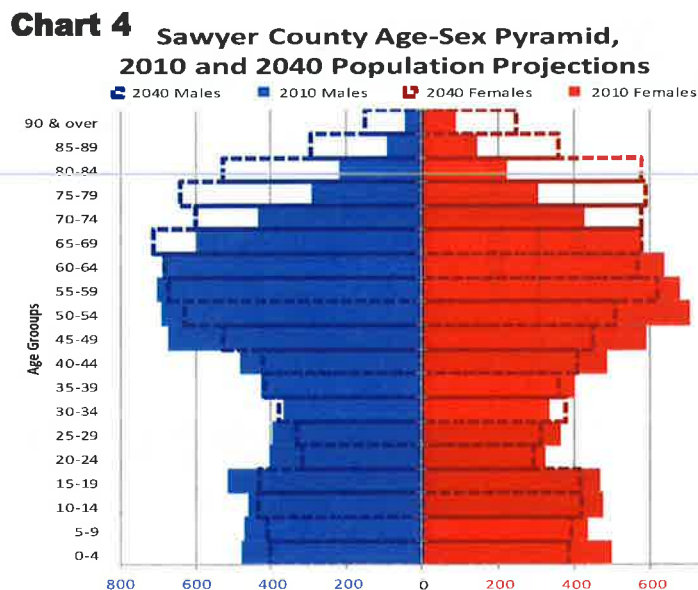
Table 1 Projected Population Change			
	4/1/2010 to 4/1/2020	4/1/2020 to 4/1/2030	4/1/2030 to 4/1/2040
Births	1,755	1,756	1,673
Deaths	2,202	2,558	2,931
Natural Increase	-447	-802	-1,258
Net Migration	960	7,142	678
Total Change	513	940	-580

A 2013 study conducted by University of Wisconsin Madison shows Sawyer County loses individuals between the ages of 15 and 29 to net migration as cohorts bound for college leave the area and take jobs in other areas. Gains in residents 30 years and older shows potential for growth as this group is most likely to expand their household through having children. The largest population gains have been in residents 60-69 years as individuals migrate to the area for retirement.



By 2040, the Department of Health estimates 40.8% of the population in Sawyer County will be 60 years or older. With this trend, Sawyer County will continue to see a decrease in the labor force.

Net migration figures and interviews with local realtors indicate that Sawyer County seniors are following the nationwide trend of retirees looking to downsize or relocate to a residential unit with less maintenance. This trend will change the owner/renter composition, putting an even greater strain on the limited rental housing inventory currently available. When retirees are unable to obtain low maintenance housing close to services, they are leaving the county. See Table 2 for a breakdown of population projections by age.



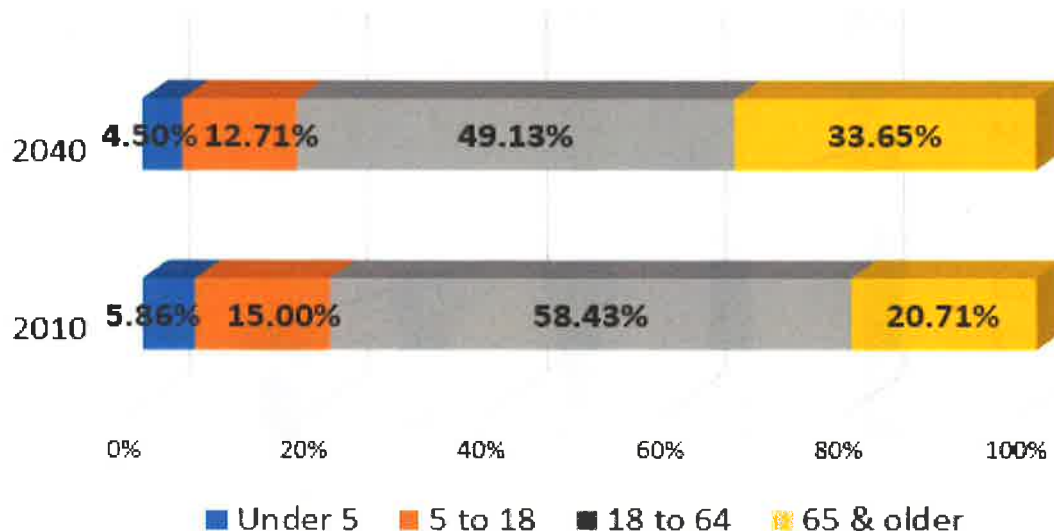
Age-sex projections are derived by taking the 2013 population and progressing it forward with modifications to fertility, mortality and migration rates. 2040 projections are solid red and blue for Wisconsin and dashed red and blue for Sawyer County.

Age Group	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
0-4	971	850	870	895	890	845	785
5-9	903	920	845	880	895	870	805
10-14	934	890	955	885	915	905	855
15-19	982	860	865	945	870	880	845
20-24	725	700	635	655	705	630	610
25-29	759	755	745	690	700	735	640
30-34	698	785	835	835	760	750	760
35-39	827	725	880	940	925	815	775
40-44	968	845	800	975	1,030	980	830
45-49	1,262	970	910	865	1,050	1,070	980
50-54	1,394	1,330	1,040	995	950	1,130	1,140
55-59	1,381	1,600	1,410	1,160	1,120	1,070	1,290
60-64	1,324	1,560	1,670	1,520	1,270	1,260	1,250
65-69	1,176	1,360	1,540	1,690	1,560	1,300	1,290
70-74	857	1,030	1,240	1,440	1,590	1,420	1,180
75-79	596	680	865	1,060	1,240	1,370	1,230
80-84	436	425	520	670	835	985	1,110
85-89	233	255	270	340	450	555	655
90 & over	131	150	175	205	255	325	400
Total:	16,557	16,690	17,070	17,645	18,010	17,895	17,430

The median age in Sawyer County is 49.5 years, according to 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, which is 10.4 years older than the Wisconsin median age of 39.1 years.

The US Census Bureau estimates 54.9% of the persons in Sawyer County are between the ages of 18 and 65 years in 2016 or 9,080 adult persons available for the workforce compared to 9,674 in 2010 and an estimated 8,564 in 2040. These estimates assume a similar ratio of persons age 15-17 and 18-19 in 2010 and 2040.

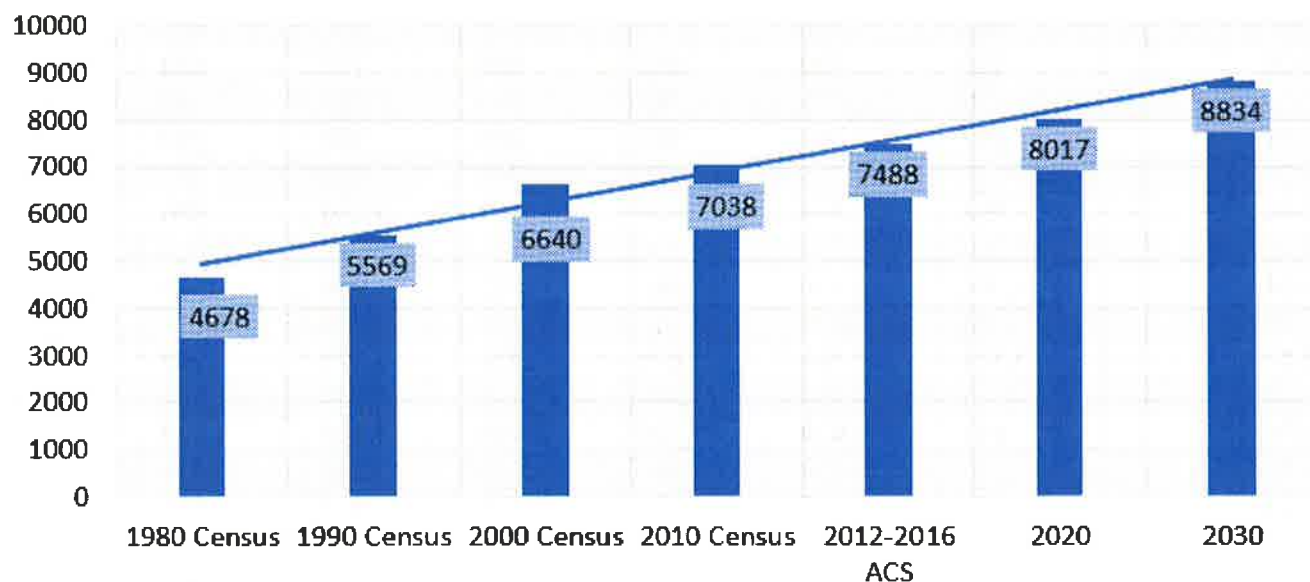
Chart 6 Population by Age



Household Trends

Chart 7

Household Projections



According to 2012-2016 ACS estimates, the average persons per household in the County is 2.15 compared to the state average of 2.43 persons. A household consists of all people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. If all persons staying in the unit have their usual place of residence elsewhere, the unit is considered vacant and is not included in household statistic.

Household projections were created using linear trend analysis. Trends beyond 2030 were not included as Sawyer County's population is projected to begin to decline at that point. It is likely that as population increases in the 65 and older cohort and decreases in the under 65 cohort, household size will continue to decrease.

