

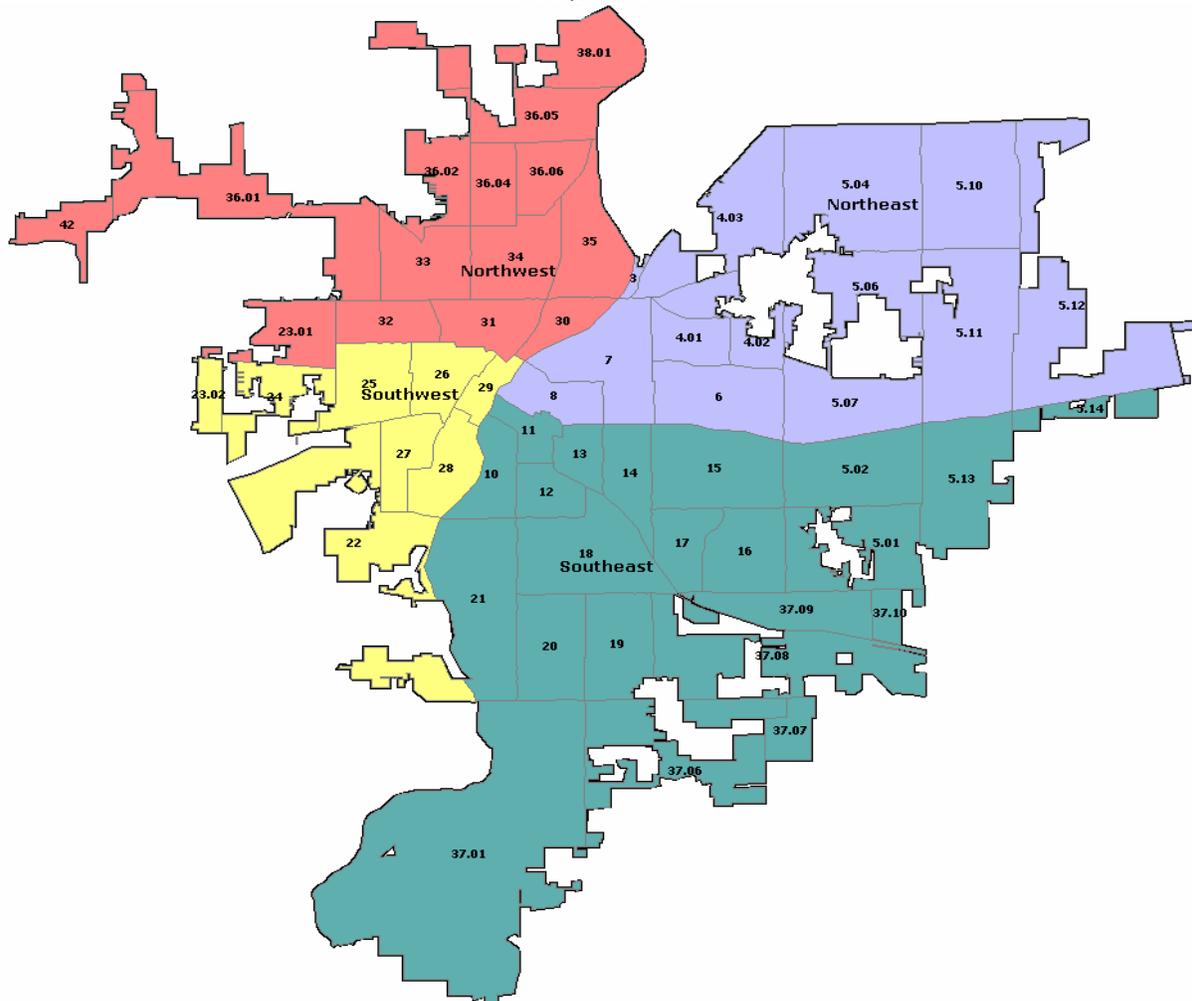
Section II. Demographic and Economic Profile

Introduction

The City of Rockford, with a population of slightly over 150,000, is located in north-central Illinois, 90 miles east of the Mississippi River, 60 miles northwest of Chicago, and 10 miles south of Wisconsin. It is located in Winnebago County and is the second largest city in Illinois.

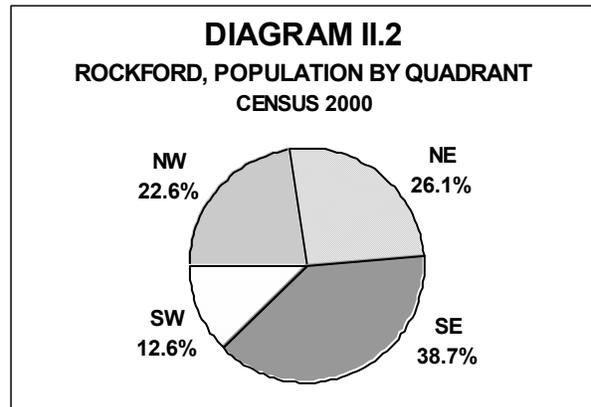
For the purposes of the Consolidated Plan, the City was divided into four quadrants (Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest), with the east-west quadrants approximately divided by Rock River, and the north-south quadrants approximately divided by State Street. Diagram II.1, below, shows the four quadrants as clusters of Census Tracts. The numbered sections within the map mark 2000 Census Bureau Tracts or those parts of the tracts within the City of Rockford.

DIAGRAM II.1
GEOGRAPHIC MAP OF THE CITY OF ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS
BY QUADRANT



Population

At the time of the 2000 Census, the population of the City of Rockford was 150,115. The total population, divided among the City's four quadrants, is shown in Diagram II.2, at right. The Southeast quadrant had the largest population, with 38.7 percent of the total, while the Southwest quadrant had the smallest percent of the population, just 12.6 percent. Between 1990 and 2000, the population of the City increased 7.7 percent, or about 10,700 persons, an average annual growth rate of just .7 percent per year.



Population in both the Northwest and Southwest quadrants declined slightly between 1990 and 2000, falling .04 and 1.2 percent, respectively. Population declined in the Southwest quadrant, by far the least populated quadrant of the City, at the highest rate. In contrast, the eastern portions of the City expanded rapidly during the 10-year period, with population in the Northeast quadrant increasing 15.8 percent and population in the Southeast quadrant rising 10.6 percent, as seen in Table II.1, below.

TABLE II.1
POPULATION CHANGE IN ROCKFORD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Northeast	33,805	39,146	15.8%
Northwest	33,908	33,894	-.04%
Southeast	52,549	58,143	10.6%
Southwest	19,164	18,932	-1.2%
City of Rockford	139,426	150,115	7.7%

The population of the City of Rockford did not keep pace with the growth rate in Winnebago County as a whole, which, according to the University of Illinois Healthy Community Study 2000, increased by 10.1 percent between 1990 and 2000.³ During the same period, the populations in nearby Boone and Ogle Counties also outpaced the City, rising by 35.6 percent and 11.0 percent respectively, as shown in Table II.2, below.

