

CHAPTER 1

Issues and Opportunities for Planning

The purpose of a comprehensive planning program is to promote orderly and beneficial development, helping to create a community that offers residents an attractive, efficient, and “resident-friendly” environment in which to live. Such an environment can be realized in part by creating a financially sound governmental structure, supporting good schools, a variety of community facilities and services, efficient land use and transportation systems, and encouraging sufficient employment opportunities and adequate, affordable housing.

The planning process involves understanding the various physical, economic, and social issues within the Village. It examines where the Village has been, where it is now, what goals or targets the community hopes to achieve, and what actions are necessary to reach these goals. A successful planning program can provide the direction needed to manage future growth by offering guidelines to government leaders, private enterprise, and individuals so that the Village development-related decisions are sound, practical, and consistent.

Section 1.1 Brief History and Description of the Planning Area

The Village of Forreton is located in Forreton Township, in the northwest corner of Ogle County, Illinois. Forreton is approximately 12 miles south of Freeport, IL, 20 miles north of Dixon, IL and 30 miles west/southwest of Rockford, IL. Forreton is located in a rich agricultural area that was predominately prairie in pre-settlement times.

Originally laid out and platted in by George W. Hewitt in the fall of 1854, Forreton was the offspring of the Illinois Central railroad. The Illinois Central added two additions to the newly platted village, in 1855 and in 1861. Forreton was incorporated by a vote of the residents at a meeting held in the schoolhouse on September 21, 1867. 172 ballots were cast - 128 votes for incorporate, 44 against incorporation. The Village of Forreton is named for the township in which it is situated. The origin of the name “Forreton” is not clear, but it may have come from the name of an early settler by the name of Forrester, or from the rest provided by the near-by White Oak Grove to weary travelers - FOR REST and then ON.