Chart 8

Projected Average Household Size

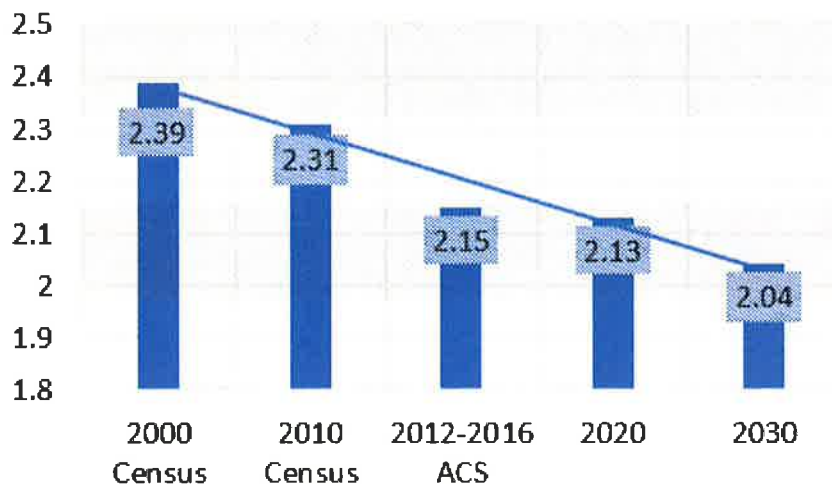
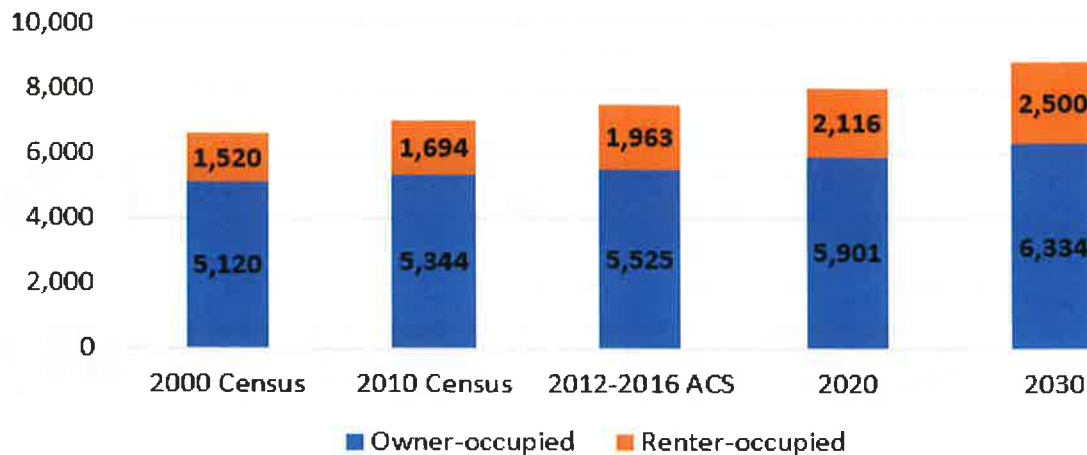
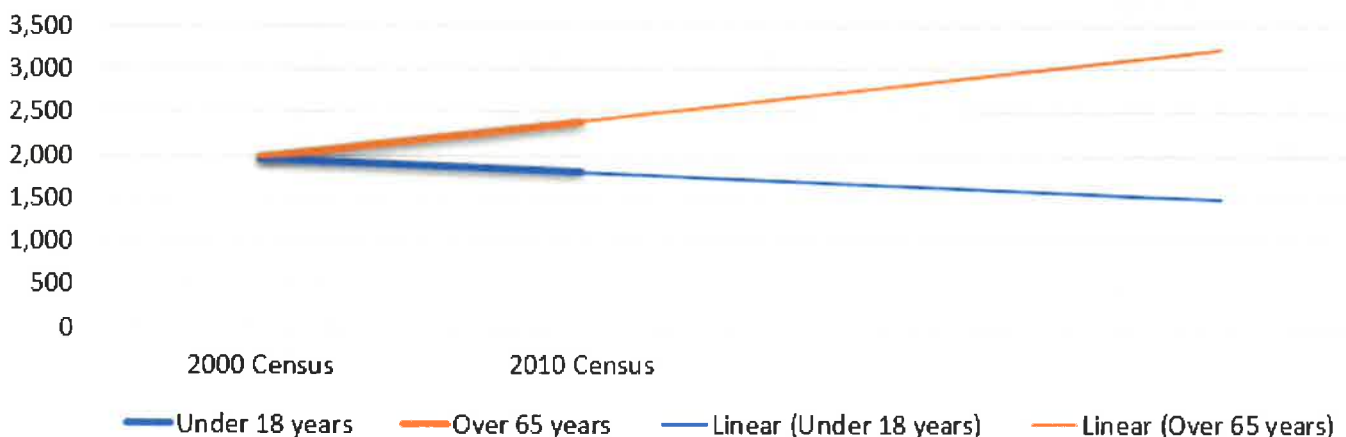


Chart 9**Household Projections by Tenure****Table 3****Household Projections by Tenure Percentage**

	2000 Census	2010 Census	2012-2016 ACS	2020	2030
Owner-occupied	77.1%	75.9%	73.8%	72.3%	70.7%
Renter-occupied	22.9%	24.1%	26.2%	27.7%	29.3%

Projections estimate the percent of renter-occupied households will continue to increase as the population ages and seniors move from owner-occupied housing units to rental units. Trends suggest that Sawyer County will need an additional 529 households by 2020 and 817 more by 2030. The increase indicates the need for an estimated 537 additional rental housing units and 809 owner-occupied housing units.

According to this study, the number of households with individuals 18 and under is projected to continue to decrease assuming current trends continue. Generally, families without minor children in the household are looking for housing units with fewer bedrooms. Many individuals in the 65 and older cohort seem to prefer two bedroom units.

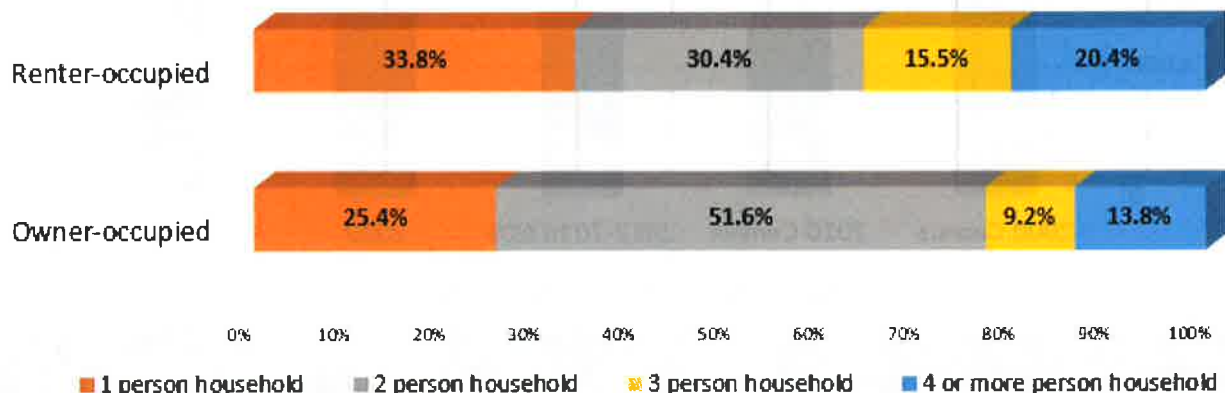
Chart 10**Household Projections by Age****Table 4****Household Projections by Age**

	2000 Census	2010 Census	2012-2016 ACS	2020	2030
Under 18 years	1,972	1,812	1,728	1,652	1,492
Over 65 years	1,978	2,397	2,664	2,816	3,235

Household Size

Chart 11

Sawyer County Household Size



Typically, a larger average household size indicates a larger number of families with children, while a smaller average household size indicates an aging population, including more people living alone. 23% or 1272 owner-occupied housing units are three or more person households while 35.9% or 704 renter-occupied housing units are three or more person households, indicating that a higher percentage of renter-occupied households are comprised of families with children and multiple family households.

Table 5 Household Size by Tenure				
Household Size	Owner-occupied	Owner-occupied %	Renter-occupied	Renter-occupied %
1 person household	1404	25.4%	663	33.8%
2 person household	2849	51.6%	596	30.4%
3 person household	511	9.2%	304	15.5%
4 or more person household	761	13.8%	400	20.4%
Occupied housing units	5,525		1,963	

Housing Units and Occupancy Status

The following table presents the housing units that existed in 2000 and 2010 according to the US Census compared to the 2012-2016 ACS data. The large number of vacant housing units is due to the significant number of seasonal dwellings in Sawyer County.

Although the number of housing units and occupied housing units have continued to grow, rental vacancy rates have dropped significantly. When the rental vacancy rate drops below 5%, landlords are able to be very selective because the supply of rental properties is not adequate to meet the demand. Owning rentals can be a financial risk as some renters may have a negative impact on the condition of the dwelling. Property owners are choosing VRBO (Vacation Rentals By Owner) over long term leases because they are able to offer short term rentals at a higher daily rate for tourists vacationing in the area. This reduces the financial risk and allows the owner to inspect their property frequently.

Table 6					
Occupancy Status					
Housing	Sawyer County 2000 Census	Percent Change 2000-2010	Sawyer County 2010 Census	Percent Change 2010-2016	Sawyer County 2012-2016 ACS
Housing units	13,722	14.1%	15,975	1.3%	16,193
Occupied Units	6,640	5.7%	7,038	6.0%	7,488
Owner-occupied	5,120	4.2%	5,344	3.3%	5,525
Renter-occupied	1,520	10.3%	1,694	13.7%	1,963
Vacant Housing Units	7,082	20.8%	8,937	-2.7%	8,705
Seasonal	6,658 (94.0%)		8,082 (90.4%)		7,845 (90.1%)
For sale	114 (1.6%)		217 (2.4%)		265 (3.0%)
For rent	111 (1.6%)		294 (3.3%)		104 (1.2%)
Other, vacant	199 (2.8%)		344 (3.8%)		491(5.6%)
Rental Vacancy Rate	6.7%		14.6%		4.9%

The “Other Vacant” category has increased by 247% since 2000. These are housing units that are not seasonal and are not for sale or for rent. Common reasons for being labeled, “other vacant” is that no one lives in the unit and the owner is making repairs or renovations, does not want to sell or rent, is using the unit for storage, or is elderly and living in a nursing home or with family members.

According to the 2012-2016 ACS estimates, rental vacancy rates have dropped by 9.7% since 2010. Rental vacancy rates by town and village show a lack of adequate rental inventory in the northwest and southeast sections of the county. See Page 15 for a comparison of vacancy rates in 2010 and 2012-2016 ACS.

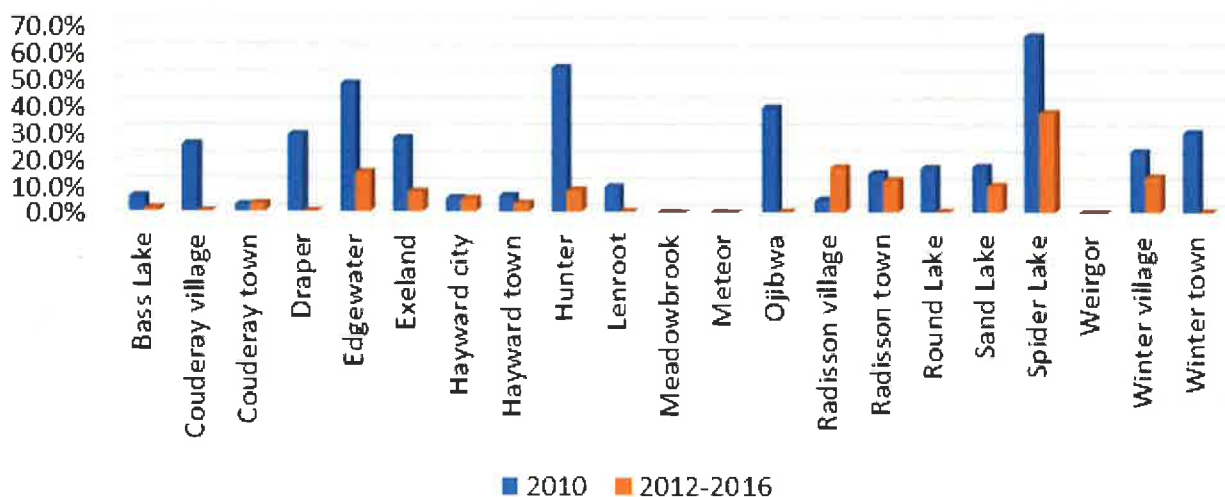
Sawyer County Housing Study 2018

Table 7**Rental Vacancy Rate**

Geographic Area	2010 Census	2012-2016 ACS		
	Vacancy Rate	Vacancy Rate	# For Rent	# Renter-occupied
Bass Lake	5.5%	1.0%	3	309
Couderay village	25.0%	0.0%	0	3
Couderay town	2.5%	2.8%	3	103
Draper	28.6%	0.0%	0	13
Edgewater	47.7%	14.7%	5	29
Exeland	27.3%	7.4%	2	25
Hayward city*	4.9%	4.7%	29	565
Hayward town	5.9%	3.1%	13	413
Hunter	53.8%	7.9%	7	82
Lenroot	9.1%	0.0%	0	62
Meadowbrook	0.0%	0.0%	0	8
Meteor	0.0%	0.0%	0	7
Ojibwa	38.9%	0.0%	0	14
Radisson village	4.5%	16.7%	9	45
Radisson town	14.3%	11.8%	2	15
Round Lake	16.4%	0.0%	0	67
Sand Lake	16.9%	9.7%	7	65
Spider Lake	65.8%	37.1%	13	22
Weirgor	0.0%	0.0%	0	23
Winter village**	22.5%	13.1%	11	55
Winter town	29.7%	0.0%	0	38

*City of Hayward has 17 units which are rented but not occupied.