TABLE II.2
POPULATION CHANGE COMPARISON
2000 CENSUS

Region	Population	Change, 1990-2000
Winnebago County	278,418	+10.1%
Boone County	41,786	+35.6%
Ogle County	51,032	+11.0%
City of Rockford	150,115	+7.7%

³ *Healthy Community Study 2003*, Rockford Health Council, June 2003.

Race and Racial Concentrations

Between 1990 and 2000, Rockford's black population increased 24.9 percent, and the Asian population rose 54.5 percent.⁴ As seen in Table II.3, below, the City became significantly more racially diverse overall, with the non-white population increasing from 18.9 to 27.2 percent of the total population.

TABLE II.3
RACIAL CHANGE IN ROCKFORD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Race	1990	2000	% Change
Whites	113,118	109,303	-3.4%
Blacks	20,868	26,072	24.9%
Asian	2,136	3,301	54.5%
All Other Races	3,304	11,439	246.2%
City of Rockford	139,426	150,115	7.7%

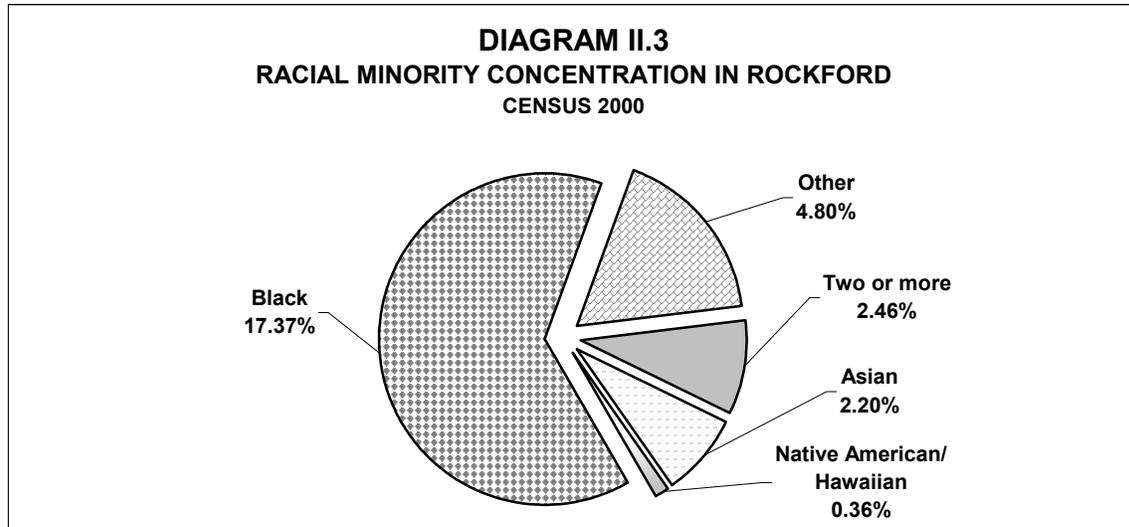
The racial composition of the City of Rockford changed along with the overall growth in the population. In 2000, 27.2 percent of the Rockford population was non-white, an 8.3 percent increase from 1990. Over the last decade, the white population in Rockford declined, coinciding with a significant rise in other races. In 2000, the City had a smaller percentage of whites than Winnebago County, the State of Illinois, or the nation, which are, respectively, 82.5, 73.5, and 75.1 percent white, as seen in Table II.4, below.

TABLE II.4
PERCENT POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY
2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Race/Ethnicity	Rockford	Winnebago County	Illinois	United States
White	72.8%	82.5%	73.5%	75.1%
Black	17.4%	10.5%	15.1%	12.3%
All Other Races	9.8%	7.0%	11.4%	12.6%

The City's percentage of blacks was much higher than in the county or nation, and 2.3 percent higher than in the State as a whole. The entire non-white, minority population of Rockford is represented in Diagram II.3, on the following page, which shows blacks form the largest minority population in Rockford.

² In 2000, the Census collected data on persons who classed themselves as two or more races. This was not done in 1990. Hence, the category "all other races" is not directly comparable between 1990 and 2000.



Racial diversity varied significantly by area of the City. The white population increased only in the Northeast quadrant, increasing by about 2,500 persons, or 7.7 percent. The white population declined in all other quadrants of the City, with the Northwest declining the most, 15.8 percent, or over 4,400 persons. Over the decade, the Southeast quadrant lost 2.8 percent of its white population and the Southwest quadrant lost 9.6 percent, as seen in Table II.5, below.

TABLE II.5
WHITES IN ROCKFORD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Northeast	32,154	34,643	7.7%
Northwest	27,992	23,576	-15.8%
Southeast	47,014	45,696	-2.8%
Southwest	5,958	5,388	-9.6%
City of Rockford	113,118	109,303	-3.4%