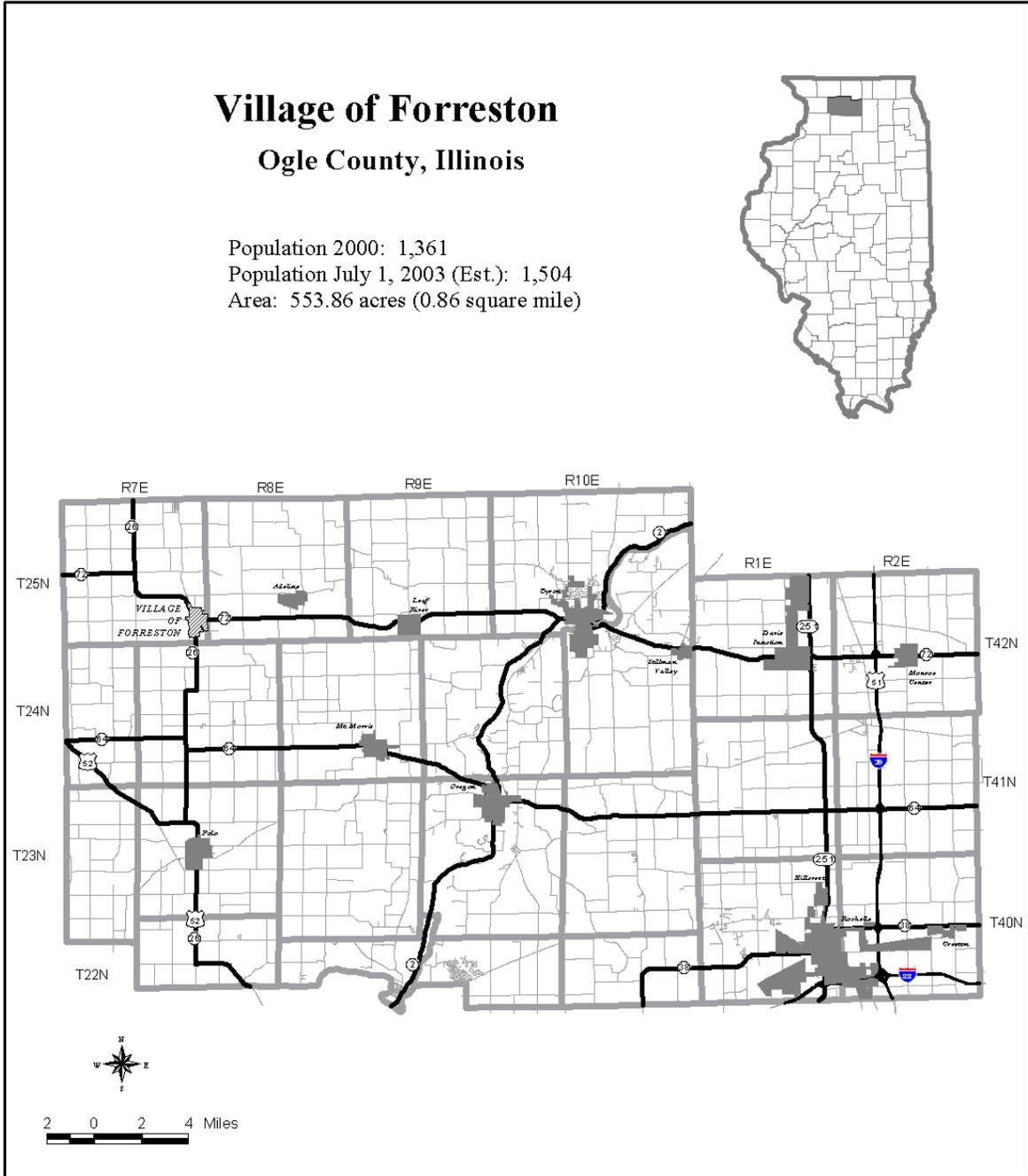
The same year the village was laid out, a railroad depot and a boarding house for railroad employees was constructed. The following year, 1855, the village began to grow with the construction of two warehouses, a combination stable/boarding house, two grain elevators, three stores, a blacksmith shop, a tavern and several dwellings. Mr. William F. Daniels operated a post office from within his store and became the first post master. The village grew steadily with the construction of a hotel in 1857 and a second hotel shortly thereafter, and a department store in 1859. The first schoolhouse was constructed in 1856 with Miss Maria Blair as the first teacher. The first private bank was started in 1867. The first village newspaper, *The Forreton Journal*, began publishing on April 6, 1876.

With the influx of new residents, most of Germanic origin, the growing Forreton village needed churches to serve the religious needs of its people. The first church in Forreton, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Forreton, was organized in October 1859 with services being held in the schoolhouse. The Forreton Reformed Church was organized in May 1865 and built a church building in 1866. The Church of the Evangelical Association constructed a church in 1870. Many churches in Forreton and the surrounding area conducted their services in the German language, and offered at least on service a month in the German language into the 1940's.

The Illinois Central Railroad, which can be credited with the establishment of the Village of Forreton, was abandoned in the late 1970's.

The Village continued to grow in population slowly through the late 19th and into the 20th century, adding businesses, industry, churches and houses.

Figure 1.1 Map of Forreston Geographic Area



Section 1.2 Past Planning In Forreston

The Village Board adopted a Comprehensive Plan document in 1976. A future land use map was drafted and adopted in 2000. Land use designations consisted of residential and industrial.

Section 1.3 The Comprehensive Planning Process

The comprehensive planning process involves several basic phases. The first phase involves research. Activities include acquiring a thorough knowledge of the existing community setting, identifying problems that require solutions, analyzing critical factors that need to be changed before progress can be made toward community goals, and establishing goals and objectives for growth and development.

The second phase of the comprehensive planning process involves the formation of planning policy. Planning policies recommend a course of action that will accommodate expected change, produce desired change, or prevent undesirable change.