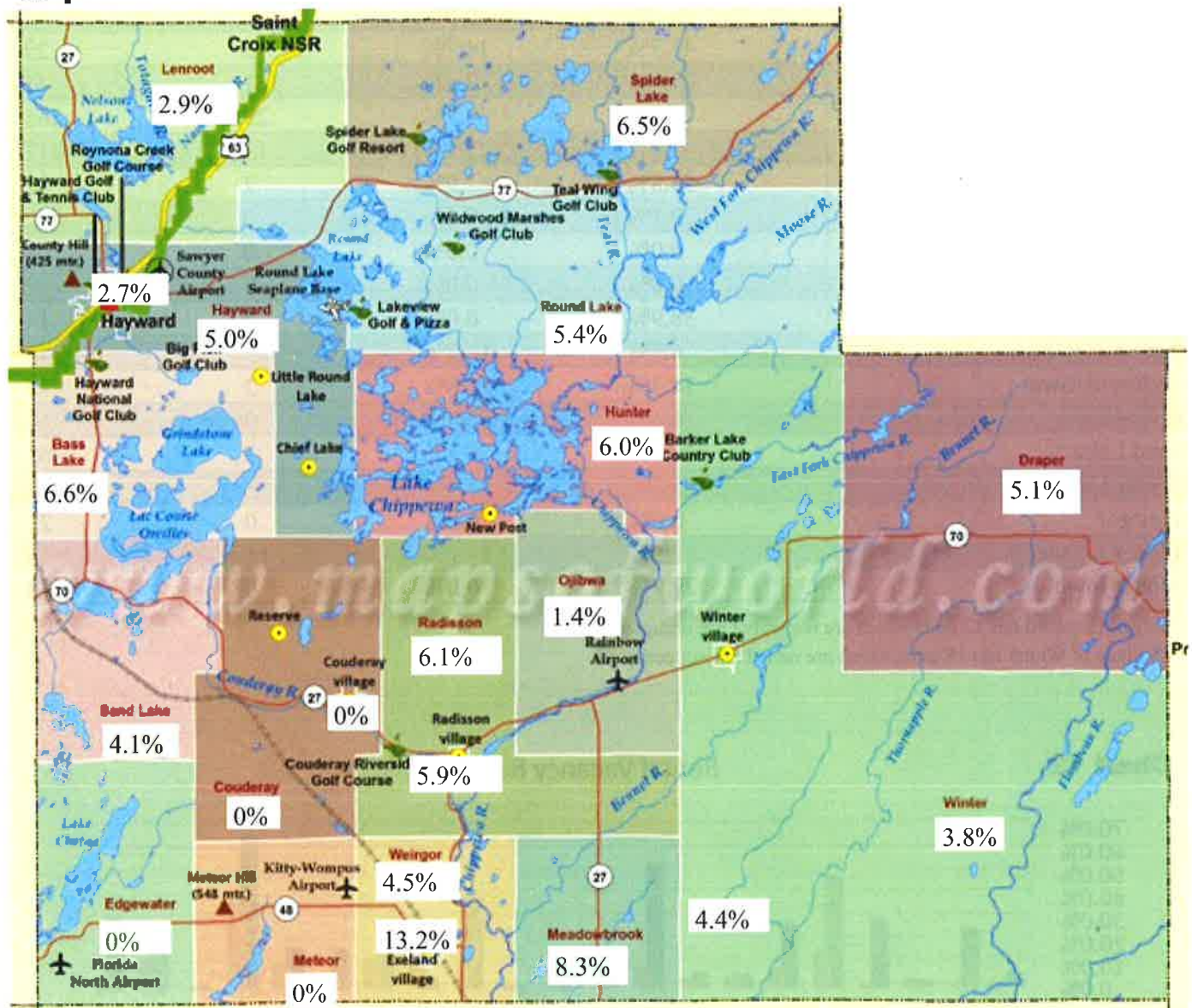
**Village of Winter has 18 units which are rented but not occupied.

Chart 12**Rental Vacancy Rate**

Homeowner Vacancy Rates

With the exception of the City of Hayward, more housing units are available for sale in the towns around Hayward than available for rent. The vacancy rates below include all price ranges of homes for sale. The towns of Spider Lake, Round Lake, Sand Lake, Hunter, Bass Lake and portions of the town of Hayward include seasonal lake properties which account for the higher vacancy rates. See Page 17 for more details.

Map 3

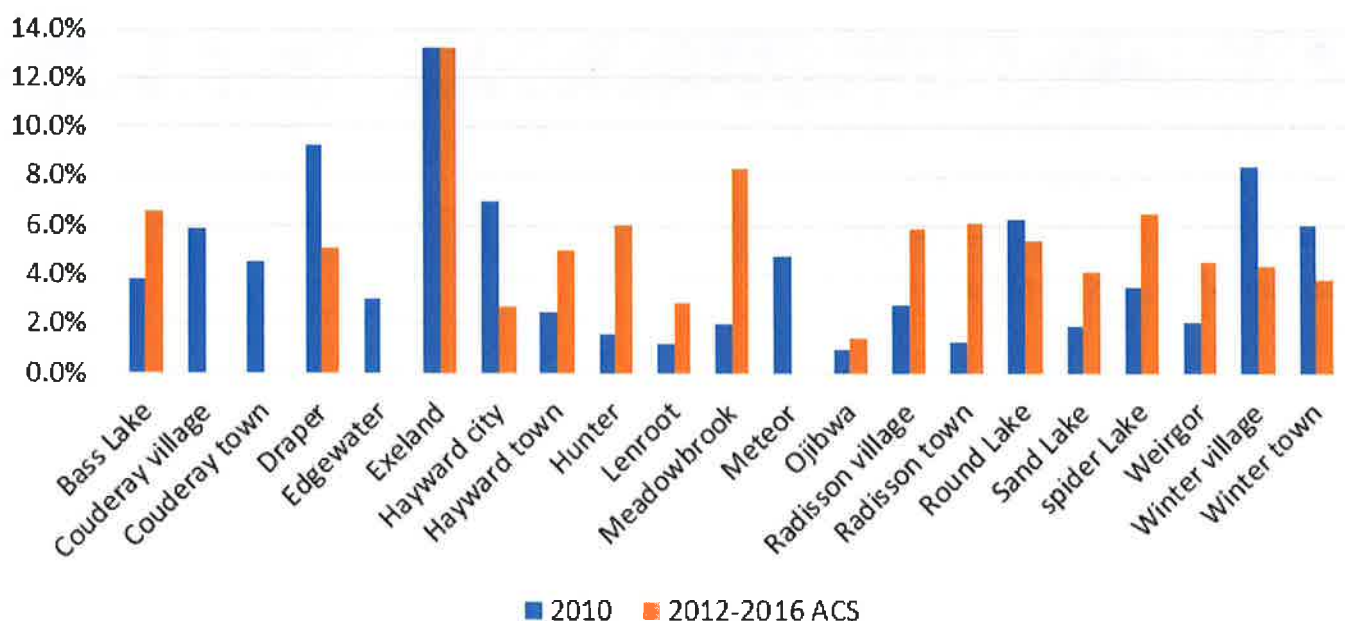


Homeowner vacancy rate is the proportion of the homeowner inventory that is vacant “for sale.” It is computed by dividing the total number of vacant units “for sale only” by the sum of the owner-occupied units, vacant units that are “for sale only,” and vacant units that have been sold but not yet occupied; and then multiplying by 100.

Table 8 Homeowner Vacancy Rate				
Geographic Area	2010 Census Vacancy Rate	2012-2016 ACS		
		Vacancy Rate	# For Sale	# Owner-occupied
Bass Lake	3.8%	6.6%	52	739
Couderay village	5.9%	0.0%	0	32
Couderay town	4.5%	0.0%	0	97
Draper	9.3%	5.1%	5	94
Edgewater	3.0%	0.0%	0	235
Exeland	13.2%	13.2%	9	59
Hayward city	7.0%	2.7%	13	470
Hayward town	2.5%	5.0%	53	1015
Hunter	1.6%	6.0%	20	312
Lenroot	1.2%	2.9%	13	436
Meadowbrook	2.0%	8.3%	4	44
Meteor	4.8%	0.0%	0	52
Ojibwa	1.0%	1.4%	2	140
Radisson village	2.8%	5.9%	4	64
Radisson town	1.3%	6.1%	10	153
Round Lake	6.3%	5.4%	29	504
Sand Lake	1.9%	4.1%	13	301
Spider Lake	3.5%	6.5%	13	188
Weirgor	2.1%	4.5%	6	127
Winter village	8.4%	4.4%	4	87
Winter town	6.0%	3.8%	15	376

Chart 13

Homeowner Vacancy Rate



Year of Construction

The 2012-2016 ACS estimates include the year of construction for the housing inventory in Sawyer County. 53.7% of renter-occupied dwellings are 39 years old or older. While 43.4% of owner-occupied dwellings are in the same age bracket. At 20 years, dwellings will begin to deteriorate without maintenance. Any structure over 50 years old may not meet standard condition requirements.

Table 9 Year of Construction by Tenure

Year	Occupied		Owner-occupied		Renter-occupied	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2014 or later	7	0.1%	5	0.1%	2	0.1%
2010 to 2013	141	1.9%	100	1.8%	41	2.1%
2000 to 2009	1,309	17.5%	1,126	20.4%	183	9.3%
1980 to 1999	2,582	34.5%	1,898	34.4%	684	34.8%
1960 to 1979	1,819	24.3%	1,315	23.8%	504	25.7%
1940 to 1959	964	12.9%	646	11.7%	318	16.2%
1939 or earlier	666	8.9%	435	7.9%	231	11.8%
Total	7,488		5,525		1,963	

Building Permit Activity

According to Sawyer County Land Records, 141 real estate properties were retired in 2018. 234 new real estate properties are projected for 2019. Projects involving new or replacement dwellings vary in value from \$10,000 to \$3,250,000. It can be assumed that extremely low value dwellings will not be adequate for year round residency and extremely high value dwellings are seasonal lake homes. Builders in the area report that about 50% of the new construction is for permanent, year round residents which adds to the county's workforce housing.