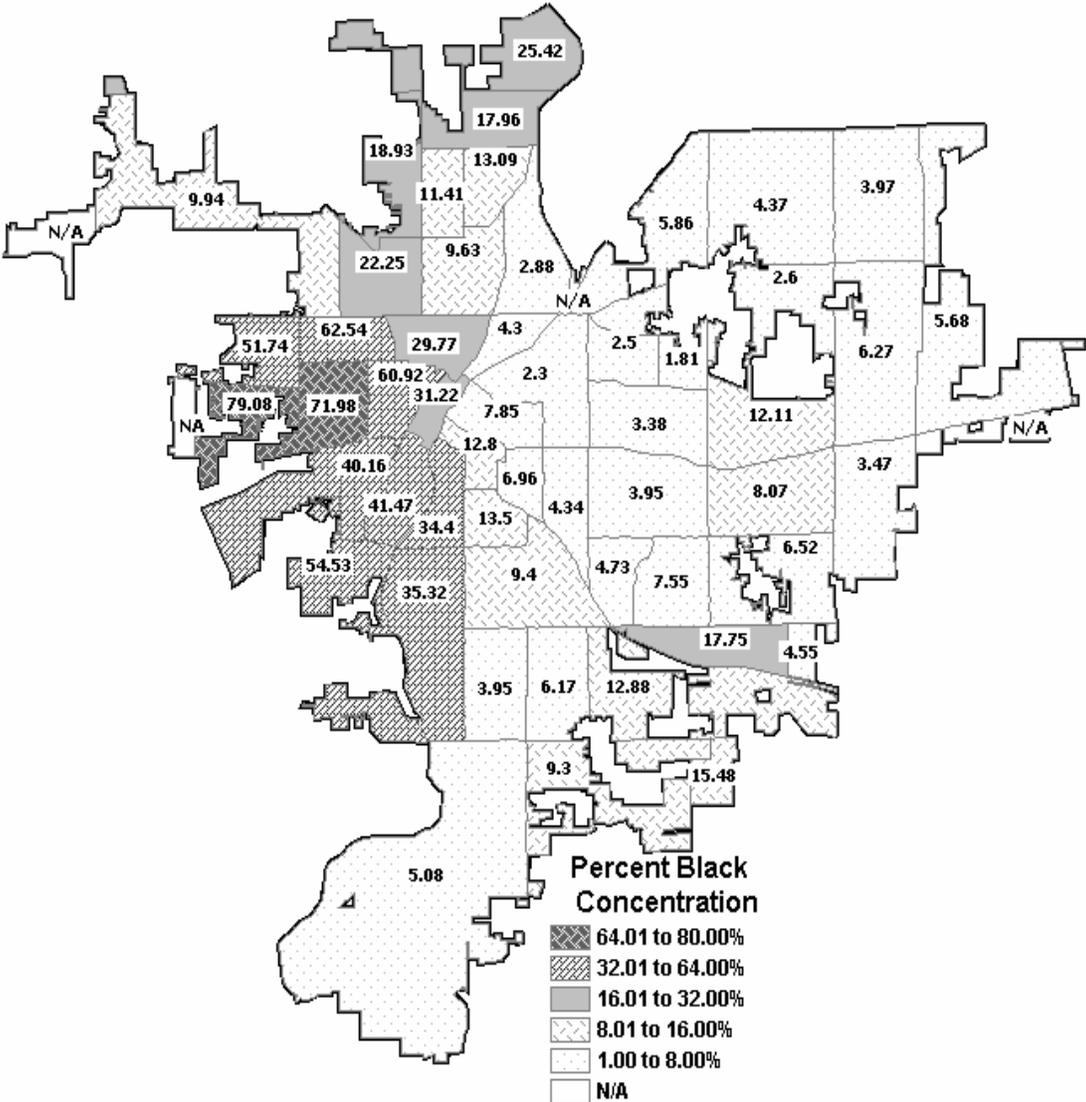
Blacks in Rockford moved in increasing numbers to the Northeast quadrant. Between 1990 and 2000, the black population jumped 156.6 percent, or over 1,100 persons, in the Northeast. Blacks also moved into the Northwest and Southeast quadrants, where their population increased 52.4 and 79.7 percent, respectively. The black population declined only in the Southwest quadrant, falling 10.8 percent, or over 1,200 persons, as seen in Table II.6, below.

TABLE II.6
BLACKS IN ROCKFORD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Northeast	747	1,917	156.6%
Northwest	5,101	7,772	52.4%
Southeast	3,299	5,928	79.7%
Southwest	11,721	10,455	-10.8%
City of Rockford	20,868	26,072	24.9%

The black racial minority concentration in Rockford in 2000 is illustrated by Census Tract in Diagram II.4, below.⁵ The highest concentrations of blacks were seen on the west side of the City, particularly in the Southwest quadrant, which was the only quadrant in which black concentrations were above 64 percent. Census Tracts 24 and 25 in the Southwest quadrant had especially high black racial concentrations, exceeding 79 and 71 percent, respectively. Black racial concentrations below 8 percent were seen mostly on the east side of the City, with disproportionately low rates in the Northeast.⁶

DIAGRAM II.4
ROCKFORD, PERCENT BLACK MINORITY CONCENTRATION BY CENSUS TRACT
CENSUS 2000



⁵ The four Census Tracts with concentrations of 0 have populations within the City limits of 19 or fewer persons.
⁶ It is important to note that racial concentrations are different from the total racial populations described in the above tables. Concentration refers to the percentage share of the total.

The Asian population increased significantly in all sections of the City, especially the Northeast and Southeast quadrants, as shown in Table II.7, below.

TABLE II.7
ASIANS IN ROCKFORD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Northeast	688	1,206	75.3%
Northwest	128	216	68.8%
Southeast	1,297	1,836	41.6%
Southwest	23	43	87.0%
City of Rockford	2,136	3,301	54.5%

Hispanic Population and Concentration

Over the decade, the Hispanic population expanded rapidly in the City, increasing by nearly 10,000 persons, or 161.6 percent. Hispanics comprised over 10 percent of the City's total population in 2000. Rockford's Hispanic concentration was significantly higher than the 6.9 percent seen in Winnebago County, but Rockford's concentration was lower than in either Illinois or the nation, which have Hispanic concentrations of 12.3 and 12.5 percent, respectively.

Over the decade, the largest increase in the Hispanic population occurred in the Southeast quadrant, where the population rose by almost 4,500 persons. The Northeast quadrant had the largest percentage increase, jumping 279.6 percent, as seen in Table II.8, below.

TABLE II.8
HISPANICS IN ROCKFORD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Northeast	510	1,936	279.6%
Northwest	1,207	2,706	124.2%
Southeast	1,904	6,400	236.1%
Southwest	2,220	4,236	90.8%
City of Rockford	5,841	15,278	161.6%