The next phase involves the selection of a preferred alternative for guiding future growth. The Land Use Element relates how the Village is expected to grow, identifying in general terms how development should proceed in the future to achieve community goals.

The final phase involves implementation of the plan and programs that will influence the day-to-day decisions made by government officials, private enterprise, and individuals. Plan implementation provides the means by which community goals can be achieved. Three major tools of implementation are the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and capital improvements program. Zoning regulations act to control growth and development so that it is harmonious with the proposals and recommendations set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. They promote sound, orderly development directed toward the preservation of property values and the improvement of the overall appearance of the community. Subdivision regulations assure that new land divisions are designed in an orderly and efficient manner and are in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. The capital improvements program is a long-range financial plan for major public improvements. It proposes the best means for utilizing available financial resources to provide residents with necessary facilities and services.

The Comprehensive Plan is the primary link between the past, the present, and the future, making it perhaps the best resource for achieving continuity over a period of time. It is to be used as a guide by those making decisions with regard to the development of the community. The Comprehensive Plan must also remain flexible so that it can be modified to reflect the processes of actual development and the changing attitudes and priorities of the community. To maintain an updated Comprehensive Plan, new information must be continually gathered and studied to determine trends and re-evaluate projections, forecasts, and plans. Even policy recommendations, which are relatively permanent statements, may require periodic review to determine their appropriateness and suitability in relation to the direction and character of community development at that time. A well thought-out and updated Comprehensive Plan, with a solid base of public involvement, is one of the most fruitful investments a Village can make. As a collection of policies and plans designed to guide future growth and development, it will help ensure continuity over time as changes occur within the Village of Forreston.

Section 1.4 Demographic Trends

A. Population Growth

Every 10 years the Federal government performs the National Census, and these Census results are the main source of the information used to understand how communities change over time. As illustrated in the following tables 1.1 and 1.2, the Village of Forreston, with the exception of the period between 1980 and 1990, has seen a gradual increase in its population since declining between 1890 and 1900.

Table 1.1
Village of Forreston Population 1890 - 2003

Year	1890	1900	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2003*
Population	1,118	1,047	1,153	1,227	1,384	1,361	1,469	1,504

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census
* July 1, 2003 Population Estimate

Table 1.2
Village of Forreston Population Change and Percent Change
1960-1970, 1970-1980, 1980-1990, 1990-2000

Period (Years)	1960 - 1970	1970 - 1980	1980 - 1990	1990 - 2000	2000 - July 1, 2003
Population Change	74	157	-23	108	35
Population % Change	6.42	12.80	-1.66	7.8	2.38

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The Village's population trend of gradual, steady growth over the past 100 years nearly parallels the population trend of the County as a whole.

B. Age Distribution

Table 1.3 below details the number of Village residents that occupied specific age groups in the past two Census years. Insight into the nature of the Village population's change over time can be gained through examining how these age groups change as they move through their life cycles. The age groups (or "cohorts" as they are called when tracking a group of same-aged people) have been displayed within the table in ten-year increments to more easily see how their numbers increase or decline over different Census years. The diagonal series of gray or white boxes within Table 1.3 indicate the path of each age cohort through the three Census periods.

**Table 1.3
Distribution of Population by Ten-Year Age Groups
Village of Forreston**

	1990	2000	Cohort Change 1990-2000	Cohort % Change 1990-2000	Class Change 1990-2000	Class % Change
Under 5 Years	92	102	---	---	10	10.87%
5 - 14 years	191	245	(26)	-13.61%	54	28.27%
15-24 years	145	165	30	20.69%	20	13.79%
25-34 years	210	175	33	15.71%	(35)	-16.67%
35-44 years	163	243	(11)	-6.75%	80	49.08%
45-54 years	147	152	(77)	-52.38%	5	3.40%
55-59 years	55	70	8	14.55%	15	27.27%
60-64 years	73	63	52	71.23%	(10)	-13.70%
65-74 years	130	125	(40)	-30.77%	(5)	-3.85%
75-84 years	121	90	(82)	-67.77%	(31)	-25.62%
85 years and over	34	39	---	---	5	14.71%
Median Age	35.6	35.5	---	---	-0.1	-0.28%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The 15-24 year old cohort increased over 20% between 1990 and 2000. The 25-34 year old cohort also increased, by nearly 16%. This trend indicates that more younger people are staying in the village as they enter adult-hood, and more young people are moving to the village.

