



# WALWORTH COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## FACT SHEET NO. 2

October 2007  
Revised August 2009

### INTRODUCTION

The first phase of the Walworth County multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning program involved the gathering of data regarding existing conditions and trends in Walworth County required as a basis for developing the comprehensive plan. This included information on the population, economy, agricultural and natural resources, land use, transportation facilities, utilities and community facilities, and existing plans and zoning. The inventory data is presented in the drafts of Chapters II through VI of the Walworth County comprehensive plan report, which can be accessed via links on the comprehensive planning website, [www.sewrpc.org/smartgrowth/walworthcounty/](http://www.sewrpc.org/smartgrowth/walworthcounty/). This fact sheet presents some of the key findings of that inventory work.

### POPULATION IN WALWORTH COUNTY BY CIVIL DIVISION

### POPULATION

Civil Division	Census				2006 Estimate	Percent Change	
	1970	1980	1990	2000		1970-2000	2000-2006
<b>Towns</b>							
Bloomfield .....	2,481	3,277	3,723	5,537	6,272	123.2	13.3
Darien .....	1,413	1,495	1,490	1,747	1,912	23.6	9.4
Delavan .....	3,798	4,182	4,195	4,559	4,845	20.0	6.3
East Troy .....	2,743	3,583	3,687	3,830	3,915	39.6	2.2
Geneva .....	3,490	3,933	3,472	4,642	4,978	33.0	7.2
LaFayette .....	979	1,024	1,276	1,708	1,917	74.5	12.2
LaGrange .....	1,311	1,661	1,643	2,444	2,566	86.4	5.0
Linn .....	1,910	2,064	2,062	2,194	2,341	14.9	6.7
Lyons .....	2,143	2,659	2,579	3,440	3,730	60.5	8.4
Richmond .....	1,251	1,649	1,405	1,835	1,948	46.7	6.2
Sharon .....	1,058	945	1,016	912	919	-13.8	0.8
Spring Prairie ...	1,197	1,777	1,756	2,089	2,193	74.5	5.0
Sugar Creek .....	1,811	2,599	2,661	3,331	3,774	83.9	13.3
Troy .....	1,265	1,794	2,051	2,328	2,409	84.0	3.5
Walworth .....	1,370	1,443	1,341	1,676	1,785	22.3	6.5
Whitewater .....	1,181	1,270	1,378	1,399	1,469	18.5	5.0
<b>Cities</b>							
Delavan .....	5,526	5,684	6,073	7,956	8,340	44.0	4.8
Elkhorn .....	3,992	4,605	5,337	7,305	8,820	83.0	20.7
Lake Geneva .....	4,890	5,612	5,979	7,148	7,489	46.2	4.8
Whitewater <sup>a</sup> .....	10,129	9,098	10,170	10,826	11,195	6.9	3.4
<b>Villages</b>							
Darien .....	839	1,152	1,158	1,572	1,598	87.4	1.7
East Troy .....	1,711	2,385	2,664	3,564	4,005	108.3	12.4
Fontana-on-Geneva Lake ..	1,464	1,764	1,635	1,754	1,866	19.8	6.4
Genoa City .....	1,085	1,202	1,277	1,949	2,645	79.6	35.7
Mukwonago <sup>a</sup> .....	0	0	0	0	33	--	--
Sharon .....	1,216	1,280	1,250	1,549	1,551	27.4	0.1
Walworth .....	1,637	1,607	1,614	2,304	2,598	40.7	12.8
Williams Bay .....	1,554	1,763	2,108	2,415	2,648	55.4	9.6
<b>Walworth County</b>	<b>63,444</b>	<b>71,507</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>92,013</b>	<b>99,761</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>8.4</b>

<sup>a</sup>Walworth County portion only.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Administration, and SEWRPC.

The population of Walworth County increased from about 63,400 persons in 1970 to 92,000 persons in 2000—representing an increase of 45 percent over 30 years. This compares to increases of 10 percent and 21 percent, respectively, for the seven-county Southeastern Wisconsin Region and State, respectively. Since 2000, the County population is estimated to have increased by an additional 7,700 persons, or 8 percent, to 99,800 persons in 2006.