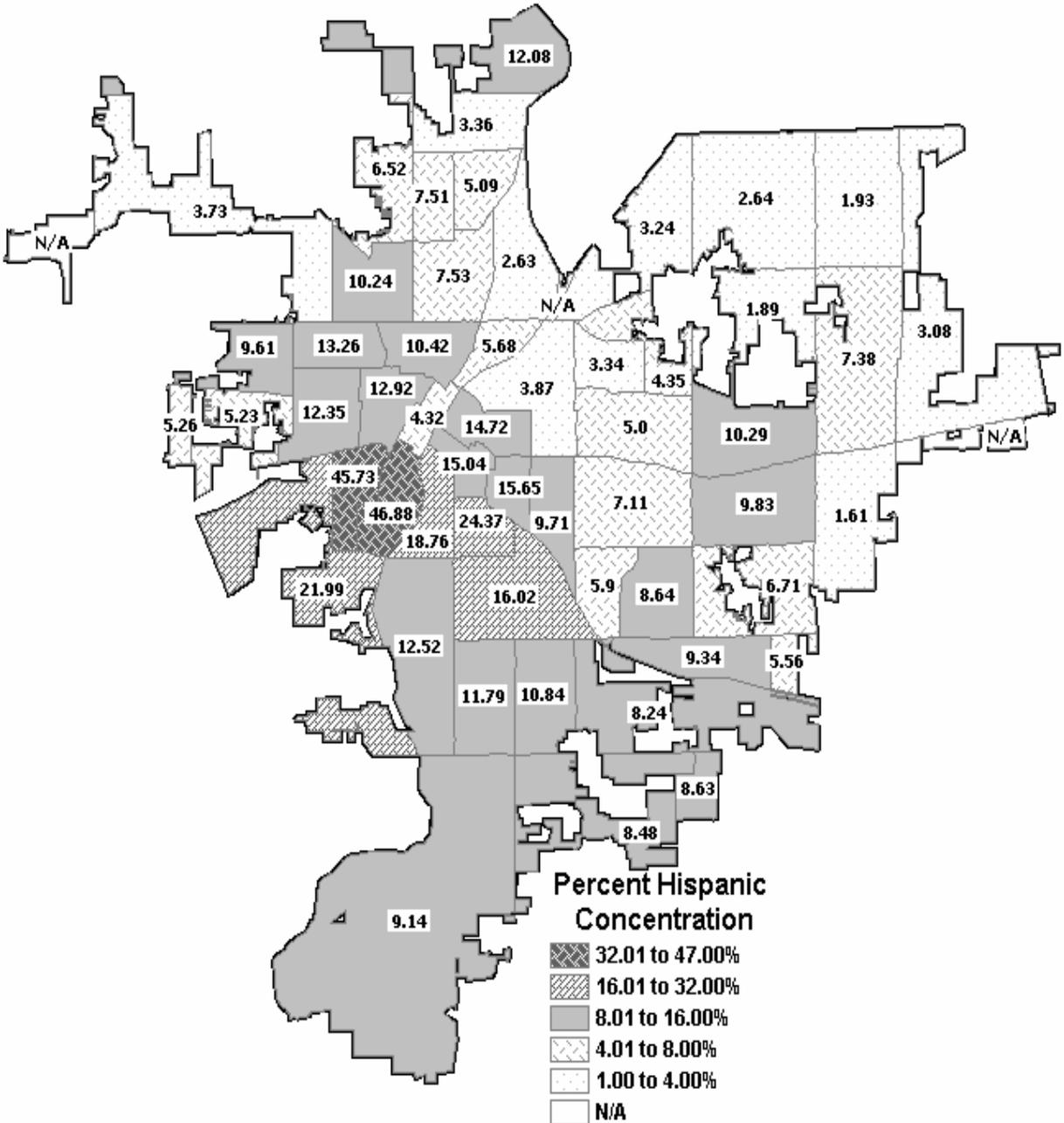
Table II.9, below, shows that 22.4 percent of the total Southwest population was Hispanic, more than double the concentration in the three other quadrants. The Southeast region was 11.0 percent Hispanic, while the two northern quadrants had Hispanic concentrations of less than 10 percent.

TABLE II.9
HISPANICS AS PART OF TOTAL POPULATION
2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	Total Population	Hispanic Population	Percent Hispanic
Northeast	39,146	1,936	4.9%
Northwest	33,894	2,706	8.0%
Southeast	58,143	6,400	11.0%
Southwest	18,932	4,236	22.4%
City of Rockford	150,115	15,278	10.2%

As shown in Diagram II.5, below, Hispanic ethnicity was extremely concentrated in Census Tracts 27 and 28 in the Southwest quadrant, where ethnic concentrations exceeded 45 percent.⁷ Several tracts in the Southeast and Southwest quadrants had concentrations between 16 and 32 percent.

DIAGRAM II.5
ROCKFORD, PERCENT HISPANIC CONCENTRATION BY CENSUS TRACT
CENSUS 2000



⁷ The three Census Tracts with Hispanic concentrations of 0 also had a population of 0 within the City limits.

Age Distribution

The highest concentration of elderly persons existed in the Northeast quadrant, where 17.4 percent of the population was of retirement age. The west side of the City had the highest concentration of citizens under the age of 20, with 37.2 of Southwest residents and 30.9 percent of Northwest residents falling into that age bracket. This was probably due in part to the fact that 55 percent of the Hispanic population in the City of Rockford is under the age of 24, and the Hispanic population is concentrated most heavily on the west side of the City.⁸

Table II.10, below, shows the change in age distribution from 1990 to 2000. By far the largest percentage increase was in the 35-54 age category, which rose almost 26 percent. The biggest decrease came in the 25-34 age segment. Over the decade, the City lost adults between the ages of 25 and 34, and gained persons under the age of 20, as well as those in the prime wage-earning years of 35 to 54.

TABLE II.10
POPULATION BY AGE COHORT
2000 CENSUS CITY OF ROCKFORD

Age	1990	2000	% Change
Under 20	40,091	44,009	9.8
20-24	10,123	9,834	-2.9
25-34	24,324	22,414	-7.9
35-54	32,526	40,917	25.8
55-64	11,827	11,832	0.0
65 and over	20,535	21,109	2.8
Total	139,426	150,115	7.7

The age distribution within a community can highlight current or future needs. The distribution of age cohorts in Rockford's four quadrants differed significantly in 2000. In general, the east side, especially the Northeast quadrant, had fewer persons under the age of 20, and the Southwest quadrant had fewer citizens over the age of 55, as seen in Table II.11, below.

TABLE II.11
PERCENT OF POPULATION BY AGE COHORT
2000 CENSUS CITY OF ROCKFORD BY QUADRANT

Age	NE	NW	SE	SW	Rockford
<20	25.7	30.7	28.4	37.2	29.3
20-24	5.3	6.1	7.2	7.9	6.6
25-34	12.4	15.0	16.7	14.5	14.9
35-54	29.9	27.0	26.6	24.0	27.3
55-64	9.3	7.1	7.9	6.3	7.9
65+	17.4	13.5	13.5	10.0	14.1

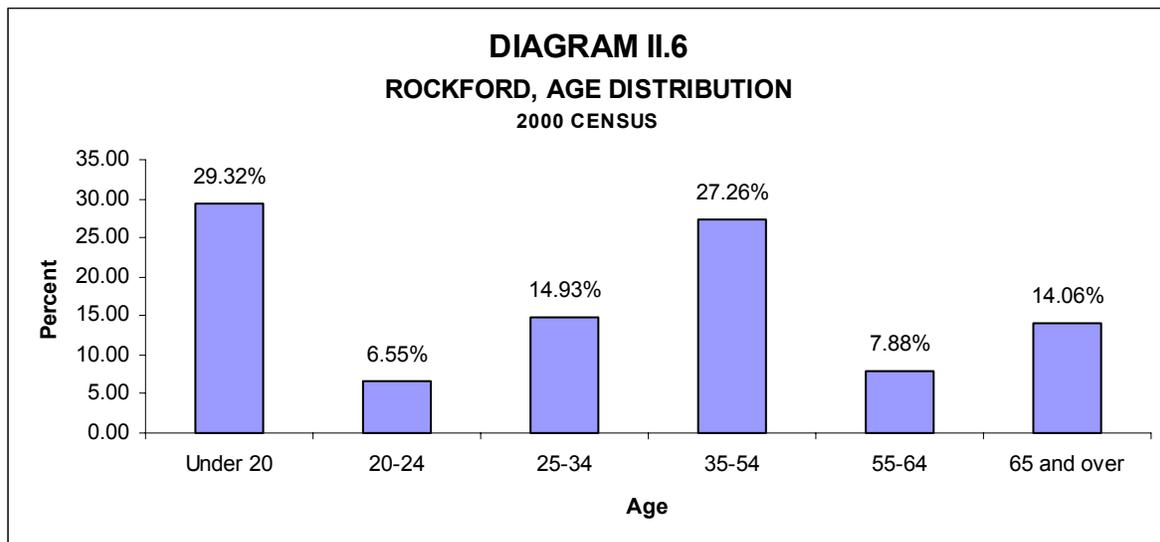
⁸ Telephone correspondence on April 23, 2004, with Marco Lenis, president and CEO of La Voz Latina.