Conversely, the 35-44 year old cohort and the 45-54 year old cohort both declined, by nearly 7% and over 52%, respectively, indicating that persons between the ages of 35 and 54 are leaving the village.

The 55-59 and 60-64 year old cohorts both increased between 1990 and 2000. The 65-74 and 75-84 year old cohorts both decreased, likely due to a combination of leaving the village to seek housing elsewhere and mortality.

The median age for the Village of Forreston decreased very slightly from 35.6 to 35.5 between 1990 and 2000. The “median age” is the point where ½ of the population lies above and ½ lies below; the older this age is, the older the overall population for a place is becoming. Increases in the younger cohorts and decreases in the older cohorts within the village appear to have cancelled each other out, creating a relatively stable median age trend.

C. Education Levels

Table 1.5 below compares the educational attainment information for the Village of Forreston. Between 1990 and 2000 the Village has become more educated. The number and percent of the total population with high school education or less has decreased by 98 persons, or 10.7%, and in 2000 accounted for 60.0% of the population 25 years of age and over compared to 73.0% in the 1990 census year. The number of persons with at least some college education up to a graduate or professional degree has increased by 135 persons, or 14.7%. Person with at least some college education but no degree, an associate’s degree, a bachelor’s degree or a graduate or professional degree accounted for 40.0% of the population of the village over 25 years of age in the 2000 census year, compared to 30%

in the 1990 census year. In Ogle County as a whole in the 2000 census year, 53.3% of the population 25 years of age and over had a high school education or less, and 46.7% of the population 25 years of age and over had at least some college education but no degree, an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree or a graduate or professional degree.

Table 1.4
Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Over
Village of Forreston

	1990	2000	Change (+/-)	% Change
Less than 9 th Grade	154 <i>16.7%</i>	76 <i>7.9%</i>	(78)	-50.6%
9 th - 12 th Gr., no diploma	106 <i>11.5%</i>	104 <i>10.9%</i>	(2)	-1.9%
High School Graduate	412 <i>44.8%</i>	394 <i>41.2%</i>	(18)	-4.4%
Some college, no degree	136 <i>14.8%</i>	194 <i>20.3%</i>	58	42.6%
Associate's degree	45 <i>4.9%</i>	42 <i>4.4%</i>	(3)	-6.7%
Bachelor's degree	51 <i>5.5%</i>	94 <i>9.8%</i>	43	84.3%
Graduate or professional degree	16 <i>1.7%</i>	53 <i>5.5%</i>	37	231.3%
Total	920 <i>100%*</i>	957 <i>100%</i>	37	4.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

*Does not total exactly 100% due to rounding.

D. Households and Income

The Village of Forreston residential community is made up of different types of households. Table 1.5, below, details the changes in the make-up of Village households over the last 10 years. Family households have seen their number and percentage of total households increase slightly between 1990 and 2000. Non-family households, or households made up of non-related residents, have decreased slightly between 1990 and 2000. Married-couple households have seen their number remain exactly the same between 1990 and 2000, but their percentage decreased from 88.5% of family households to 83.6%. Single-father or mother headed family households have increased from 11.51% of family households in 1990 to 16.43% in 2000, with a majority of the rise attributable to the increase in single-mother headed households. Non-family households have decreased from 1990 to 2000 in both number and percentage of total households. The Persons Per Household calculation for the Village has increase from 2.36 in 1990 to 2.47 in 2000. The average household size in Ogle County as a whole in the 2000 census year was 2.62, which is 6.1% higher than the Village of Forreston.