The median age in Walworth County, 35.1 years, is slightly lower than the Region and State. Persons under 20 comprised 29 percent of the population; persons between 20 and 64 comprised 58 percent; and persons 65 and over comprised 13 percent.

In the 2000 census, 94.5 percent of the County population was reported as white (and no other race); 4.4 percent was reported as Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or some other race; and 1.1 percent was reported as being of more than one race. Independent of the question on race, 6.7 percent of the total County population was reported as Hispanic in the census.

The percent of the population in the County that is 25 years and older and that has attained a high school or higher level of education is 84 percent—the same as for the Region and one percentage point lower than the State. Nearly 22 percent of the County population age 25 years and over had a bachelor's degree or graduate degree, compared to just over 25 percent for the Region and just over 22 percent for the State.

## HOUSEHOLDS IN WALWORTH COUNTY BY CIVIL DIVISION

Civil Division	Households				2006 Estimate	Percent Change	
	1970	1980	1990	2000		1970-2000	2000-2006
<b>Towns</b>							
Bloomfield .....	840	1,218	1,412	2,067	2,478	146.1	19.9
Darien .....	375	467	522	615	721	64.0	17.2
Delavan .....	1,187	1,494	1,614	1,798	1,986	51.5	10.5
East Troy .....	767	1,142	1,269	1,427	1,547	86.0	8.4
Geneva .....	917	1,185	1,213	1,660	1,950	81.0	17.5
LaFayette .....	256	343	436	595	727	132.4	22.2
LaGrange .....	403	586	606	923	990	129.0	7.3
Linn .....	609	739	817	910	994	49.4	9.2
Lyons .....	597	919	968	1,231	1,379	106.2	12.0
Richmond .....	369	559	526	704	773	90.8	9.8
Sharon .....	282	298	333	333	359	18.1	7.8
Spring Prairie .....	320	514	560	726	799	126.9	10.1
Sugar Creek .....	534	831	895	1,197	1,427	124.2	19.2
Troy .....	378	576	678	837	902	121.4	7.8
Walworth .....	386	427	457	529	600	37.0	13.4
Whitewater .....	344	435	497	552	595	60.5	7.8
<b>Cities</b>							
Delavan .....	1,733	2,059	2,355	2,931	3,159	69.1	7.8
Elkhorn .....	1,365	1,814	2,100	2,919	3,739	113.8	28.1
Lake Geneva .....	1,715	2,380	2,599	3,053	3,325	78.0	8.9
Whitewater <sup>a</sup> .....	2,150	2,734	3,336	3,765	4,058	75.1	7.8
<b>Villages</b>							
Darien .....	250	372	390	537	562	114.8	4.7
East Troy .....	544	849	979	1,350	1,628	148.2	20.6
Fontana-on-Geneva Lake .....	479	657	652	764	841	59.5	10.1
Genoa City .....	319	418	455	674	984	111.3	46.0
Mukwonago <sup>a</sup> .....	0	0	0	0	1	--	--
Sharon .....	367	426	448	565	577	54.0	2.1
Walworth .....	536	640	658	850	1,002	58.6	17.9
Williams Bay .....	522	707	844	993	1,120	90.2	12.8
<b>Walworth County</b>	<b>18,544</b>	<b>24,789</b>	<b>27,620</b>	<b>34,505</b>	<b>39,223</b>	<b>86.1</b>	<b>13.7</b>

<sup>a</sup> Walworth County portion only.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Administration, and SEWRPC.

## JOBS IN WALWORTH COUNTY BY INDUSTRY GROUP

General Industry Group	1970		2000	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
Agricultural .....	2,600	9.8	1,300	2.5
Construction .....	1,100	4.2	3,100	6.0
Manufacturing .....	5,400	20.5	10,200	19.7
Transportation and Public Utilities .....	1,000	3.8	2,000	3.9
Wholesale Trade .....	400	1.5	1,800	3.5
Retail Trade .....	5,000	18.9	9,400	18.1
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate .....	1,000	3.8	2,900	5.6
Services .....	5,200	19.7	13,600	26.3
Government and Government Enterprises .....	4,500	17.0	6,600	12.7
Other .....	200	0.8	900	1.7
<b>Total Jobs</b>	<b>26,400</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>51,800</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and SEWRPC.