Using Census data published in the Healthy Community Study 2003, Rockford's age distribution was compared to Winnebago County and the nation in Table II.12, below. The City of Rockford's age distribution was similar to that of both the county and the country, although the City's median age was less than in the county or nation. The percent of the population 65 and older and the percent of persons who were under the age of 24 were higher in Rockford than in Winnebago County or the nation.

TABLE II.12
AGE DISTRIBUTION COMPARISON
2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Age	Rockford	Winnebago County	United States
24 and under	35.9%	34.8%	35.4%
25-54	42.2%	43.6%	43.6%
55-64	7.9%	8.8%	8.6%
65 and over	14.1%	12.8%	12.4%
Median Age	34.4	35.9	35.3

About 57 percent of Rockford's population fell into one of two age categories. Some 29.3 percent of the population was under 20 years of age, and 27.3 percent was between the ages of 35 and 54. The City's age distribution is represented in Diagram II.6, below.



Sex

In 2000, Rockford had a slightly higher percentage of females than males in the City as a whole, as well as in each of the four quadrants. In the City, 51.8 percent of the population was female, and 48.2 percent of the population was male.

The Census Bureau also separates the 65-and-over population by sex. In 2000, the elderly in Rockford were predominantly female, with 12,947 females falling within this age range. Of the males in Rockford, 8,162 were elderly.

Persons with Disabilities

The 2000 Census defines disability with a broad range of categories, including physical, sensory, and mental disability. People with disabilities include those with long-standing conditions, as well as those with temporary conditions lasting six months or more that inhibit certain activities.

The Census breaks disabilities down further into three subcategories. These cover people with self-care disabilities (difficulty with activities such as bathing or dressing), go-outside-home disabilities (difficulty walking out of the home), and employment disabilities (difficulty working at a job or business).

In 2000, over 28,000 persons, or 19 percent, of Rockford's residents had some form of disability, or some combination of disabilities. The most common disability cited was physical, and the most common subcategory cited was employment, as shown in Table II.13, below.⁹ Of the 21,109 persons aged 65 or older, over 35 percent had disabilities.

TABLE II.13
DISABLED INDIVIDUALS BY AGE AND TYPE OF DISABILITY
CITY OF ROCKFORD, 2000 CENSUS

Type of Disability	5-15	16-20	21-64	65+	Total
Sensory	162	45	913	862	1,982
Physical	124	44	1,673	1,638	3,479
Mental	1,011	337	818	214	2,380
Self-care	83	15	65	7	170
Go-outside-home (ambulatory)	.	161	593	1,071	1,825
Employment	.	539	5,724	.	6,263
Two or more types	349	634	7,729	3,659	12,371
Total	1,729	1,775	17,515	7,451	28,470

Households

The total number of households in the City of Rockford increased slightly faster than did the population, 7.9 percent compared to 7.7 percent. The rate of household formation varied by quadrant. Household formation in the Northeast quadrant jumped 21.7 percent, outpacing population growth in the Northeast quadrant, which rose 15.8 percent.

TABLE II.14
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS IN ROCKFORD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Northeast	13,022	15,850	21.7%
Northwest	13,543	13,223	-2.4%
Southeast	21,691	23,853	10.0%
Southwest	6,583	6,232	-5.3%
City of Rockford	54,839	59,158	7.9%

⁹ Appendix A provides a breakdown of disabled individuals in the City by quadrant.

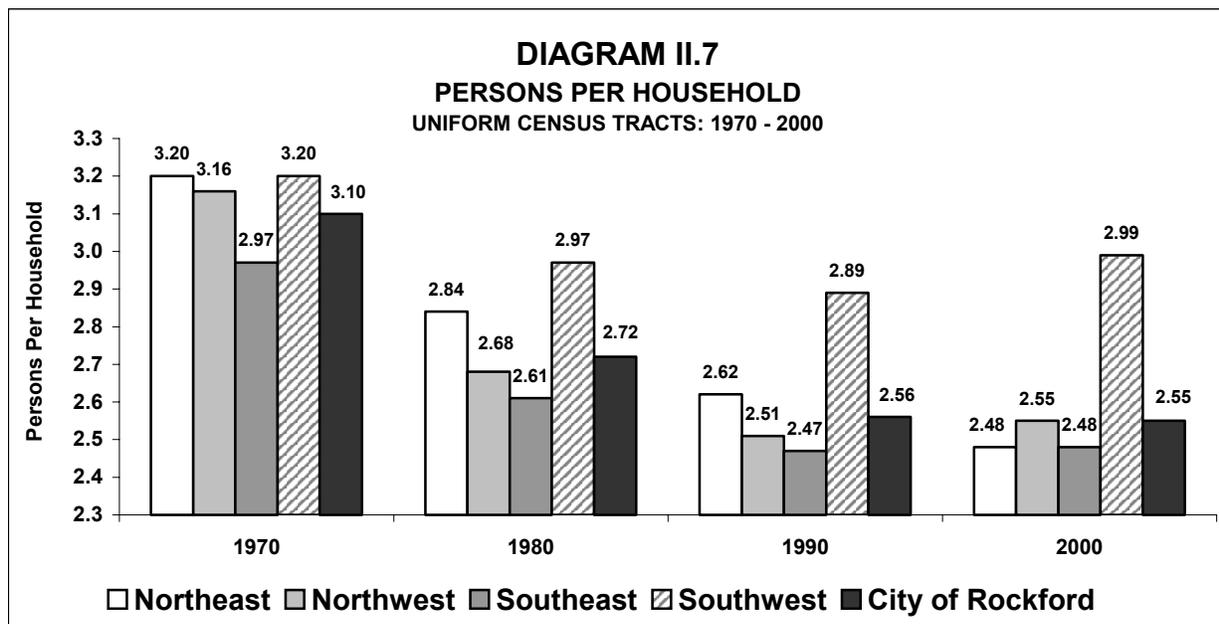
Declines in household formation in the Northwest and Southwest quadrants were more pronounced than the corresponding declines in population seen in those two areas. While population fell .04 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively, household formation dropped 2.4 percent in the Northwest and 5.3 percent in the Southwest quadrant. Household formation in the Southeast quadrant grew more slowly than the population.

Persons Per Household

Household formation can change either more or less quickly than the rate of change in the population due to changes in the number of persons per household.

Over the last 40 years, the number of persons per household fell in the City of Rockford. In 1970, the four quadrants clustered around three persons per household. That average fell from 3.1 in 1970 to 2.6 in 1990. The Southwest quadrant maintains the largest average number of persons per household, at 3.0. This is important to note because large households may have greater difficulty finding affordable housing, particularly rental housing.

The downward trend in persons per household, as seen in Diagram II.7, below, puts significant pressure on housing demand, thereby allowing housing demand to outpace population growth.¹⁰ Even if the City's population growth were to end entirely, the demand for housing would still increase if the number of persons per household continued to decrease.



¹⁰ These data represent a cluster of Census Tracts approximately consistent with the City's geographic area in 2000 for the Census years 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000. Hence, the actual 2000 data for the City and its quadrants are slightly different.

Between 1990 and 2000, three of the City's four quadrants experienced a modest pause in this downward trend in persons per household. In fact, between 1990 and 2000, the number of persons per household in the Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest quadrants actually increased, as seen in Table II.15, to the right. These increases were not seen in the Northeast quadrant, where persons per household slipped 4.0 percent, causing the City's overall average to decline a modest .2 percent.

TABLE II.15
PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Northeast	2.49	2.39	-4.0%
Northwest	2.43	2.47	1.9%
Southeast	2.39	2.40	0.8%
Southwest	2.79	2.86	2.5%
City of Rockford	2.47	2.46	-0.2%

Separating the growth of renter households and owner-occupied households provides further insights. While owner-occupied households declined in average size in three of the four quadrants, average renter household size increased in all four quadrants of the City. As seen in Table II.16, below, the average size of homeowner households increased only in the Southwest quadrant, where the average household in 2000 exceeded three persons per household. The average size of homeowner households in the other three quadrants declined by as much as .13, the amount seen in the Northeast quadrant.

TABLE II.16
PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Owner-occupied: Persons Per Household			
Northeast	2.70	2.57	-4.8%
Northwest	2.62	2.60	-0.5%
Southeast	2.57	2.52	-1.9%
Southwest	2.97	3.05	2.6%
City of Rockford	2.65	2.59	-2.2%
Renter Occupied: Persons Per Household			
Northeast	1.92	1.95	1.4%
Northwest	2.14	2.27	5.8%
Southeast	2.15	2.24	3.9%
Southwest	2.66	2.72	2.3%
City of Rockford	2.20	2.26	2.8%

The implication of this demographic data is that household formation will outpace population growth because the average household size will continue to decline very slightly. It also is expected that the City of Rockford will continue to see significant in-migration from minority races and ethnicities, especially Hispanics.

Income Distribution and Low-Income Concentrations

Median household income in Rockford was \$37,667 in 2000, a 33.2 percent increase from the \$28,282 level seen in 1990. The 2000 Census found many households with total incomes less than \$20,000. In fact, a few Census Tracts on the inner west side of the City showed household incomes below \$20,000 for more than 50 percent of the total households. All of the City's Census Tracts, expressed as a percentage share of the number of households having incomes below \$20,000, are presented in Diagram II.8, below.

As shown in the diagram, the concentration of lower-income households was highest in the central areas of the City, particularly the Southwest quadrant. The percentage of low-income households was much lower in the Northeast and, to a lesser extent, in the Southeast quadrant.

DIAGRAM II.8
Rockford, Percent Low-Income Concentration by Census Tract
Census 2000