Table 1.5
Households, Average Household Size and Household Type
Village of Forreston

	1990	2000	Change (+/-)	% Change
Households	576	594	18	3.13%
Average Household Size	2.36	2.47	0.11	4.66%
Households by Type:				
Family Households <i>(% of Total Households)</i>	391 <i>(67.88%)</i>	414 <i>(69.70%)</i>	23	5.88%
Married-couple families <i>(% of Family Households)</i>	346 <i>(88.49%)</i>	346 <i>(83.57%)</i>	0	0.00%
Other family, male householder <i>(% of Family Households)</i>	12 <i>(3.47%)</i>	18 <i>(5.20%)</i>	6	50.00%
Other family, female householder <i>(% of Family Households)</i>	33 <i>(8.44%)</i>	50 <i>(12.08%)</i>	17	51.52%
Non-Family Households <i>(% of Total Households)</i>	185 <i>(32.12%)</i>	180 <i>(30.3%)</i>	-5	-2.70%
Householder living alone <i>(% of Total Non-Family Households)</i>	171 <i>(92.43%)</i>	157 <i>(87.22%)</i>	-14	-8.19%
Householder 65 years and older <i>(% of Total Non-Family Households)</i>	121 <i>(65.41%)</i>	96 <i>(53.33%)</i>	-25	-20.66%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Another instructive piece of information on the state of households within the Village is the level of income that each household achieves. Again the Census provides insight into the range of incomes present within the Village of Forreston.

Table 1.6
Household Income 1990 - 2000
Village of Forreston

Household Income (\$)	1990	2000	Change (+/-)	% Change
Less than 10,000	110 <i>(19.43%)</i>	51 <i>(8.59%)</i>	(59)	-53.64%
10,000 - 14,999	63 <i>(11.13%)</i>	53 <i>(8.92%)</i>	(10)	-15.87%
15,000 - 24,999	108 <i>(19.08%)</i>	90 <i>(15.15%)</i>	(18)	-16.67%
25,000 - 34,999	111 <i>(19.61%)</i>	80 <i>(13.47%)</i>	(31)	-27.93%
35,000 - 49,999	99 <i>(17.49%)</i>	123 <i>(20.71%)</i>	24	24.24%
50,000 - 74,999	54 <i>(9.54%)</i>	132 <i>(22.22%)</i>	78	144.44%
75,000 - 99,999	19 <i>(3.36%)</i>	41 <i>(6.90%)</i>	22	115.79%
100,000 - 149,999	0 <i>(0%)</i>	18 <i>(3.03%)</i>	18	---
150,000 - 199,999	2 <i>(0.35%)</i>	3 <i>(0.51%)</i>	1	50.00%
200,000 or more	---	3 <i>(0.51%)</i>	3	---
Total Households	566 <i>(100%)</i>	594 <i>(100%)</i>	28	4.95%
Median Household Income (\$)	25,227	36,554	11,327	44.90%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Table 1.6 above describes how household incomes have changed in the last 10 years. It is a testimony to both the inflation of wages and the increased earning power of the residents of the Village of Forreston that the percentage of households making greater than \$50,000 per year has increased from 13.25% in 1990 to nearly 33.16% in 2000. Median household income has increased from \$25,277 to \$36,554 over the same period. The percentage increase in households earning greater than \$50,000 for Ogle County as a whole is similar over the 10-year period (19.91% to 44.67%). The median household income for the County was 22.5% higher than the Village of Forreston in 1990 (\$30,958) and 24.3% higher than the Village of Forreston in 2000 (\$45,448), indicating that median household income is increasing at a greater pace County-wide compared to the Village of Forreston.