Of the 34,500 occupied housing units, 23,800 units, or 69 percent, were owner-occupied; 10,700 units, or 31 percent, were renter-occupied.

Of the 9,300 vacant housing units in 2000, 7,500 units—representing 17 percent of all housing units in the County—were reported in the census as being devoted to seasonal, recreational, or other occasional use. This relatively high proportion is a reflection of a second home market attributable to the County's outstanding natural and recreational resources.

## HOUSEHOLDS

The number of households in Walworth County increased from about 18,500 in 1970 to 34,500 in 2000. The percentage increase in households during this time—86 percent—exceeds the percentage increase in population—45 percent, reflecting a decline in the average household size in the County. The average household size decreased from 3.16 persons in 1970 to 2.57 persons in 2000.

Since 2000, the number of households is estimated to have increased by an additional 4,700 households, or 14 percent, to 39,200 households in 2006.

## JOBS AND LABOR FORCE

The number of employment opportunities, or jobs, in Walworth County increased from about 26,400 in 1970 to 51,800 in 2000, an increase of 96 percent over 30 years. The largest employment categories in 2000 were service (26 percent of all jobs); manufacturing (20 percent); and retail trade (18 percent).

The resident labor force of Walworth County (persons 16 and over who are employed or temporarily unemployed) totaled 51,900 persons in 2000. The labor force participation rate—that is, the labor force as a percent of the total labor force-age population—stood at 70 percent, just slightly higher than the rates for the Region (68 percent) and State (69 percent).

## HOUSING STOCK

There was a total of 43,800 housing units in the County in 2000. Of the total housing stock, 34,500 units, or 79 percent, were reported as occupied at the time of the census in 2000; the balance of 9,300 units, or 21 percent, was reported as vacant.

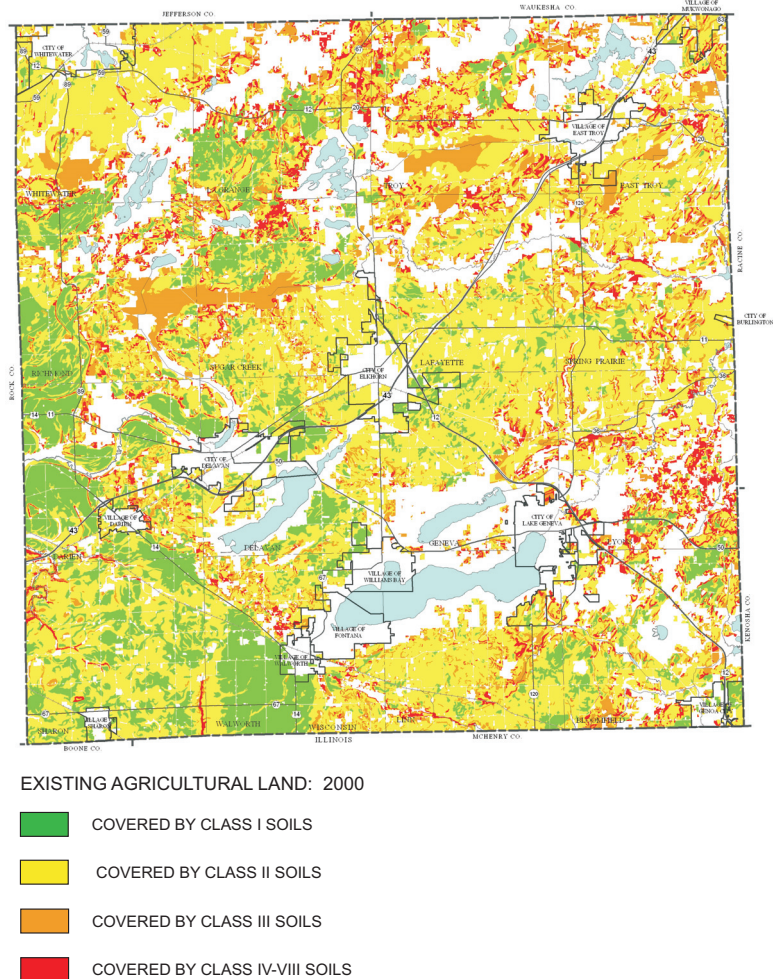
**AGRICULTURAL LAND IN  
WALWORTH COUNTY BY CIVIL DIVISION**

Civil Division	Agricultural Land (acres)	Percent of Civil Division Area
<b>Towns</b>		
Bloomfield.....	12,386	58.2
Darien.....	16,392	75.5
Delavan.....	10,828	60.5
East Troy.....	9,945	52.5
Geneva.....	11,048	57.2
LaFayette.....	15,168	68.8
LaGrange.....	13,370	58.5
Linn.....	12,606	60.4
Lyons.....	13,045	58.8
Richmond.....	17,232	74.8
Sharon.....	20,528	90.5
Spring Prairie.....	16,224	70.8
Sugar Creek.....	16,638	76.9
Troy.....	14,860	65.4
Walworth.....	15,004	80.7
Whitwater.....	13,268	68.1
<b>Cities</b>		
Burlington <sup>a</sup> .....	62	75.6
Delavan.....	1,399	30.4
Elkhorn.....	2,037	41.5
Lake Geneva.....	1,010	21.6
Whitwater <sup>a</sup> .....	1,054	30.0
<b>Villages</b>		
Darien.....	288	34.8
East Troy.....	769	26.5
Fontana-on-Geneva Lake.....	209	7.5
Genoa City.....	598	44.1
Mukwonago <sup>a</sup> .....	967	83.7
Sharon.....	185	28.3
Walworth.....	221	22.7
Williams Bay.....	330	14.2
<b>Walworth County</b>	<b>237,671</b>	<b>64.4</b>

<sup>a</sup> Walworth County portion only.

Source: SEWRPC.

**EXISTING AGRICULTURAL LAND IN  
WALWORTH COUNTY BY SOIL CAPABILITY CLASS**



Source: USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and SEWRPC.

**AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

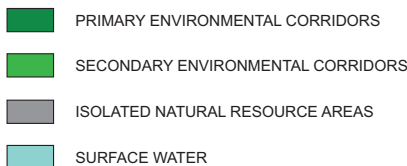
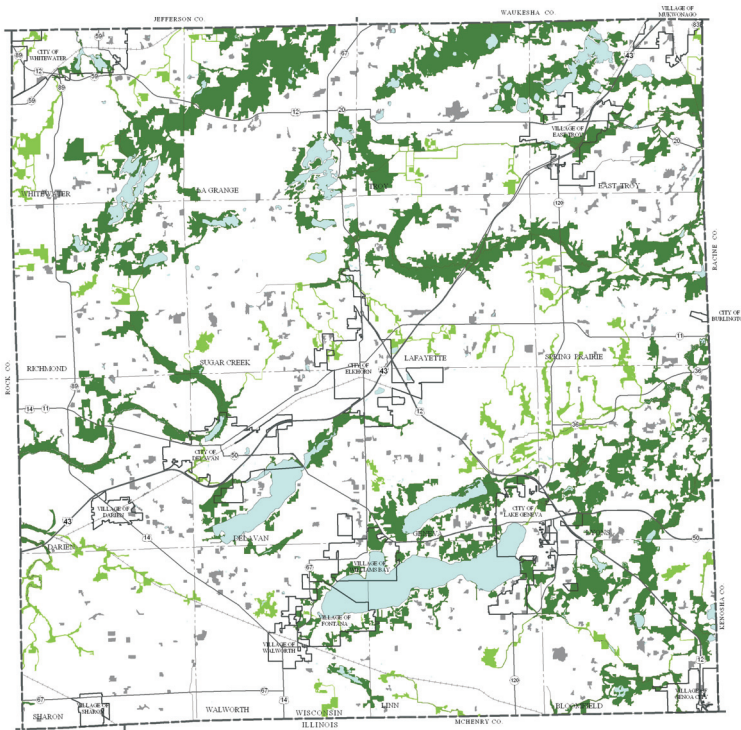
According to the regional land use inventory, there was a total of 237,700 acres of agricultural land in Walworth County in 2000, representing nearly two thirds of the total County area. This includes cultivated land, pasture land, and land used for horticulture and nurseries; it excludes wetland and woodland areas on existing farm units.

Much of the County’s farmland is covered by Class I, II, and III soils. Some of the largest concentrations of Class I soils are found in the south-central and west-central areas of the County, in areas referred to as the Bigfoot Prairie, Heart Prairie, and Rock Prairie.

The Federal Census of Agriculture reported a total of 988 farms in Walworth County in 2002. Of this total, 406 encompassed less than 50 acres; 294 encompassed 50 to 179 acres; and 288 encompassed 180 acres or more. The total value of agricultural products sold (before taxes and production expenses) stood at \$87 million in 2002. Farm statistics for the County reflect a decrease in dairy farming activity, with the associated traditional crop rotations, over the past 30 years and an increase in row crops, particularly soybeans.

---

## ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS AND ISOLATED NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS IN WALWORTH COUNTY: 2000



Source: SEWRPC.

corridors are generally located along the small perennial and intermittent streams within the County; they encompassed 9,200 acres, or about 2.5 percent of the County, in 2000.

The County encompasses five “legacy places” identified by the Wisconsin DNR as being particularly important to meeting the State’s conservation and recreation needs over the next 50 years. These include the Sugar Creek Valley, the Southern Kettle Moraine (Whitewater Lake to Turtle Creek); the Kettle Moraine State Forest; the White River and Bloomfield area; and the Mukwonago River.

## PARK AND OPEN SPACE SITES

Walworth County encompasses a wide variety of park, recreation, and open space sites, including:

- 3 park and open space sites encompassing 224 acres owned by the County (Natureland Park, Price Conservancy, and Veterans Park), along with the White River State Trail, which is maintained by Walworth County
  - 38 sites, encompassing 13,607 acres, owned by the Wisconsin DNR, the largest of these being the Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest
  - 8 sites, encompassing 649 acres, owned by the Wisconsin DOT
  - 175 sites, encompassing 2,574 acres, owned by cities, villages, towns, and school districts in the County
  - 165 privately owned sites, encompassing 12,176 acres
- 

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Walworth County has an abundance of significant natural resource features, including:

- 173 miles of perennial streams and hundreds more miles of smaller, intermittent streams
- 27 major lakes of at least 50 acres in size, and numerous smaller named and unnamed lakes and ponds
- 26,900 acres of wetlands (7 percent of the County area)
- 31,300 acres of woodlands (8 percent of the County area)
- 77 natural areas having native plant and animal communities representative of the pre-European settlement landscape
- 23 other critical species habitat sites which support rare threatened, or endangered plant or animal species

Areas containing concentrations of natural resource features have been identified as environmental corridors. The largest such corridors—“primary” environmental corridors—are generally located along major stream valleys, around major lakes, and in the Kettle Moraine; they encompassed 49,600 acres, or 13 percent of the County, in 2000. “Secondary” environmental

**EXISTING LAND USE IN WALWORTH COUNTY: 2000**

Land Use Category <sup>a</sup>	Acres	Percent of Urban/ Nonurban	Percent of Total
<b>Urban</b>			
Residential			
Single-Family.....	19,327	41.5	5.2
Multi-Family.....	932	2.0	0.3
Subtotal	20,259	43.5	5.5
Commercial.....	1,248	2.7	0.3
Industrial.....	1,420	3.1	0.4
Transportation, Communication, and Utilities.....			
Streets and Highways.....	13,710	29.4	3.7
Railroads.....	682	1.5	0.2
Other.....	814	1.7	0.2
Subtotal	15,206	32.6	4.1
Governmental and Institutional.....	1,734	3.7	0.5
Recreational.....	4,307	9.3	1.2
Unused Urban.....	2,379	5.1	0.6
Urban Subtotal	46,553	100.0	12.6
<b>Non-Urban</b>			
Natural Areas			
Surface Water.....	14,466	4.5	3.9
Wetlands.....	26,854	8.3	7.3
Woodlands.....	31,294	9.7	8.5
Subtotal	72,614	22.5	19.7
Extractive and Landfill.....	1,499	0.5	0.4
Agricultural.....	237,671	73.7	64.4
Unused Rural.....	10,614	3.3	2.9
Non-Urban Subtotal	322,398	100.0	87.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>368,951</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup> Off-street parking is included with the associated land use.

Source: SEWRPC.

**CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Cultural features of Walworth County include the following:

- 32 historic buildings or structures, five historic districts, an ancient burial site, and an ancient village site—all listed on the National Register of Historic Places
- 9 historic sites identified under the Wisconsin Historical Markers Program
- More than 3,000 properties that are included on the Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society

There are 7 local historical societies in Walworth County, in addition to the Walworth County Historical Society.

**LAND USE**

Urban land uses—including residential; commercial; industrial; recreational; governmental and institutional; transportation, communication, and utilities; and other urban land—encompassed 46,600 acres, or 13 percent of the County, in 2000. Residential land comprised the largest urban category, accounting for 44 percent of all urban land.

Nonurban land uses—consisting largely of agricultural, wetlands, woodlands, surface water—encompassed about 322,400 acres, or 87 percent of the County, in 2000. Agricultural land comprised the largest nonurban land use category, accounting for 74 percent of all nonurban land.

Between 1963 and 2000, there was an increase in urban land, and a decrease in nonurban land, of about 19,000 acres in the County.

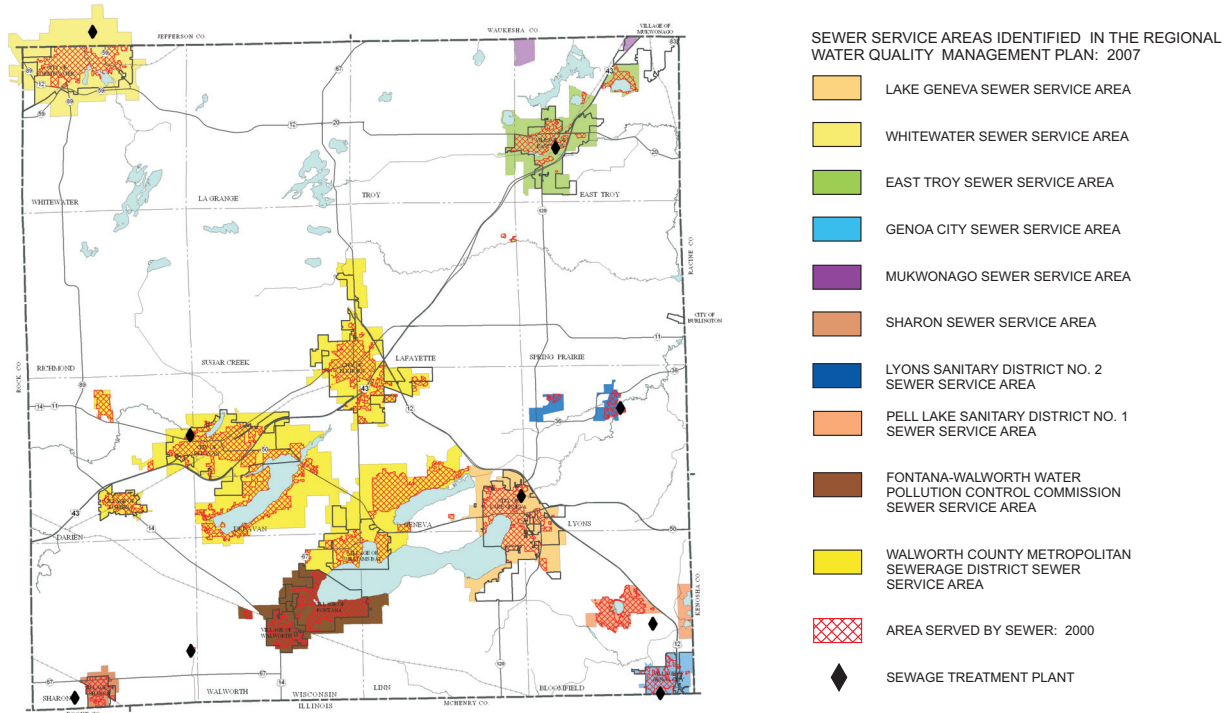
**TRANSPORTATION**

There was a total of 1,507 linear miles of public streets and highways in Walworth County in 2005. Of this, 213 miles consisted of State trunk highways, 173 miles consisted of County trunk highways, and 1,121 miles consisted of local streets and highways.

Public transit service in Walworth County is limited to the following:

- The County Transportation Program which provides rides for medical care, nutrition, and shopping for seniors and the disabled, along with rides, primarily for medical care, to clients of the County Department of Health and Social Services, residents in the Lakeland Health Care Center, and those receiving medical assistance
- Public shared-ride taxicab service provided by the City of Whitewater through Brown Cab Service

## PLANNED SANITARY SEWER SERVICE AREAS AND AS SERVED BY SEWER IN WALWORTH COUNTY



Source: SEWRPC.

There are five public-use airports in Walworth County. Two of these—East Troy Municipal and Burlington Municipal (whose runway facilities extend into Walworth County) are publicly owned. The other three—Grand Geneva, Lake Lawn, and Bigfoot Airfield—are privately owned. None of these provide scheduled air carrier passenger service; County residents may use Mitchell International Airport, Rockford International Airport, or Chicago’s O’Hare International and Midway International Airports for such service.

### PUBLIC UTILITIES

Areas in the County served by public sanitary sewer service in 2000 encompassed about 27.6 square miles, or 5 percent of the County, with a population of 62,100 persons, or 68 percent of the County population. These areas were served by nine public sewage treatment facilities in 2000.

In 2005, 16 public water supply systems provided water supply to about 22.2 square miles, or 4 percent of the County, with a population of 59,100 persons, or 61 percent of the County population. All of these systems rely on groundwater as a source of supply.

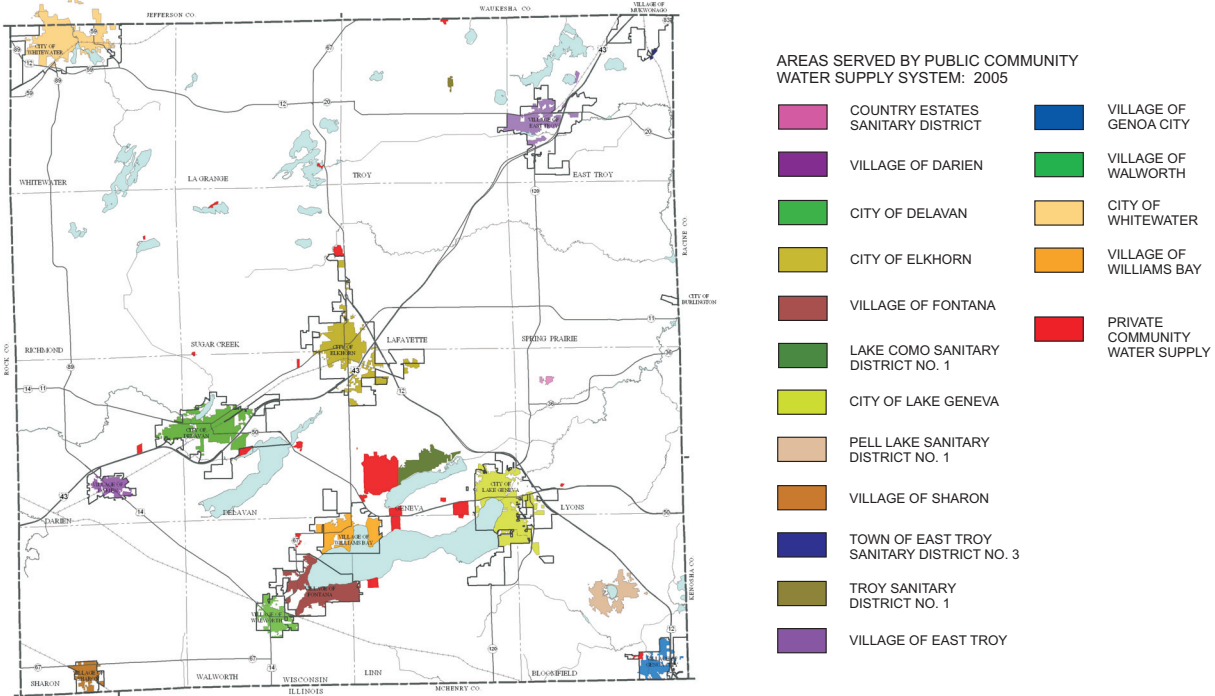
### COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Each city and village in Walworth County, along with the Towns of Bloomfield, Delavan, East Troy, Geneva, and Linn has its own police department. The other 11 towns rely on the Walworth County Sheriff’s Department.