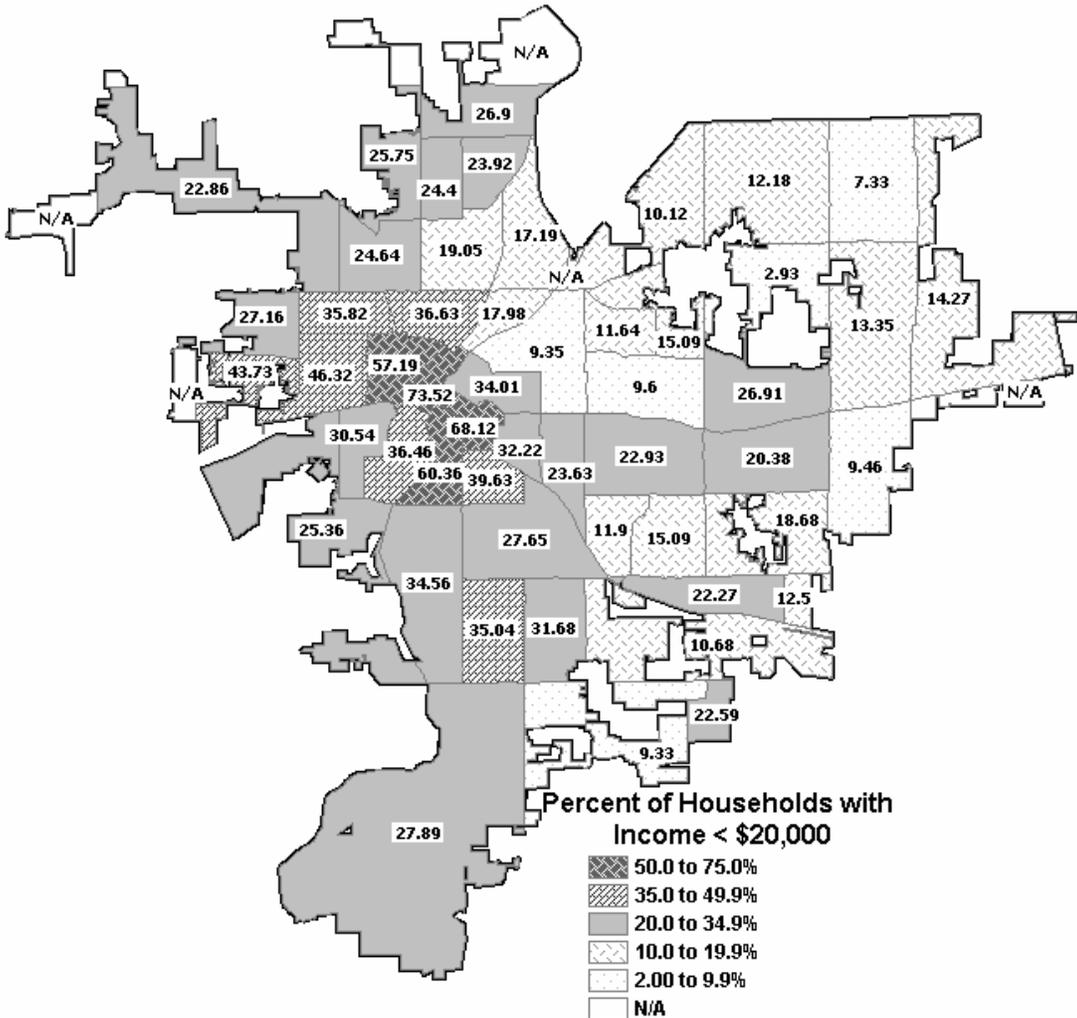
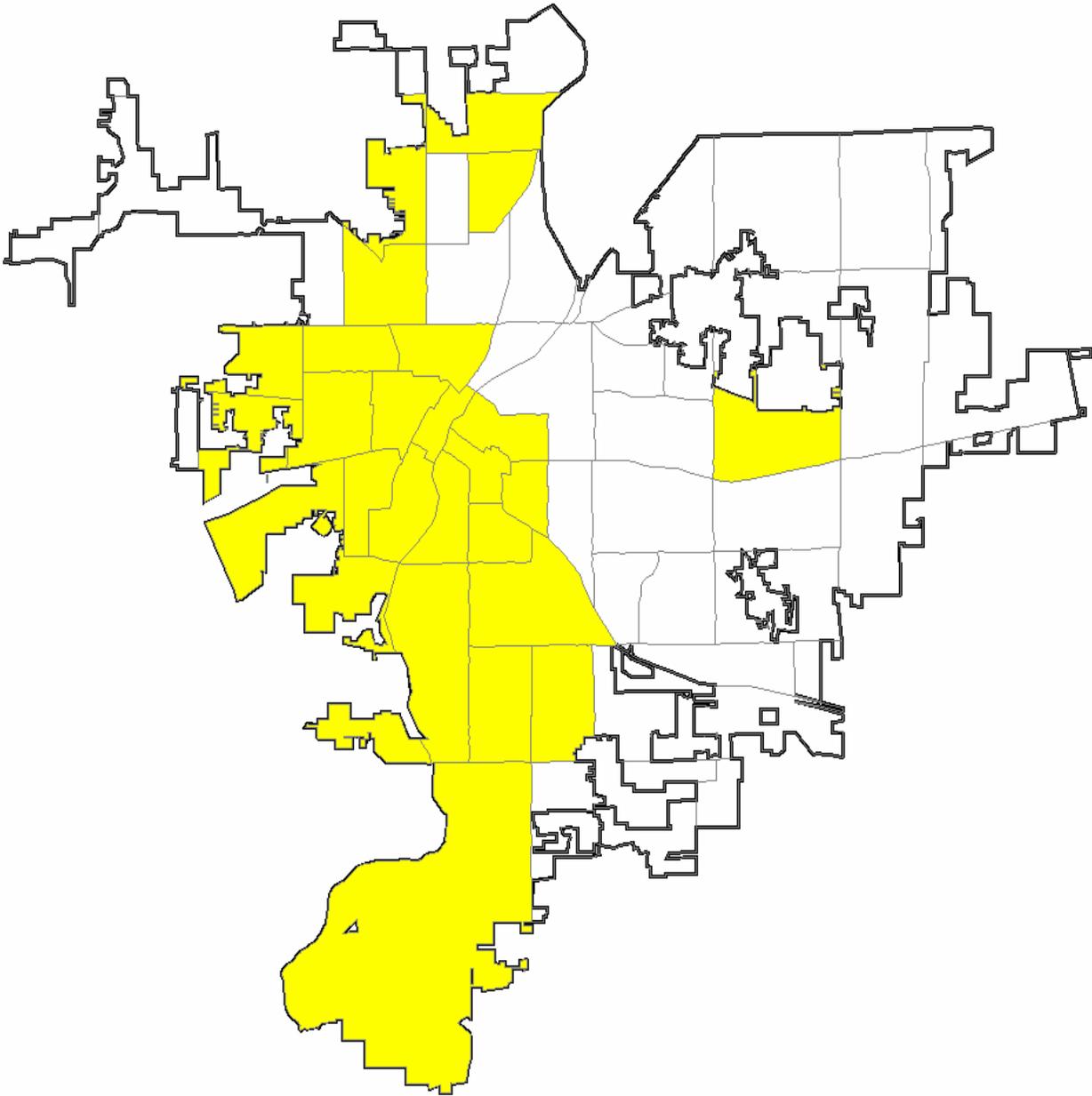


Diagram II.9, below, highlights Census Tracts in the City of Rockford with more than 50 percent of their tract population earning low- to moderate-incomes. These areas define the Community Development Block Grant qualifying areas traditionally used by the City’s CDBG Program.

DIAGRAM II.9
CDBG AREAS BY CENSUS TRACTS
SEPTEMBER 2003



Household Income

Household income in the City of Rockford grew significantly between 1990 and 2000. The number of households with income levels less than \$35,000 fell 18 percent overall and over 27 percent in the Northwest quadrant. Household income data are presented in Table II.17, at right.

Households with incomes between \$35,000 and \$75,000 expanded 21.7 percent over the decade, with the most substantial increase, 31.6 percent, in the Southeast quadrant. The Northeast and Southwest quadrants experienced more moderate increases, 11.0 and 18.5 percent, respectively.

The number of households with incomes in excess of \$75,000 increased by 168.7 percent. The Southwest quadrant experienced the sharpest increase, 615 percent, from just 69 households in 1990 to over 493 households in 2000. The Northeast quadrant, which had the most upper-income households in both 1990 and 2000, more than doubled its total by 2000, rising 116.7 percent and exceeding 5,000 households.

On the surface, this household income growth looks very good for the City of Rockford; however, these data were not adjusted for the effects of inflation and do not fully address the changes in the buying power of Rockford's households. Another way to view income data is by inspecting the distribution around a normalizing value. In 1991 and again in 2001, HUD requested that the Census Bureau prepare a set of special tabulations. HUD programs are designed to serve households based upon their income expressed as a percent of median family income (MFI).¹¹

HUD defines household income levels in relation to MFI as follows:

- Extremely low-income are those with incomes from 0 to 30 percent of MFI;
- Very low-income are those with income from 30 to 50 percent of MFI;
- Low-income are those with incomes from 50 to 80 percent of MFI; and
- Moderately low-income are those earning 80 to 95 percent of MFI.

¹¹ Median Family Income (MFI) represents that value at which one-half of all families have incomes above that value and one-half have incomes below that value. There were 37,348 families in the 2000 Census for Rockford and 59,158 households. Households include both family and non-family householders.