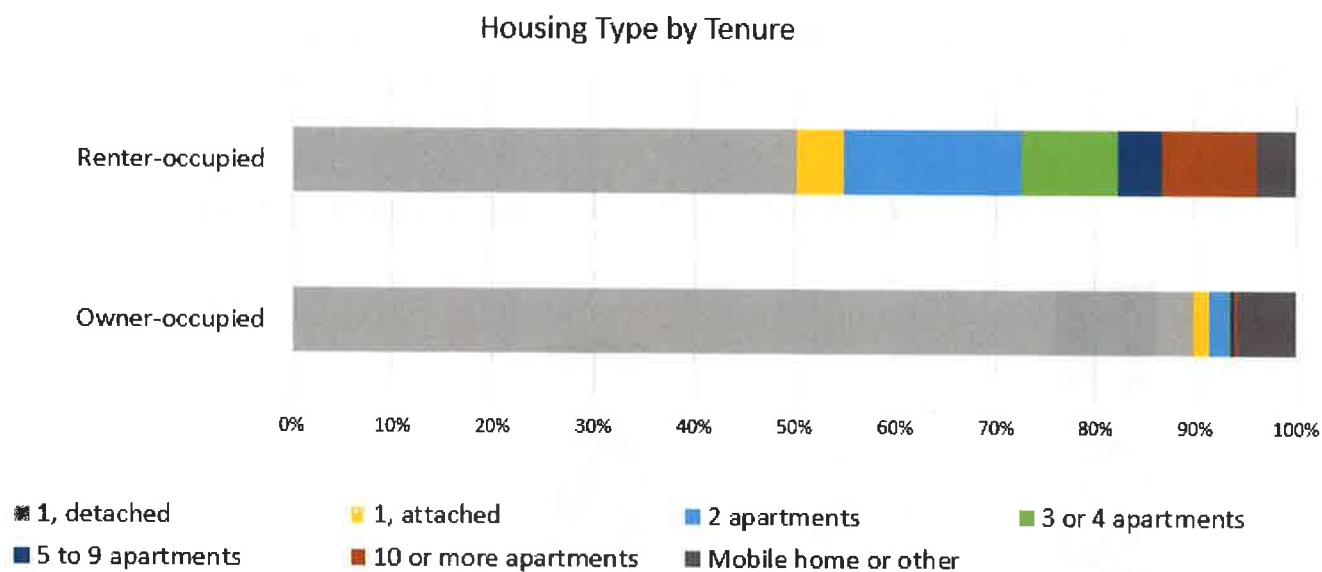
Table 10 Building Permits	2016	2017	2018 to 10/18
Total number of new & replacement dwellings	100	115	72
Total cost of project under \$150,000	52	53	38
Total cost of project \$150,000—\$249,999	15	25	19
Total cost of project \$250,000 & over	33	37	15

Housing Units

Housing units	Housing Type					
	Estimated Occupied		Estimated Owner-occupied		Estimated Renter-occupied	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1, detached	6044	80.7%	5059	91.6%	985	50.2%
1. attached	180	2.4%	86	1.6%	94	4.8%
2 apartments	358	4.8%	12	0.2%	346	17.6%
3 or 4 apartments	196	2.6%	4	0.1%	192	9.8%
5 to 9 apartments	110	1.5%	23	0.4%	87	4.4%
10 or more apartments	202	2.7%	17	0.3%	185	9.4%
Mobile home or other type of housing	398	5.3%	324	5.9%	74	3.8%

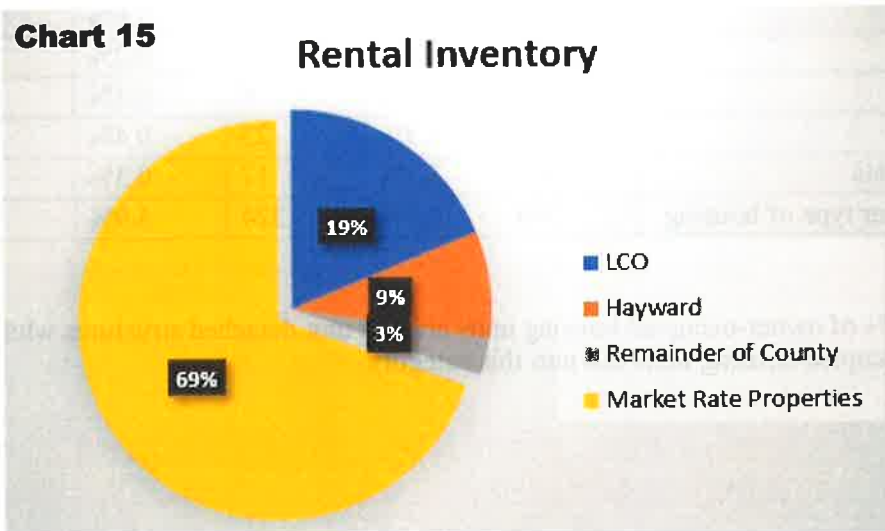
An estimated 91.6% of owner-occupied housing units are one unit detached structures while an estimated 50.2% of renter occupied housing units fall into this category.

Chart 14



Rentals

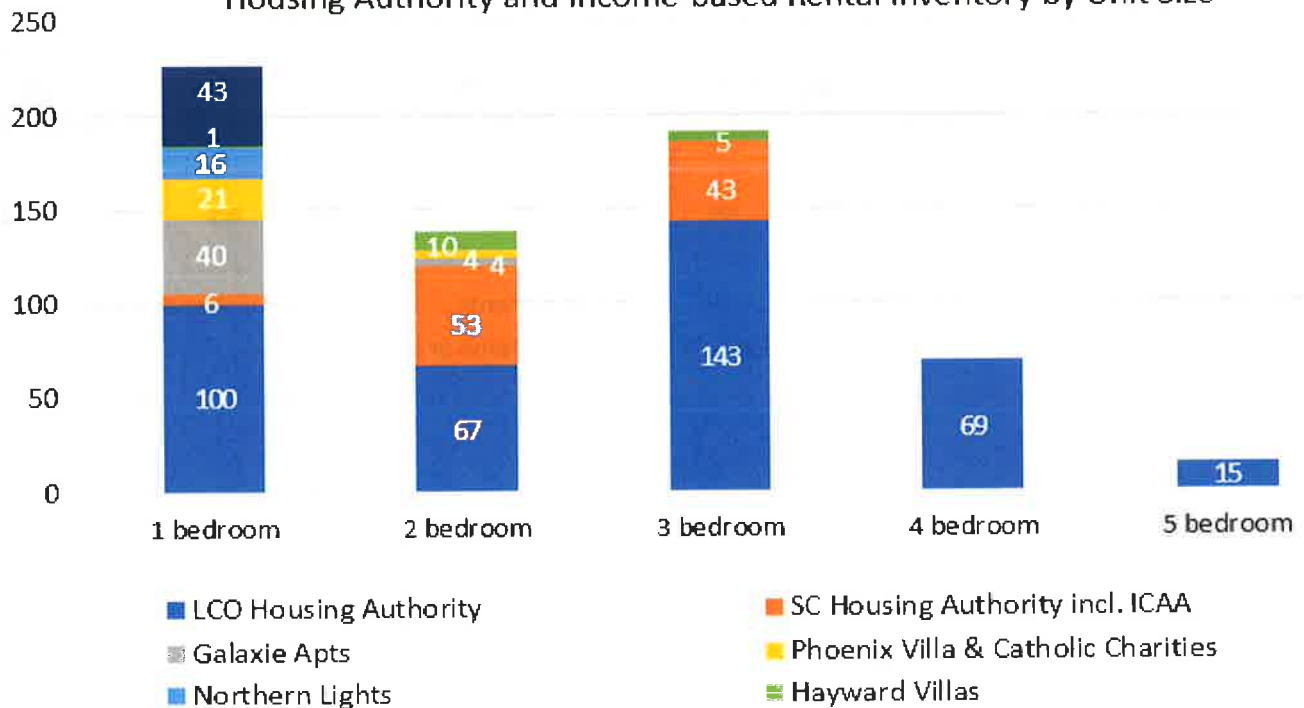
2012-2016 ACS estimates an inventory of 2,102 rental units in the county. The rental inventory includes occupied rental units, units available for rent and units rented but not occupied. The chart below is divided into two sections: Housing authority and income-based rental units and market rate rental units. Housing authority and income-based rentals account for 640 rental units while 1462 are market rate rental units. Of the 640 housing authority and income-based rentals units, 394 are in LCO, 182 in Hayward, and 64 in the remainder of the county.



Of the 108 housing authority and income-based one bedroom rental units in Hayward, 97 are for elderly or disabled and 10 are for individuals with chronic mental illness, leaving one unit for a cost-burdened individual.

Chart 16

Housing Authority and Income-based Rental Inventory by Unit Size



Below is a list of Sawyer County Housing Authority, Lac Courte Oreilles Housing Authority and income-based housing in Sawyer County separated by location. All renter households in the rental units listed below pay a minimum of \$25 per month. Some keep their rents low for qualifying families while others have a higher payment standard, but do not charge more than 30% of the household income including utilities.

Table 12 Housing Authority & Income-based Rental Inventory							
	Type	Unit size	Number of units	Rent	Waiting List	Vacancy	Utilities included
Hayward							
Galaxie Apt	Elderly/disabled	1 bedroom	32	\$399-\$560	yes	0	W,S,G
Shirley Anne	Elderly/disabled	1 bedroom	12	\$410	yes		
Fran Mar	Elderly/disabled	1 bedroom	31	\$508	yes		
Northern Lights	Elderly/disabled	1 bedroom	16	Income based			
Hayward Villas	Family/Elderly	1 bedroom	1	\$280	yes	0	W,S,G
		2 bedroom	10	\$565-\$600	yes	0	
		3 bedroom	5	\$685	yes	0	
SCHA	Family/Elderly	1 bedroom	2	\$579	yes		All utilities
		2 bedroom	28	\$766*			
		3 bedroom	33	\$960*			
Phoenix Villa	Chronic Mental Illness	1 bedroom	10	30% income	yes	0	
		2 bedroom	2	30% income		0	
LCO							
LCO Housing Authority		1 bedroom	100	% of income	yes		
		2 bedroom	67				
		3 bedroom	143				
		4 bedroom	69				
		5 bedroom	15				
Radisson							
Galaxie Apts	Elderly/disabled	2 bedroom	4	\$380-\$460	No	1	W,S,G
Winter							
Galaxie Apts	Elderly/disabled	1 bedroom	8	\$365-\$440	No	1	W,S,G
Catholic Charities	Elderly	1 bedroom	11	30% income	yes		
		2 bedroom	2	30% income			
TOTAL SCHA							
Outside Hayward	Family/Elderly		39		No	5	All utilities
Total:			640			7	

LCO = Lac Courte Oreilles

SCHA = Sawyer County Housing Authority

W,S,G = water, sewer, and garbage

* 10 of the 2 bedroom units and 8 of the 3 bedroom units have rents which are 30% income