With the examination of income information, the Village should also assess the poverty status of its residents. "Poverty" is generally defined as a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is poor. If a family's total income is less than that family's threshold, then that family, and every individual in it, is considered poor. The poverty thresholds do not vary geographically. That is, they are the same

throughout the United States. However, the poverty thresholds are updated annually for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition counts money income before taxes and does not include capital gains and non-cash benefits (such as public housing, food stamps, and Medicaid). Poverty is not defined for people in military barracks, institutional group quarters, or for unrelated children under age 15 (such as foster children). Table 1.7 below outlines poverty thresholds for Census years 1990 and 2000. Table 1.8 lists the Census information on poverty for the total number of residents, persons age 65 and above, and families within the Village of Forreston.

Poverty status rose within the Village of Forreston between 1989 and 1999 among individuals (9.17% to 9.65% of the population) and families (7.31% to 7.42% of families). Poverty status among the 65 and older population decreased, however, from 13.88% to 9.23%. Compared to Ogle County as a whole, poverty status among individuals and those 65 years and older decreased, while poverty status among families remained unchanged.

**Table 1.7
Poverty Thresholds - 1990 and 2000**

Size of Family Unit	1990	2000
One Person	\$6,652	\$8,794
Two Persons	\$8,509	\$11,239
Three Persons	\$10,419	\$13,738
Four Persons	\$13,481	\$17,603
Five Persons	\$15,792	\$20,819
Six Persons	\$17,839	\$23,528
Seven Persons	\$20,241	\$26,754
Eight Persons	\$22,582	\$29,701
Nine Persons or more	\$26,848	\$35,060

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

**Table 1.8
Poverty Status 1989 and 1999
Village of Forreston**

	1989	1999	Change (+/-)	% Change
Individuals	1,342	1,451		
Below Poverty Level	123 9.17%	140 9.65%	17	13.82%
65 yrs. and over	281	260		
Below Poverty Level	39 13.88%	24 9.23%	(15)	-38.46%
Families	383	418		
Below Poverty Level	28 7.31%	31 7.42%	10	47.62%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

E. Employment Characteristics

Table 1.9 below summarizes employment by industry data provided for the last two Census years. This information represents what type of industry that the working residents of the Village were employed by, and is not a listing of the employment currently located within the Village of Forreston. The discussion of the Village economy will take place within the Economic Development Element of this Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that the method used for classifying industries was changed between the 1990 and 2000 Census, and therefore the information included in the industry categories of Table 1.9 is not entirely consistent for comparison between those years. The table attempts to place the two Census years in a useable context.

Table 1.9
Summary of Employment by Industry
Village of Forreston

Industry	1990	2000	Change (+/-)	% Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	36	12	(24)	-66.67%
Construction	47	39	(8)	-17.02%
Manufacturing	187	170	(17)	-9.09%
Wholesale trade	23	43	20	86.96%
Retail trade	80	54	(26)	-32.50%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	60	52	(8)	-13.33%
Information	---	4	4	---
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	46	52	6	13.04%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	37	34	(3)	-8.11%
Educational, health and social services	75	134	59	78.67%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	0	29	29	---
Other services (except public administration)	28	28	0	0.00%
Public administration	9	10	1	11.11%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Section 1.5 Population Projections

Projections are estimates of future populations based on statistical models that extrapolate past and present trends into the future. Projections can be created through very simple or very complex calculations. The type of calculations used is based on the available data and desired use of the projection.

Forecasts are also estimate of a future population based on statistical models. Forecasts, however, include additional adjustments made to reflect assumptions of future changes.

Targets express desirable future populations based on policies and goals.

Developing population projections is a complex process. There is always a greater difficulty in deriving population projections for small geographic areas such as townships and small cities or villages. Projections for larger geographic areas are more reliable, since the large population base will be less likely to exhibit short term variations. Likewise, any projection results that extend for periods longer than ten years become statistically less reliable as inputs to the projection are based on calculations rather than actual numbers. In summary, the smaller the area and the longer the period, the less likely a projection will be accurate.