TABLE II.17
HOUSEHOLD INCOME
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
HOUSEHOLDS WITH INCOME LESS THAN \$35,000			
Northeast	5,354	4,871	-9.0%
Northwest	8,621	6,286	-27.1%
Southeast	14,035	11,854	-15.5%
Southwest	5,219	4,235	-18.9%
City of Rockford	33,229	27,246	-18.0%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH INCOME \$35,000 TO \$75,000			
Northeast	5,332	5,920	11.0%
Northwest	4,354	5,222	19.9%
Southeast	6,896	9,077	31.6%
Southwest	1,240	1,470	18.5%
City of Rockford	17,822	21,689	21.7%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH INCOME MORE THAN \$75,000			
Northeast	2,349	5,091	116.7%
Northwest	538	1,739	223.2%
Southeast	832	2,856	243.3%
Southwest	69	493	614.5%
City of Rockford	3,788	10,179	168.7%

Comparing the 1990 distribution to the 2000 distribution from these special tabulations reveals several interesting relationships. The City's total number of extremely low-income households rose by 812, an increase of 10.3 percent. Extremely low-income renter households rose by 770, or 13.6 percent, over the period.¹² Extremely low-income renter households increased their share of total renter households from 26.4 percent in 1990 to 28.3 percent in 2000. These data are presented in Table II.18, below.

TABLE II.18
DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME
1990 AND 2000 CENSUS SPECIAL TABULATIONS

% of MFI	1990		2000	
	Households	% of Total	Households	% of Total
Owner Households				
<30	2,204	6.6%	2,246	6.2%
30.1-50	2,758	8.3%	3,166	8.8%
50.1-80	5,108	15.3%	6,773	18.8%
80.1-95	3,015	9.0%	3,423	9.5%
>95	20,302	60.8%	20,428	56.7%
Subtotal	33,387	100.0%	36,036	100.0%
Renter Households				
<30	5,674	26.4%	6,444	28.3%
30.1-50	3,941	18.4%	4,144	18.2%
50.1-80	4,643	21.6%	5,111	22.5%
80.1-95	1,742	8.1%	1,936	8.5%
>95	5,452	25.4%	5,097	22.4%
Subtotal	21,452	100.0%	22,732	100.0%
All Households				
<30	7,878	14.4%	8,690	14.8%
30.1-50	6,699	12.2%	7,310	12.4%
50.1-80	9,751	17.8%	11,884	20.2%
80.1-95	4,757	8.7%	5,359	9.1%
>95	25,754	47.0%	25,525	43.4%
Total	54,839	100.0%	58,768	100.0%

When compared over time, the City of Rockford tends to be gaining proportionally more lower-income households, particularly extremely low-income renters.¹³

¹² As per HUD special tabulations, the data will not add up to the Census SF3 data due to special tabulation rounding rules that were not used for the SF3 data. The rounding rules applied to each cell are as follows: 0 rounds to 0, 1-7 rounds to 4, all other values round to the nearest multiple of 5. As a result the totals may be slightly inflated or deflated when compared to the SF3 totals.

¹³ For a more detailed breakdown of this household income data by quadrant, see Appendix B, which also shows family income ranges by quadrant.

Employment

Total employment by place of residence in the City of Rockford edged up slightly between 1990 and 2000, increasing from 65,168 to 67,868, or 4.1 percent, over the period. These gains in employment were not spread evenly throughout the City. While those living on the east side gained employment, persons living on the west side were employed less frequently. Employment in the Northeast quadrant rose over 18 percent and the Southeast quadrant gained a more modest 6.5 percent. The Northwest and Southwest quadrants both lost significant levels of employment, falling 8.4 and 9.7 percent respectively, as seen in Table II.19, below. The implication of this data is that more underemployed and unemployed persons live on the west side than on the east side of the City.

TABLE II.19
EMPLOYMENT IN ROCKFORD
1990 AND 2000 DECENNIAL CENSUS

Quadrant	1990	2000	% Change
Northeast	16,714	19,758	18.2%
Northwest	16,520	15,127	-8.4%
Southeast	25,508	27,178	6.5%
Southwest	6,426	5,805	-9.7%
City of Rockford	65,168	67,868	4.1%

Between 1990 and 2000, the manufacturing sector suffered and appears to be in a long-term period of decline, falling 15.3 percent and shedding over 3,100 jobs between 1990 and 2000. Announcements of plant closures and permanent employment declines in the manufacturing sector over the last year contribute to a bleak outlook for this segment of Rockford's economy. Retail trade also declined 4 percent, or 300 jobs, between 1990 and 2000, as shown in Table II.20, below.

TABLE II.20
FIVE LARGEST EMPLOYMENT SECTORS
1990 and 2000 Decennial Census

Sector	1990	2000	% Change
Manufacturing	20,385	17,276	-15.3%
Education, health, and social services	11,102	13,666	23.1%
Retail Trade	7,679	7,374	-4.0%
Professional Services	4,142	5,216	25.9%
Arts, entertainment, other	4,581	5,061	10.5%

The City of Rockford is not without some economic success stories, including growth in several employment sectors. Education, health, and social services together grew 23.1 percent. Professional services, comprised of scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services, increased nearly 26 percent. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services climbed 10.5 percent. Smaller employment sectors, including "transportation and warehousing, and utilities," were up 30 percent, and "other services" were up 41 percent.¹⁴

¹⁴ Additional details concerning past sector performance can be found in Appendix B.

This data indicates upbeat and positive signs for the City's future. There are certainly bright spots in Rockford's economic landscape, areas that will continue to provide opportunities for expansion and development. It behooves economic development planners to look toward the brighter segments of the local economy, facilitating further expansion and hence prosperity from sectors that are flourishing in Rockford.

Summary of Demographics and Economics

The preceding demographic and economic profile identifies a number of facts and trends that impact housing and community development in Rockford. These include the following:

- Rockford's population and employment is increasing substantially east of Rock River. Population in the Southwest quadrant declined the fastest between 1990 and 2000, 1.2 percent, and showed the greatest employment loss, by place of residence, at almost 10 percent. Over the decade, population in the Northeast quadrant grew most quickly, 15.8 percent, and its employment levels increased the most, over 18 percent.
- The City of Rockford experienced significant change in its racial and ethnic composition. The City's white population declined 3.4 percent from 1990 to 2000, with only the Northeast quadrant increasing its white population. Meanwhile, the minority population rose by 14,504 persons, with the Hispanic population jumping nearly 162 percent and forming 22.4 percent of the Southwest quadrant in 2000. Between 1990 and 2000, the City's black population increased nearly 25 percent and the Asian population rose almost 55 percent. Racial and ethnic diversity is a positive trend for Rockford, providing the community with new viewpoints and multicultural opportunities.
- The City of Rockford's extremely low-income population, heavily concentrated as renters, increased slightly, about 3.5 percent since 1990.
- While Census data shows the City suffered a loss of over 3,100 manufacturing jobs between 1990 and 2000, and more losses were suffered in recent months, selected non-traditional, non-manufacturing sectors show promise as future growth comes to Rockford. Employment in professional services, including scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services, increased almost 26 percent from 1990 to 2000. Education, health, and social services increased over 23 percent. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services increased over 10 percent. Employment in the "transportation and warehousing, and utilities" sector rose 30 percent, and employment in "other services" increased 41 percent.
- Utilizing the existing labor pool and skills of Rockford's workforce presents additional opportunities for economic expansion and vitality.