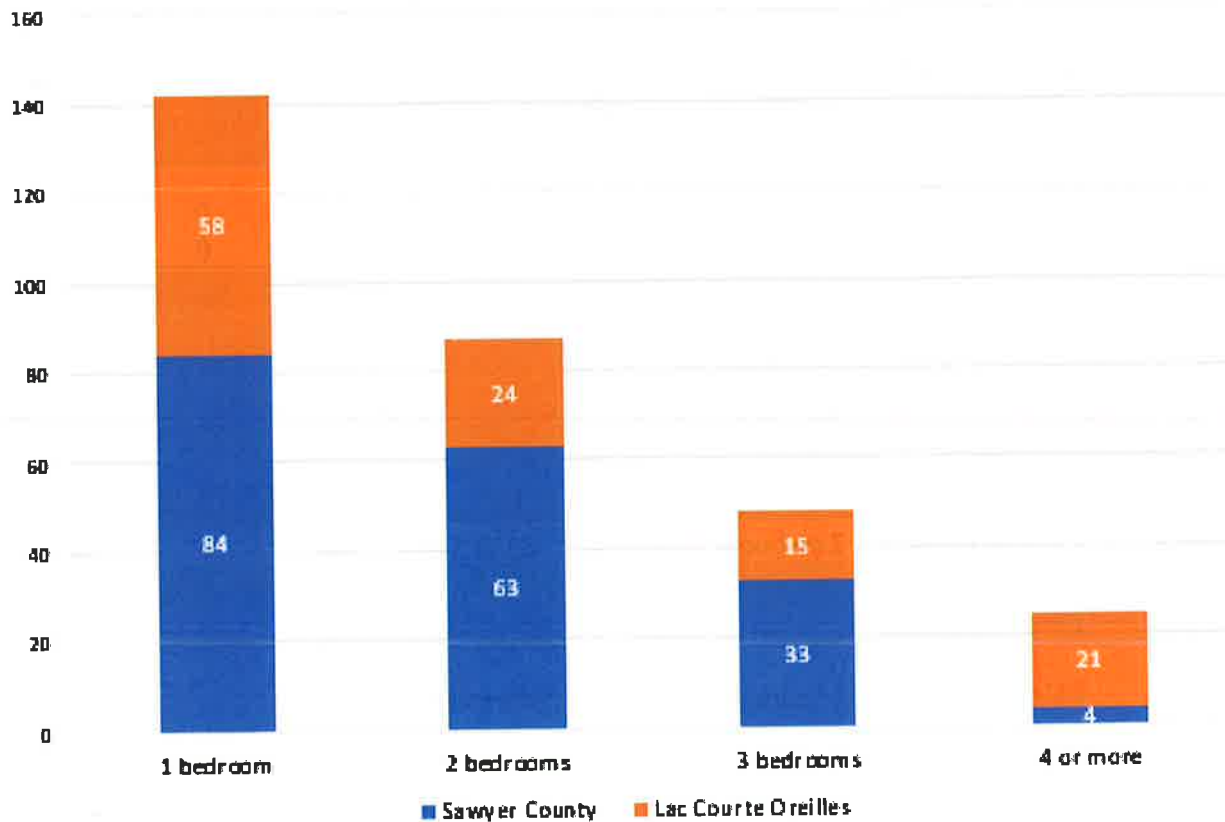
Table 13 Payment Standard Ranges for Housing Authorities & Income-based Rentals	
1 bedroom	\$280-\$579
2 bedroom	\$380-\$766
3 bedroom	\$685-\$960
4 bedroom	\$1,043

Waiting Lists

Both Sawyer County and Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) Housing Authorities have a large number of families on their waiting lists. Wait times vary based on location and unit size. Sawyer County Housing Authority has very little turnover in their one bedroom units. LCO Housing Authority has a wait time of 6-12 months for one bedroom units for the elderly/near elderly/disabled. Wait times vary for other clients. For two or more bedroom units, the wait in LCO is close to two years. In Hayward, families wait 8-12 months for a unit with two or more bedrooms. For the remainder of the County, wait time is minimal. Sawyer County Housing Authority has three vacant units in Exeland, one in Winter, and one in Radisson. Galaxie Apartments have two vacancies; one in Radisson and one in Winter. With a total of seven vacancies, the rental vacancy rate for housing authority and income-based rental units in Sawyer County is 1.1% with a 0% rental vacancy rate in Hayward and Lac Courte Oreilles.

Chart 17

Housing Authority Waiting List by Unit Size



Sawyer County Housing Authority received 140 applications for housing from January 1 to August 21, 2018. As an example of the population being served, 35% of the applicants are part of the workforce and 69% reported that they were homeless or living with others.

The table below shows the 2018 housing authority and income-based rentals by unit size in Sawyer County. This study estimated the number of market rate rentals based on the number of renter-occupied units from 2012-2016 ACS and the current number of housing authority and income-based rentals. The 2018 housing authority and income-based rentals include 7 vacant units. There are no income-based studio or efficiency apartments in the county.

	2012-2016 ACS Renter-occupied	2018 Housing Authority & Income-based Rentals	2018 Estimated Market Rate Renter-occupied Units
No bedrooms	18	0	18
1 bedroom	392	227	165
2 bedrooms	720	138	582
3 bedrooms	545	191	354
4 bedrooms	265	69	196
5 or more bedrooms	23	15	8
Total	1963	640	1,323

Chart 18

Percent of Market Rate vs Housing Authority & Income-based Rental Units by Size



Income Data

Household income represents all independent households, including people living alone, multiple families living together and unrelated individuals together in a housing unit.

Table 15 Household Income				
	Sawyer County 2010 ACS	Sawyer County 2012-2016 ACS In 2016 dollars	30% of Gross In- come available for housing In 2016 dollars	Wisconsin 2012-2016
Median household income	\$37,091	\$41,869	\$1,047	\$54,610
Owner-occupied household	\$47,177	\$49,787	\$1,245	\$69,544
Renter-occupied household	\$22,203	\$24,453	\$611	\$31,736

Median income for Sawyer County continues to grow. 2012-2016 ACS 5-year estimates show median household income for Sawyer County at \$41,869, 23.3% lower than the state average of \$54,610. Estimated median household income for renter-occupied housing units is \$24,453.

Table 16 Households by Income Level				
	2000 Census		2012-2016 ACS	
	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied
Total Households	5108	1532	5525	1963
Less than \$10,000	435	355	223	313
\$10,000 to \$14,999	407	231	250	204
\$15,000 to \$19,999	429	176	319	237
\$20,000 to \$24,999	381	159	311	251
\$25,000 to \$34,999	775	249	676	305
\$35,000 to \$49,000	932	180	995	303
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1017	142	1,172	250
\$75,000 to \$99,999	374	34	736	67
\$100,000 to \$149,999	230	2	534	24
\$150,000 or more	128	4	309	9
	5108	1532	5,525	1,963

Household income broken out by tenure was not available in the 2010 Census data. The table on the previous page and charts below show the estimated change in household income from 2000 to 2012-2016. Owner-occupied households have experienced a reduction in households earning less than \$35,000 while renter-occupied households have experienced a reduction in households making less than \$15,000.

Chart 19

Owner-occupied Household Income

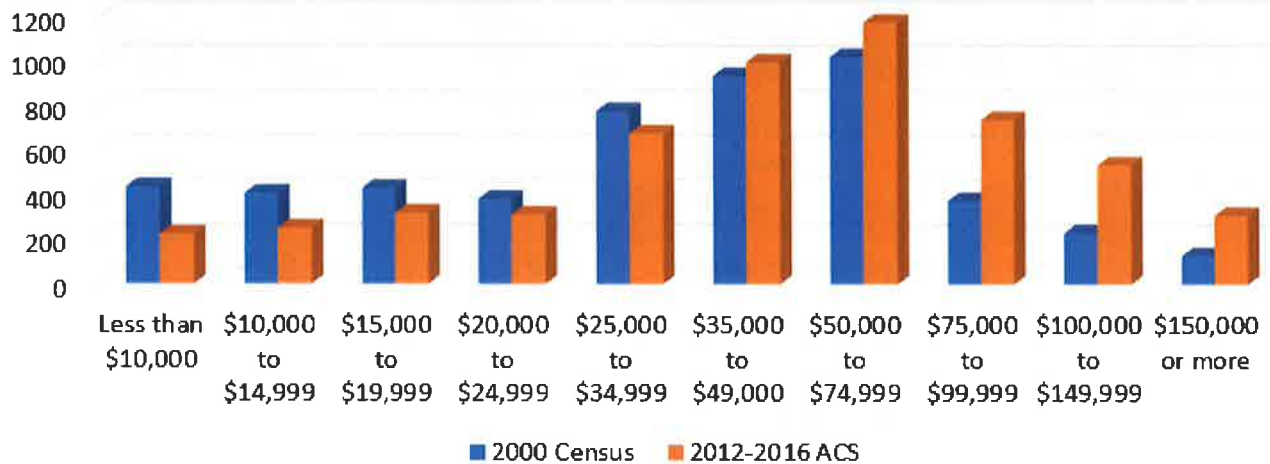
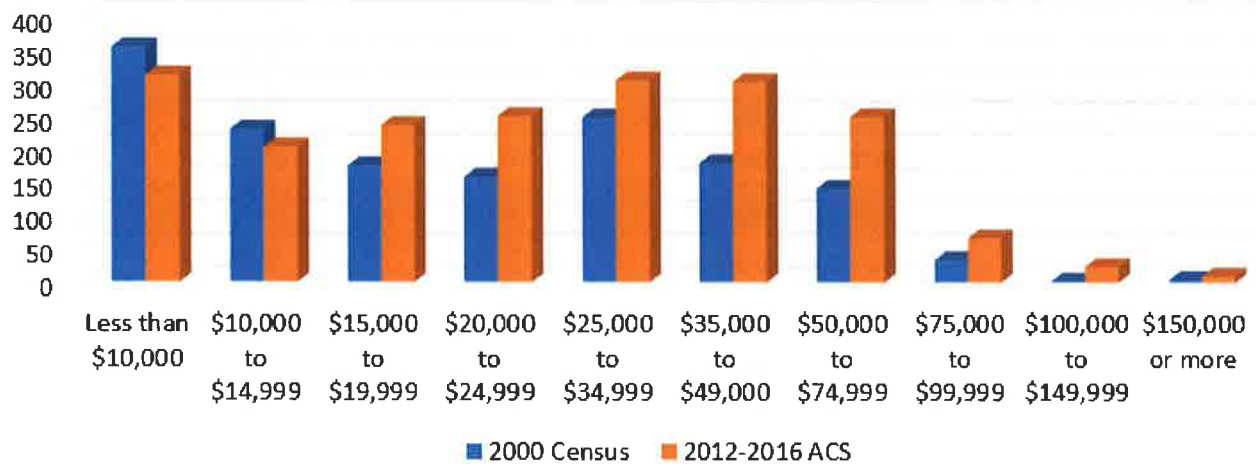


Chart 20

Renter-occupied Household Income



Cost Burdened Households

The table below shows cost burdened households by annual income according to ACS 2012-2016. 25.3% of owner-occupied housing units and 38.1% of renter-occupied housing units spend more than 30% of annual income on housing expenses.

Table 17 Household Costs as Percent of Income			
	Occupied Housing Units	Owner- occupied	Renter- occupied
Income less than \$20,000	17.7%	13.4%	29.8%
Less than 20 percent	1.2%	1.0%	1.7%
20 to 29 percent	3.8%	2.6%	6.9%
30 percent or more	12.8%	9.8%	21.1%
Income \$20,000 to \$34,999	19.8%	17.8%	25.4%
Less than 20 percent	7.1%	7.1%	6.9%
20 to 29 percent	4.9%	4.2%	6.9%
30 percent or more	7.9%	6.6%	11.6%
Income \$35,000 to \$49,999	17.0%	18.0%	14.2%
Less than 20 percent	7.0%	7.4%	5.9%
20 to 29 percent	5.5%	5.6%	5.2%
30 percent or more	4.4%	4.9%	3.1%
Income \$50,000 to \$74,999	18.6%	21.2%	11.4%
Less than 20 percent	11.2%	12.3%	8.2%
20 to 29 percent	4.7%	6.1%	0.9%
30 percent or more	2.7%	2.9%	2.3%
Income \$75,000 or more	22.1%	28.6%	3.9%
Less than 20 percent	18.7%	24.0%	3.9%
20 to 29 percent	2.6%	3.5%	0.0%
30 percent or more	0.8%	1.1%	0.0%
Zero or negative income	0.9%	0.9%	1.1%
No cash rent	3.8%	(X)	14.3%

Using the commonly accepted standard that up to 30% of gross income can be applied to housing expenses without experiencing a cost burden, a median income owner-occupied household in Sawyer County could afford approximately \$1,245 per month for housing in 2016 while a median income renter-occupied household could afford only \$611 per month for housing.

Table 18	Housing	Sawyer County 2010 ACS	Sawyer County 2012-2016 ACS	Wisconsin
	Median value of owner-occupied housing units	\$168,200	\$159,800	\$167,000
	Median selected monthly owner costs With a mortgage	\$1,159	\$1,126	\$1,391
	Median selected monthly owner costs Without a mortgage	\$427	\$415	\$532
	Median gross rent, 2012-2016	\$518	\$657	\$789

Gross rent is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities. With median gross rent at \$657 per month, the median renter-occupied household is cost burdened. Sawyer County Housing Authority believes the median rent is under-reported as individuals report the rent they pay rather than the total rent for the housing unit.

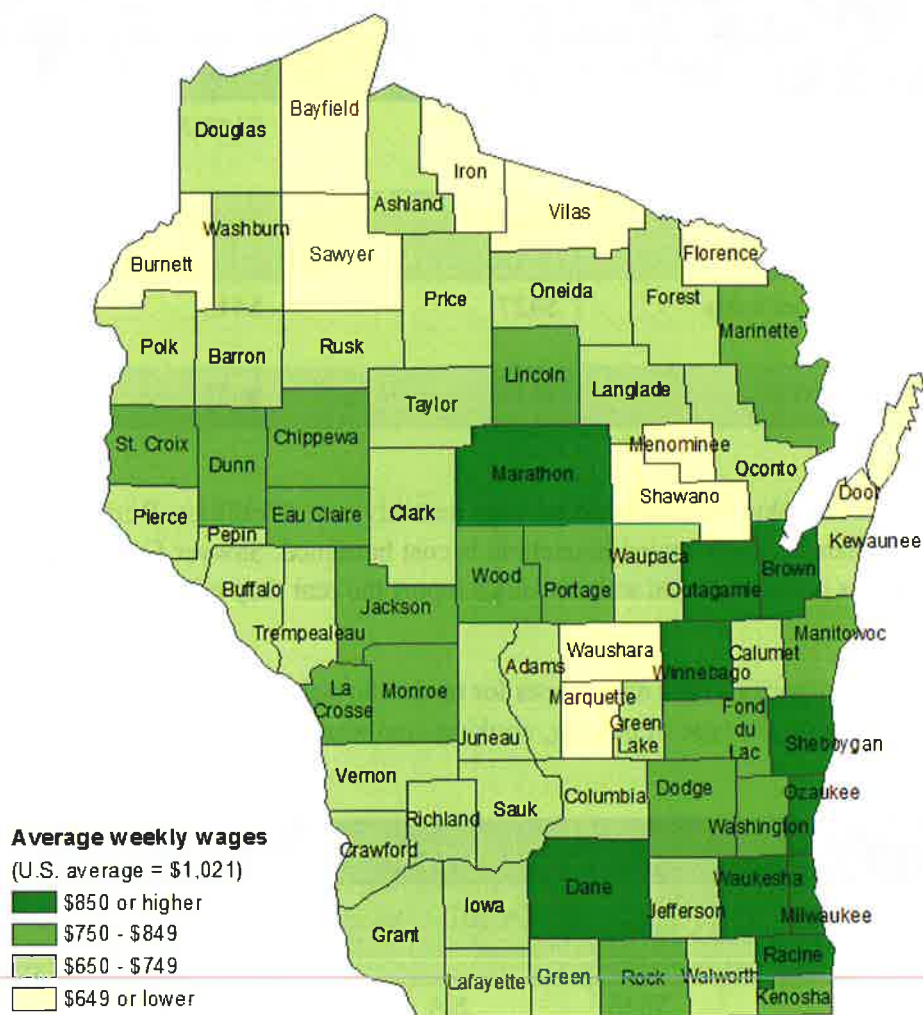
Sawyer County Housing Authority offers allowances for tenant-furnished utilities and other services. Allowances vary depending on the type of heating, cooking, and water heating systems in the unit.

Table 19	Gross Rent Comparison				
	Gross Median Rent 2012-2016 ACS	SCHA 2016 Rates	SCHA 2017 Rates	SCHA 2019 Rates	2018 Utility Allowance
No bedroom	\$338	NA	NA	NA	NA
1 bedroom	\$438	\$548	\$579	\$599	\$137-\$194
2 bedroom	\$695	\$660	\$766	\$792	\$169-\$249
3 bedroom	\$762	\$819	\$960	\$992	\$239-\$346
4 bedroom	\$679	\$905	\$1,043	\$1,074	\$273-\$402
5 or more bedrooms	\$343	NA	NA	NA	\$302-\$452
Total Median Gross Rent	\$657				

The U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics shows a comparison of average weekly wages by county in Wisconsin as of the third quarter of 2017. The average weekly wage in Sawyer County is \$649 or lower, placing it in the lowest income bracket in the state.

Map 4

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Wisconsin, third quarter 2017



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

According to Hayward Community Schools, 969 of the 2051 students enrolled in 2018 qualify for free or reduced lunch and 54 students meet the definition of homeless. 2012-2016 ACS estimates 16.4% of persons in Sawyer County are living in poverty compared to 11.8% in Wisconsin. In 2000, 12.7% of persons in Sawyer County were living in poverty.

Employment Data

Educational services, health care and social assistance make up the largest share of employment positions followed by arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service. Because the local economy is largely dependent on tourism, many retail, recreation, accommodation and food services jobs are seasonal. Families dependent on seasonal jobs as their primary source of income struggle to find and maintain year round affordable housing.

Table 20	Labor Force by Industry	Number	Percent
	Total Civilian Labor Force	7,071	100%
	Education services and health care and social assistance	1,527	21.6%
	Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1,136	16.1%
	Retail trade	1,015	14.4%
	Manufacturing	690	9.8%
	Construction	503	7.1%
	Professional, scientific, administrative & waste management services	426	6.0%
	Other services, except public administration	374	5.3%
	Public Administration	365	5.2%
	Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	362	5.1%
	Transportation, warehousing and utilities	282	4.0%
	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	221	3.1%
	Information	95	1.3%
	Wholesale trade	75	1.1%

The largest employers in Sawyer County are located in Hayward and the northern section of Lac Courte Oreilles. The distance between available housing and employment opportunities creates challenges for employers and the work force.

Table 21	Largest Employers	Number of Employees	Industry
	LCO Tribal Government	463-628	Tribal Government
	Hayward Area Memorial Hospital & Water's Edge	360	Health Care Services
	Lac Courte Oreilles Casino	320	Gaming & Gambling
	Wal-Mart	280-300	Discount Department Store
	Sawyer County Government	250	General Government
	Louisiana Pacific	250	Lumber Products
	Hayward Public Schools	200	Education
	Marketplace Foods	148	Grocery Store
	LCO Ojibwa Schools	117	Education

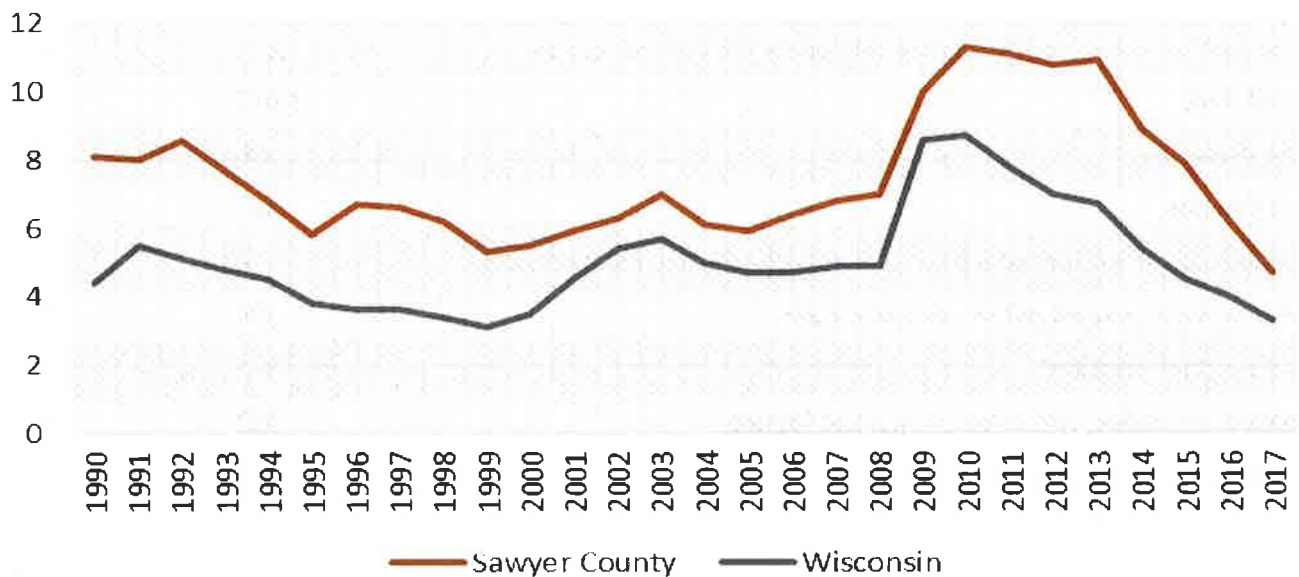
As of October 2018

Unemployment Data

According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Sawyer County has a higher unemployment rate than the state of Wisconsin. The county experienced very high unemployment rates during the recession of 2008 and took much longer to recover than the state. The unemployment rate for Sawyer County is the lowest it has been in decades with a rate of 3.7% in August 2018. When unemployment drops below 4-5%, employers have more difficulty filling vacant positions.

Chart 21

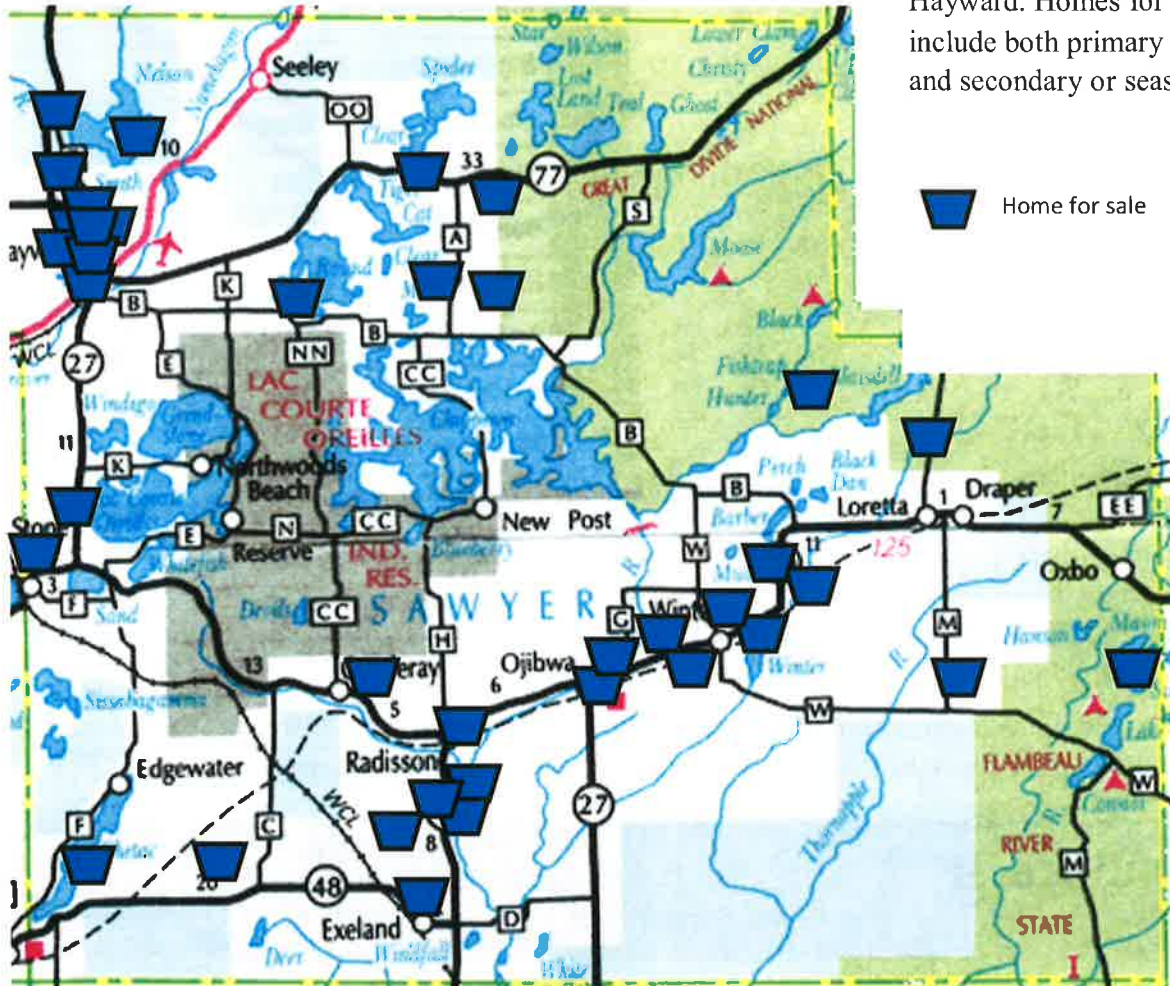
Unemployment Rate



Home Sales

The map below shows homes currently for sale priced at \$150,000 and under in Sawyer County according to Wisconsin Realtor's Association. There are a total of 50 homes in the price range selected, 15 of which are

Map 5



located within 5 miles of Hayward. Homes for sale may include both primary residences and secondary or seasonal homes.

Chart 22

Number of Home Sales



Wisconsin Realtor's Association reports the number of home sales for 2007-2017. Sale numbers and values dropped during the recession of 2008. Number of sales have increased each year since 2009. Sales in 2017 were over 6 times the number of sales in 2009. According to local realtor and broker, Ty Wiley, there are currently 393 properties for sale in Sawyer County.

According to Zillow Home Value Index, the median home value in Sawyer County is \$176,000. Sawyer County home values have gone up 1.6% over the past year and Zillow predicts they will rise 2.8% within the next year. Wisconsin is projected to reach a median home value of \$186,000 by July 2019, surpassing Sawyer County's projected \$180,000.

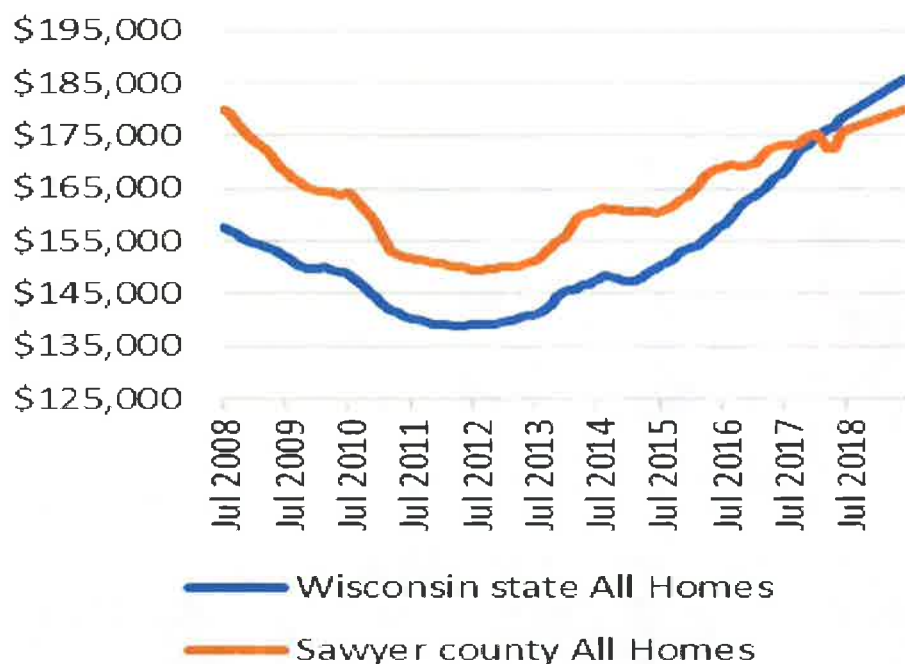
The median price of homes currently listed in Sawyer County is \$235,000. Local listings show a median list price of \$139,900 for residential properties which are not on water versus a

median list price of \$339,000 for residential properties on water, indicating that lake homes in the County have a significant impact on home values in the County.

Sawyer County does not have a shortage of building sites. Local listings show 525 vacant land parcels for sale in the county. Of the current vacant land listings, 50.5% are off water and 49.5% on water.

Chart 23

Median Home Values



	Vacant Land Off Water	Vacant Land On Water	Residential Off Water	Residential On Water
Total listings	265	260	130	256
Minimum List Price	\$4,900	\$14,900	\$24,900	\$34,900
Maximum List Price	\$649,000	\$835,000	\$699,900	\$2,500,000
Average List Price	\$51,243	\$125,871	\$178,065	\$433,177
Median List Price	\$25,000	\$79,900	\$139,900	\$339,000

Mortgage Delinquency and Foreclosure

Mortgage delinquency is the first step in the foreclosure process. This is when a homeowner fails to make a mortgage payment. The percent of delinquent mortgages in Sawyer County is 1.8%, which is higher than the national value of 1.6%. With U.S. home values having fallen by more than 20% nationally from their peak in 2007 until their trough in late 2011, many homeowners are now underwater on their mortgages, meaning they owe more than their home is worth. The percent of Sawyer County homeowners underwater on their mortgage is 12.4%, which is higher than Wisconsin at 10.6%.

1. Maintain and preserve the existing housing stock

Findings: Seasonal residency accounts for 54.7% of the housing units in Sawyer County. Seasonal, or second homes, are considered “vacant” and not included in the occupied housing data. 80.7% of occupied housing is made up of single-family detached units. For owner-occupied housing units, 91.6% are single-family detached units. LCO Housing Authority’s last homeowner project was completed in 2010. They have 32 families on their homeowner waiting list. Some families have been on the waiting list since 1998.

According to the 2012-2016 ACS estimates, home ownership tenure rate in Sawyer County is 73.8%, down from 77.1% in 2000. The average household size has decreased to 2.15, indicating an aging population and a decrease in the number of families with children in the county.

Home values in the county vary dramatically from high priced lake homes to lower valued single family homes. Local listings show the median list price of residential properties not on water is \$139,000 vs \$339,000 for properties on water. According to Zillow, the current median home value in Sawyer County is \$176,000.

43.4% of owner-occupied housing units are 39 years or older. The likelihood of condition becoming an issue increases with the age of the structure. Community members have also reported issues of condition due to the need for meth abatement in a portion of the housing stock in the county. Exact numbers are unknown.

Recommendation: Houses that are lost due to condition reduce the affordable, standard housing stock as they are unlikely to be replaced by housing in a similar price range. Home repair and maintenance is not affordable for cost burdened households which account for 25.3% of owner-occupied households.

Maintenance and repair of existing housing will be an important strategy to sustain the current housing inventory. Explore the use of housing rehabilitation programs to improve the county’s affordable housing stock. Work with community groups and businesses to reduce the cost of maintaining existing structures for cost burdened homeowners.

2. Demolish and clear any substandard structures

Findings: This housing study did not include a visual housing condition survey. However, observation and interviews with community stakeholders would indicate that there are a number of substandard housing units in Sawyer County.

Recommendation: Encourage ongoing efforts to clear significantly substandard structures to enhance the appearance and appeal of the community and improve the safety of homeowners and renters.

3. Promote the development of rental housing

Findings: The number of renter-occupied households has increased by 22.6% since 2000 while the number of owner-occupied households has increased by only 7.3%, creating a greater demand for rental housing. Of the rental population, 55% live in single-family units, 27.4% live in buildings with 2-4 units, 13.8% live in buildings with 5 or more units, and 3.8% live in mobile homes or other type housing.

With rental vacancy rates at 4.9%, landlords are able to be very selective because the supply of rental properties is not adequate to meet the demand. Lack of standard, available housing is affecting employers in the area. Individuals who have moved to the county have reported difficulty finding available housing in good condition. Potential employees cannot find rental or short-term housing within commuting distance to their jobs.

Projections estimate an additional 537 renter-occupied households between 2016 and 2030. 35.9% of renter households have three or more persons living in the home, indicating a need for two and three bedroom units.