The Village of Forreston has experienced increasing population in every Cesus year since 1960 with the exception of the period 1980-1990. The population increased by 108 persons, or 7.8% between 1990 and 2000, and is projected to maintain this slow but steady population increase into the future. Population increase in Forreston is likely being caused by a increases in both the number and persons per household. This trend is accounted for by a slightly decreasing median age for Village residents, and the increasing number of persons living in each household through younger families with children moving to the Village. The number of new housing units available within Forreston will increase modestly into the future (see Section 1.5(B) below) leaving persons per household as a main determinant of the number of residents within the Village of Forreston. According to the 2000 Census (Table 1.6 above), Forreston averaged 2.47 persons per household (PPH) in 594 households. It is anticipated that this average will remain stabile or increase very slightly into the future. This assumption is based on the belief that Forreston, with its quality school system, rural and family-oriented atmosphere, and relatively low taxes, will remain a desirable place to live, particularly for young families.

To estimate the Forreston population for 2010, 2020 and 2030, two different methodologies were employed, as follows:

Population Projection Methodology A:

The number of housing units and persons per household within the Village was projected out to 2010, 2020 and 2030, using a simple mathematical progression projection assuming a 3% increase per 10-year period for housing units and a 0.11% increase per 10-year period for persons per household. The projected number of housing units was multiplied by persons per household to yield an estimated population.

Population Projection Methodology B:

The 10-year growth rate from 1960-1970, 1970-1980, 1980-1990, and 1990-2000 was averaged to yield an average 10-year growth rate of 6.85%. This average growth rate was then used to project the populatio for 2010, 2020, and 2030.

This population projection does not include any large-scale development of vacant land for residential uses within the planning period. It is still possible, however, for vacant or developed lands within and/or adjacent to the Village to be developed or redeveloped. Larger-scale residential development could have a significant impact on the number of housing units and the Village's population.

**Table 1.10A
Methodology A Projected Population
Village of Forreston**

Year	2010	2020	2030
Population	1,512	1,562	1,610

**Table 1.10B
Methodology B Projected Population
Village of Forreston**

Year	2010	2020	2030
Population	1,570	1,678	1,793

Calculating an average of the projected populations of the two methodologies may yield a result that is more accurate.

**Table 1.10C
Projected Population
Based on Average Projected Population of Methodology A and Methodology B
Village of Forreston**

Year	2010	2020	2030
Population	1,541	1,620	1,702

Section 1.6 Community Goals, Objectives and Policies

The following goals, objectives and policies provide the framework for guiding future community development activities within Forreston. Goals are stated as desirable conditions to strive for in the future. They are common ideals of the community that can be achieved through the actions of government leaders, private enterprise and individuals. Objectives are general targets to be achieved along the path of satisfying community goals. Policies are methods of action to accomplish these stated objectives. Together these three pieces express the uniqueness of the community while stating changes that will produce desirable patterns for growth and development.

A. Goal:

Forreston shall pursue policies that preserve its current quality living environment. It is the goal of the Village to maintain the overall aesthetic quality of its residential, recreational, commercial and industrial areas.

B. Objectives:

1. Promote the maintenance and improvement of existing development within Forreston.
2. New development, either at the Village edge or on infill sites, should be designed in a manner that allows urban services to be most efficiently and economically provided.
3. Ensure that newly developed or redeveloped areas are compatible with existing uses of land.
4. To improve long range fiscal planning for the Village.

C. Policies:

1. The Village of Forreston should implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure the Village remains a desirable place to live and work, and support maintaining the current balance of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational land uses.
2. Current implementation tools, such as the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and other Village ordinances should continue to be used and enforced.
3. The Village should develop a capital improvement program to address future public utility, transportation, and other public needs.
4. The Village should encourage development which protects and enhances the Village's tax base.
5. The Forreston Planning Commission should maintain an active role in assessing Village needs, evaluating development, and utilizing the planning process as a means of accomplishing the recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan.