

### **III. DEMOGRAPHICS**

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Demographic data provides a framework to assist the County with decisions in regards to housing, business development, community facilities and services, environmental impacts, and transportation. This data provides valuable information about the facilities, services, and planning that will be required in the future.

#### **A. Issues Summary**

There are several factors and trends influencing the demographic structure of the county:

- Decreasing number of youth and adults of child bearing age.
- Transition of a large segment of the population (baby boomers) into the elderly category.
- Median age of County is growing older. In 1990 it was 39.2 and in 2004 it was 41.7.
- The County is experiencing a more diverse population base. In 1990, 1.1% of the County Population was non-white, and increased to 4.8% in 2000.
- More residents have at least a high school education than in previous years.
- Higher education degrees have increased, but are far below the state average.
- Household size has decreased from 2.51 in 1990 to 2.39 in 2000.

As the trend for young people leaving the County continues, the County's aging population continues to grow. As the residents of Cottonwood County continue to age, consideration must be taken as to how the County will provide necessary, adequate, and affordable services to the senior population.

#### **A.1. Demographic Strengths, Challenges and Future Direction**

The County Committee identified demographic issues in the County.

##### **Demographic Strengths**

- Civic pride
- Increase in diverse population base
- Existing labor force
- Good education system

##### **Demographic Challenges**

- Aging population
- Less Youth
- Median age growing older

##### **The Future of Demographics**

- Retain a good educational system
- Stabilize numbers of next generation
- Retirement population moving to shoreland properties.
- Maintain civic pride
- Encourage people to return to rural Minnesota.
- Prepare for and preserve the quality of life for the increasing aging population

## B. Population Trends

In 1900, the U.S. Census reported Cottonwood County's population at 12,069 people. In 2000, the U.S. Census enumerated 12,167 people in Cottonwood County, with a 2004 estimate of 11,061. Over the past century, the County population rose to a peak in 1940 through 1960 of between 15,000 to 16,000. The County's population showed a decline after 1970; with the greatest decrease occurring from 1980 to 1990 at -13.0%, slowing considerably from 1990 to 2000.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated in 1995 that the population of Cottonwood County was 12,768. This number was used to create a population projection through the year 2025. According to this projection, which showed population decline of about 3% every ten years, Cottonwood County's population in the year 2000 should have been 12,440 (higher than the Census count). The Minnesota Land Management Information Center (LMIC) has developed revised population projections, based on Census 2000 counts, to the year 2030. These revised projections are shown in Figure 3-1.

The trend for the population distribution in Cottonwood County from 1950 to 2000 was from rural (non-communities) to the communities in the County (Figure 3-2). In 1950, 55% of the population resided in rural Cottonwood County, by 2000, 66% of the population resided in the communities. During this time, the countywide population decreased by 22.8%. The population in rural parts of the county decreased by 52.6%, in the rural communities by 8.7%, and increased in the City of Windom by 41.9%. The median age of the county population is 41.7 years, in 1990 it was 39.2, Figure I illustrates the median age by jurisdiction in the County.

| Census Year | Population | Percent Change | Revised projection | Percent Change |
|-------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1900        | 12,069     |                |                    |                |
| 1910        | 12,651     | 4.8%           |                    |                |
| 1920        | 14,570     | 15.2%          |                    |                |
| 1930        | 14,782     | 1.5%           |                    |                |
| 1940        | 16,143     | 9.2%           |                    |                |
| 1950        | 15,763     | -2.4%          |                    |                |
| 1960        | 16,166     | 2.6%           |                    |                |
| 1970        | 14,887     | -7.9%          |                    |                |
| 1980        | 14,584     | -2.0%          |                    |                |
| 1990        | 12,694     | -13.0%         |                    |                |
| 2000        | 12,167     | -4.2%          |                    |                |
| 2005        | 12,010     | -1.3%          | 12,010             | -1.3%          |
| 2010        | 11,650     | -3.0%          | 11,920             | -0.7%          |
| 2015        | 11,300     | -3.0%          | 11,970             | 0.4%           |
| 2020        | 10,970     | -2.9%          | 12,100             | 1.1%           |
| 2025        | 10,600     | -3.4%          | 12,180             | 0.7%           |
| 2030        |            |                | 12,280             | 0.8%           |

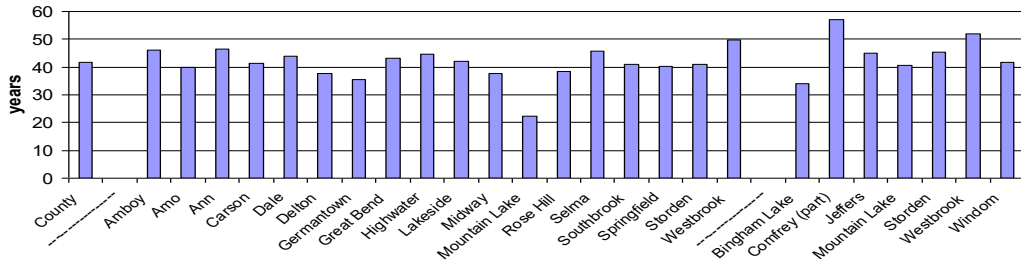
Source: US Bureau of Census, Minnesota Planning, LMIC

|                 | 1950   |     | 1960   |     | 1970   |     | 1980   |     | 1990   |     | 2000   |     |
|-----------------|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|
|                 | #      | %   | #      | %   | #      | %   | #      | %   | #      | %   | #      | %   |
| County Total    | 15,763 |     | 16,166 |     | 14,887 |     | 14,854 |     | 12,684 |     | 12,167 |     |
| Rural Farm      | 8,031  | 51% | 7,100  | 44% | 5,468  | 37% | 5,893  | 40% | 2,493  | 20% | 1,441  | 12% |
| Rural Non-farm  | 674    | 4%  | 1,287  | 8%  | 1,609  | 11% | 2,018  | 14% | 2,278  | 18% | 2,682  | 22% |
| Rural Community | 3,893  | 25% | 4,088  | 25% | 3,990  | 27% | 2,277  | 15% | 3,640  | 29% | 3,345  | 29% |
| Urban 2500+     | 3,165  | 20% | 3,691  | 23% | 3,820  | 26% | 4,666  | 31% | 4,283  | 34% | 4,490  | 37% |

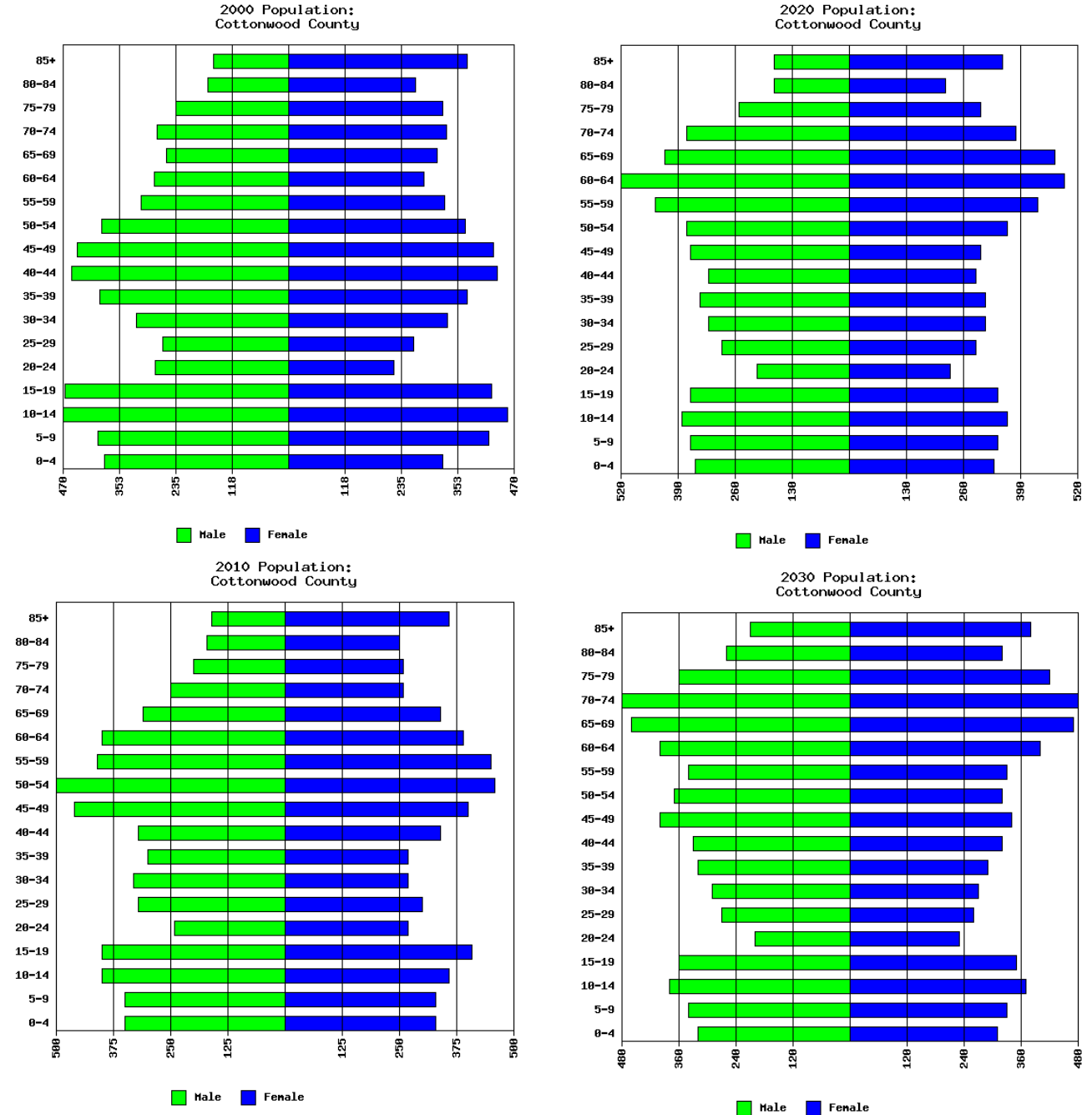
Source: US Census Bureau

The rural population is also counted by farm and non-farm occupation. The trend has been a decreasing farm population. The Census of Agriculture data show there were 970 operators in 1987 and 784 in 1997; the 2002 data indicates an increase in the number of operators to 832. There is however an increasing number of operators who list another occupation as their principal occupation.

**Figure 3-3: Cottonwood County Median Age 2000**



**Figure 3-4: Population Pyramids 2000 to 2030**



LMIC projections also break out population by age cohort. Figure 3-4 (above) illustrates the population by age cohort in a population pyramid for the years 2000, 2010, 2020, and 2030. Figure 3-5 shows population projections by age cohort from 2000 to 2030.

The current population projection by LMIC to 2030 shows a one percent increase from 2000 counts. As a figure by it self, it appears the population of the county will remain stable. However, when reviewing the age cohort data, the projections provide indicators that must be planned for, primarily the baby boomers. The baby boomers were born from 1946 to 1964. In the year 2000, they were in the 35 to 39 age category to the 55 to 59 category; by 2030 the baby boomers will all be in the 65+ age category. Not only will this large segment of the population rely on more services, it is projected that the County will have a larger number of frail elderly (age 85+), and smaller number of working and child bearing age citizens.

| <b>Figure 3-5: Population Projection 2000 to 2030 by Age Cohort</b> |              |             |             |             |             |             |             |                             |
|---|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Age Group</b>  | <b>2000*</b> | <b>2005</b> | <b>2010</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2020</b> | <b>2025</b> | <b>2030</b> | <b>2000 - 2030 % Change</b> |
| 0-4   | 705          | 680         | 680         | 690         | 680         | 650         | 630         | -10.6                       |
| 5-9   | 815          | 710         | 680         | 690         | 700         | 690         | 670         | -17.8                       |
| 9-14  | 928          | 870         | 760         | 740         | 740         | 760         | 750         | -19.2                       |
| 15-19   | 889          | 860         | 810         | 720         | 700         | 700         | 710         | -20.1                       |
| 20-24   | 498          | 530         | 510         | 480         | 440         | 420         | 430         | -13.7                       |
| 25-29   | 524          | 580         | 620         | 610         | 580         | 530         | 530         | 1.1                         |
| 30-34   | 648          | 550         | 600         | 640         | 630         | 610         | 560         | -13.6                       |
| 35-39   | 766          | 660         | 570         | 600         | 650         | 630         | 610         | -20.4                       |
| 40-44   | 887          | 770         | 660         | 580         | 610         | 650         | 650         | -26.7                       |
| 45-49   | 866          | 980         | 860         | 740         | 660         | 690         | 740         | -14.5                       |
| 50-54   | 758          | 860         | 960         | 860         | 730         | 650         | 690         | -9                          |
| 55-59   | 633          | 770         | 860         | 960         | 870         | 760         | 670         | 5.8                         |
| 60-64   | 561          | 660         | 790         | 900         | 1,010       | 930         | 800         | 42.6                        |
| 65-69   | 565          | 540         | 650         | 790         | 890         | 1,000       | 930         | 64.6                        |
| 70-74   | 603          | 520         | 510         | 610         | 750         | 850         | 960         | 59.2                        |
| 75-79   | 558          | 530         | 460         | 450         | 550         | 680         | 780         | 39.8                        |
| 80-84   | 434          | 440         | 420         | 380         | 390         | 460         | 580         | 33.6                        |
| 85+   | 529          | 500         | 520         | 530         | 520         | 520         | 590         | 11.5                        |
| Total   | 12,167       | 12,010      | 11,920      | 11,970      | 12,100      | 12,180      | 12,280      | 0.9                         |

• 2000 population is from Census 2000. Note: County data is rounded to 10's.

Source: Minnesota Land Management Information Center

## B.1. Migration and Tenure

Several elements of the Census data can be utilized to look at the dynamics of a population: migration, birth and death records, and tenure of housing. The population estimates from the US Census provide information about the total change of population from April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2003. While there was a natural increase in population (22 persons) there was an overall decrease of 148 people, primarily due to out migration. Data from the Minnesota Demographer's Office also indicates that an average of 73% of the annual deaths in Cottonwood County is in the age category of 75 and older or a decrease of approximately 7% of the population in that age category (from 2000 to 2002). Under the current population projection scenario, there will be a natural population decrease (more deaths than births). Given the rate of natural decrease, the age structure is also important. Older people are unlikely to move, but more likely to die. About 17.5% of population 2000 was 65 and over - or about 1.5 times as many as the state average. While the rate of population decrease has slowed, it has been a pattern in Cottonwood County since at least 1970.

| Geographic Area   | Total Population change * | Natural Increase |         |         | Migration |                             |                        |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
|                   |                           | Total            | Births  | Deaths  | Total     | Net International Migration | Net Internal Migration |
| Minnesota         | 139,890                   | 93,341           | 216,100 | 122,759 | 46,271    | 47,425                      | -1154                  |
| Cottonwood County | -148                      | 22               | 483     | 461     | -161      | 10                          | -171                   |
| Region 8 Total    | -2,422                    | 353              | 4,697   | 4,344   | -2,753    | 563                         | -3,316                 |

\* Total population change includes residual

Source: State Data Center

The 2000 Census identified 4917 occupied housing units in Cottonwood County (3464 in communities and 1453 in the rural areas of the County). The Census 2000 data indicates that 48% of the householders moved into their homes between 1990 and 2000. Separated into more specific categories, 18.3% of the Householders have resided in the same homes since 1969 or earlier (13.4% community and 30.2% rural), 16.3% moved to their homes between 1970 and 1979, 17.7% between 1980 and 1989, 14.5% between 1990 and 1994, and 33.1% between 1995 and 2000. The data indicates that while there is a significant number of rural residents that have resided in their homes, about ½ of the County population have moved into their residences from 1990 to 2000.

## B.2 Education.

The US Census identifies education level for persons 25 and older. Cottonwood County has increased the percentage of population with a high school degree or higher from 1990 to 2000 from 71.7% to 80.4%, an 8.7% increase. While behind the Minnesota percentage, Cottonwood County decreased the margin of difference. The percentage of population with a bachelors degree or higher increased from 12.3 percent to 14.2 percent, but lagged behind the state percentages. This data indicates that more of the population base is obtaining a high school education, but while the County retains a similar level of population with a bachelors degree or higher, the difference between the state percentage and county has increased. An anomaly in the educational attainment level is in Mountain Lake Township where a large number of residents (age 25 and older) are without a high school degree. This most likely is impacted by the population in the two Hutterite Colonies, within the township and their sustainable agrarian life style.

| <b>Figure 3-7:<br/>Education</b> | Population 25<br>& older | High School<br>or higher | Co % | MN % | Bachelors degree<br>or higher | Co % | MN % |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------|------|-------------------------------|------|------|
| Cottonwood County<br>(2000 data) | 8344                     | 6712                     | 80.4 | 87.9 | 1189                          | 14.2 | 27.4 |
| Cottonwood County<br>(1990 data) | 8644                     | 6198                     | 71.7 | 82.4 | 1063                          | 12.3 | 21.6 |

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

### B.3. Ethnicity and Race

Data results on ethnicity and race from the 1990 and 2000 Census differ because questions for the 2000 Census were modified and race-by-race comparison would not be accurate. The comparisons that can be made are as follows: The percentage of white population decreased from 98.0% to 95.2%. Individuals of any race, including of Hispanic origin of any race, increased to 2.2%. While the race categories below are for one race, we will make the assumption that there was an increase in the minority population categories of Asian or Pacific Islander, other race, as well as individual reporting mixed races (Figure 3-8).

| <b>Figure 3-8: Population by Race</b>    | 1990   | % of 1990 | 2000   | % of 2000 |
|--|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Total Population                         | 12,694 |           | 12,167 |           |
| White                                    | 12,563 | 98.9%     | 11,587 | 95.2%     |
| Black/Black one-race                     | 12     | <1%       | 41     | <1%       |
| American Indian / Am Indian one-race     | 10     | <1%       | 28     | <1%       |
| Asian or Pacific Islander / API one-race | 88     | <1%       | 208    | 1.7%      |
| Other race                               | 21     | <1%       | 164    | 1.3%      |
| Two or more races                        |        | NA        | 139    | 1.1%      |
| Hispanic Origin (of any race)            | 63     | <1%       | 267    | 2.2%      |

Source: US Census, 1990 and 2000

NA – Census Data Categories Changed

### C. Household Trends

From 1990 to 2000, the number of households in Minnesota grew by 15%; during the same time, households in Cottonwood County decreased by 3% or -143 households. In Minnesota, the trend for most counties is toward smaller household size, but larger numbers of total households. The average household size varies greatly from one county to another.

| <b>Figure 3-9: Population and Household Estimates, 1990 to 2000</b> |                    |                    |                   |                    |                    |                   |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|   | 1990<br>Population | 2000<br>Population | Percent<br>Change | 1990<br>Households | 2000<br>Households | Percent<br>Change |
| Minnesota   | 4,375,665          | 4,919,479          | 12%               | 1,647,853          | 1,895,127          | 15%               |
| Cottonwood Co   | 12,694             | 12,167             | -4.2%             | 5,060              | 4,917              | -3%               |

Source: US Census 1990, 2000

#### C.1 Housing.

Chapter VII provides more information on housing in Cottonwood County. In sum, there has been a decrease in the total number of housing units; a slight increase in the number of owner-occupied housing units and decrease in the number of renter-occupied housing units.