Hill Construction has proposed building eight apartment buildings with eight rental units in each structure. The City of Hayward and Joint Review Board voted to create a Tax Incremental District (TID) as a tax incentive for the development. Because of the cost of construction, the developer would need to charge a minimum of \$950 per month rent for a two bedroom apartment. While this well is above the \$611 per month in housing costs a median renter-occupied household in Sawyer County can afford, it may be a viable option for renter-occupied households with higher incomes. The addition of 64 workforce rental units could open up existing rentals for renter-occupied households with lower incomes.

Recommendation: Due to the continued demand for housing in the Hayward and LCO area, it would be appropriate to promote the development of new rental units targeted toward the community workforce. Explore the feasibility of tiny houses. Currently Sawyer County Zoning requires housing units to be a minimum of 500 square feet.

4. Promote rental housing rehabilitation

Findings: Rental stock exists in efficiency and one, two, three, four and five bedroom units. 53.7% of renter-occupied housing units are 39 years or older and would likely benefit from rehabilitation. LCO Housing Authority has 394 housing units, most of which were built from 1971-1978. LCO has been working on updating their inventory for the past 10 years. To date, 120 units have been completely renovated.

2012-2016 ACS estimates show 491 vacant housing units which are not seasonal, for sale, or for rent. Rehabilitation of the housing units in this category which are in need of improvements could make more rental housing units available for occupancy.

Recommendation: Rehabilitation is encouraged to maintain the condition and quality of rental units, helping to ensure that renter households have access to decent, safe and sanitary housing. School programs, community groups and organizations may be able to provide resources for rental rehabilitation. Options for grant funding should also be explored.

5. Promote affordable rental housing creation when possible

Findings: The recommendation on the previous page addressed the potential for developing additional rental housing through new construction. The economics of new housing construction generally require substantially higher gross rental rates than otherwise exist in the rental housing in the county. 2012-2016 ACS estimates show 38.1% of renter-occupied households spend more than 30% of total income on housing expenses, which is the standard for determining whether housing is classified as “affordable.” With the median renter-occupied household income at \$24,453, half of all renter households in the county would ideally need a unit that is at or below the \$611 gross rent threshold. Creating rental housing units at or below this rent level will generally require a significant financial subsidy.

Renters of subsidized housing must pass a background and credit check. Even when these requirements are met and the consumer is awarded a housing voucher or rental assistance, housing that meets the basic housing quality standards inspection is not available. Qualifying renters are placed on a waiting list until a unit that meets the standard requirements is available. Waiting lists fluctuate, even within the time frame of this study. As of August 2018, LCO Housing Authority had 154 families waiting for rental housing, 16 elderly/near elderly and disabled waiting for one bedroom units and Sawyer County Housing Authority had 160 families on their Voucher Program waiting list. The Salvation Army currently has three families on a waiting list for the shelter. Once stable housing is secured, renters of subsidized housing are often able to join the workforce.

There is a need for affordable housing for households that don’t meet the income guidelines for assistance but still struggle to make ends meet.

Recommendation: Sawyer County would benefit from affordable rental housing creation. This would help expand the available labor force, and ease the housing pressure caused by low vacancy rates. However, there is no easy way to address the financial gap between affordable rental housing and the costs associated with building new units.

This study encourages the county to look for ways to add to the rental supply by better utilizing existing structures such as commercial buildings with unused space or by securing grant assistance that is intended for affordable rental housing. Target rents for affordable units should be at or below the levels allowed by the Housing Voucher Program listed in Table 19. Ideally, the expansion of affordable rental housing should not result in the reduction of affordable ownership housing as entry level housing units are limited in the Hayward and LCO areas.

Rewards and tax credits should be made available to private investors for the development of affordable housing units. This study recommends local stakeholders join together to advocate for state and federal programs and adequate funding for construction, operation and maintenance of affordable housing in the county.

6. Promote creation of senior housing

Findings: By 2040, the Department of Health estimates that 40.8% of the population in Sawyer County will be 60 years or older. Projections estimate from 2012-2016 to 2030, households with individuals 65 and over will increase by 571. Seniors who are reaching a time in their lives when they are ready to move to lower maintenance housing in locations closer to services often leave the area because they not able to find suitable housing. While senior apartments, assisted living facilities and nursing homes are available in the area, many have waiting lists.

Water's Edge added 20 senior apartments in September 2018. As of October 2018, 13 apartments are available for rent. With 25-30 individuals remaining on the waiting list, the units are projected to fill quickly.

Recommendations: Rental options for seniors who want to move closer to services should be explored. One-level buildings in a duplex configuration with an attached garage seem to appeal to seniors who want to maintain some of the amenities of single family living in a rental setting.

7. Promote education and resources to future homeowners and renters

Findings: There is not one place for individuals to go to get a complete listing of available rentals. Open units are advertised by word of mouth and rarely become available to the general public.

Some renters are leery of the responsibility of homeownership and the long term financial commitment of a mortgage. Future homeowners would benefit from education on buying and maintaining a home.

Recommendations: Explore the possibility of creating a general listing of all rental units on a community website. Provide financial literacy courses and home care and maintenance education.

8. Explore the need for supportive or transitional housing

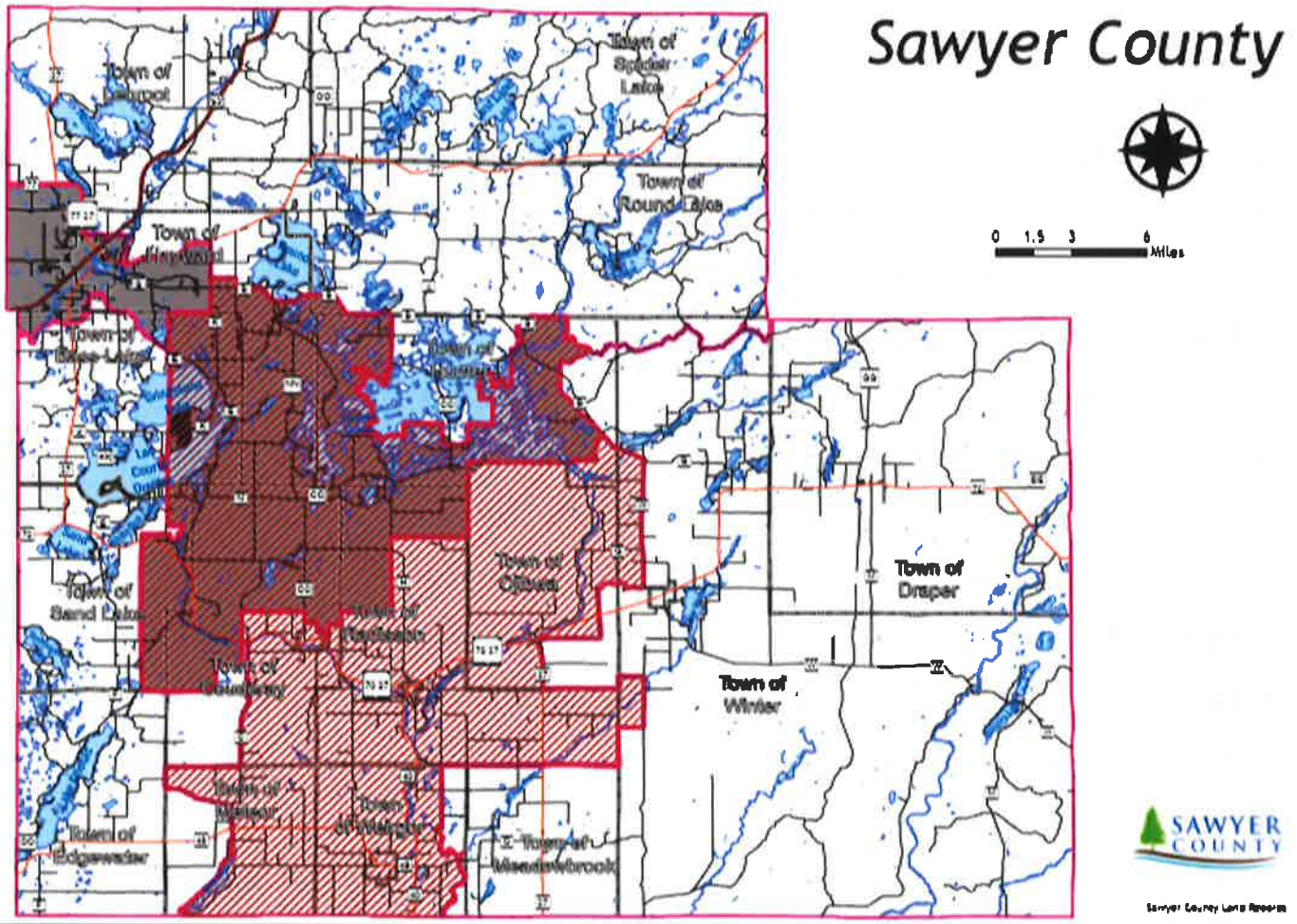
Finding: Transitional/supportive housing for veterans and individuals in abusive situations, recovering from addiction and coming out of incarceration is needed. Currently the only three options in Sawyer County are the LCO Women's Shelter, Elizabeth House and New Reflections Pathway to Hope. No options are available for men. When individuals affected by addiction and crime are unable to find housing, they return to their former situation and are unable to continue their recovery.

Recommendations: Funding sources, partnerships with community stakeholders and individuals willing to manage a recovery house are necessary components to provide support to individuals in the community who do not qualify for traditional or subsidized housing.








Opportunity Zones

Opportunity Zones are indicated in gray.

Map 6



Legend

-  Tracts with Poverty Rate >20%
-  Designated by US Treasury as Opportunity Zones
-  Census Tracts
-  County Hwy
-  State Hwy
-  Town Road
-  US Hwy

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Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for sharing information relevant to the housing study and the community:

Area North Realty	Ty Wiley
Catholic Charities	
E. Fuller Inc.	Peggy Strand
Greater Hayward Area Ministerial Association (GHAMA)	
Hayward Chamber of Commerce	Chris Ruckdaschel and Bart Moreland
Hayward Community Schools	
Hayward Area Memorial Hospital & Water's Edge	Candi McConnell and Kerri O'Bel
Hill Construction	Jeremy Hill
Lac Courte Oreilles Casino	
Lac Courte Oreilles College	
Lac Courte Oreilles Government	Jean Martin
Lac Courte Oreilles Housing Authority	Mark Montano and Marcy Gouge
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa School	
Louisiana Pacific	Vanessa
Mack Jack, Inc.	Lori Thoennes
Marketplace Foods	
Northwest Connections	Mandy Shilts
Salvation Army	Sue Skinner
Sawyer County Housing Authority	Sheila Young
Sawyer County Jail Administration Lieutenant	Joe Sajdera
Sawyer County/LCO EDC Housing Committee Member	Mark Ulfers
Sawyer County Land Records	Lavonne Nedlose
Sawyer County Non Profit	Nancy
Sawyer County Zoning	Dale Olson
Trent Johnson Construction	Trent Johnson
UW-Extension	Ariga Grigoryan and Sky Holt
Walmart	
Winter Chamber of Commerce	
Winter Community Schools	
Woodland Realty	Jim Dahlby

Revised 12/13/18