Fire protection service in Walworth County is provided by 18 different fire departments (16 public departments and 2 private fire companies)—all of which rely heavily upon on-call, rather than full-time, fire fighters. Sixteen of the 18 fire departments provide both fire protection and emergency medical services. Emergency medical service is also provided by Delavan Rescue Squad, Inc., Medix Ambulance Services, Inc., and Paratech Ambulance Services, Inc.

---

## PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS IN WALWORTH COUNTY: 2005



Source: Wisconsin Public Service Commission, Water Utilities, and SEWRPC.

There are eleven public libraries in Walworth County, all operated by the County's cities and villages. These libraries may be used by all Walworth County residents with valid library cards; indeed, all public libraries throughout the State are required to honor valid borrowers' cards from any system, with the exception of Milwaukee.

Most of the County is served by six K-12 school districts (Burlington Area, Delavan-Darien, East Troy Community, Elkhorn Area, Whitewater, and Williams Bay) and two union high school districts (Big Foot and Lake Geneva-Genoa City). The Big Foot Union High School District and the Lake Geneva-Genoa City Union High School District both encompass four feeder elementary school districts.

### EXISTING PLANS AND ZONING

Long-range planning is not new in Walworth County; there is a long history of planning at the regional, county, and local level. The framework of existing plans includes the following:

- **Regional Plans:** Land Use, Transportation, Water Quality Management, Park and Open Space, Natural Areas, and Water Supply (underway)
  - **County Plans:** Land Use, Park and Open Space, Farmland Preservation, Solid Waste Management, Land and Water Resources Management
  - **Local Plans:** Most of the cities, villages, and towns in the County have adopted a land use, master, or comprehensive plan as a long-range guide to land use within their communities. These plans typically include a land use plan component, and some plans address transportation, community facilities, and other matters. As of June 2007, only four of the local plans—plans for the Towns of Bloomfield, Linn, and Lyons, and the Village of Sharon—had been adopted under Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law (Sec. 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes) and were held out as including the required nine plans elements specified in the law.
-

---

The entire area of Walworth County is subject to zoning. With the exception of areas subject to extraterritorial zoning, town areas throughout Walworth County are under the jurisdiction of the Walworth County Zoning and Walworth County Shoreland Zoning Ordinances. Each of the cities and villages in Walworth County has adopted and administers its own general zoning ordinance governing the use of land within its incorporated area.

Three communities—the City of Elkhorn, the Village of Fontana, and the Village of Williams Bay—have adopted extraterritorial zoning (ETZ) within certain adjacent town areas. The Elkhorn ETZ area includes portions of the Towns of Delavan, Geneva, and LaFayette. The Williams Bay ETZ area includes portions of the Towns of Geneva and Linn. The Fontana ETZ area includes portions of the Towns of Linn and Walworth.

*For additional details regarding the inventory findings of the multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning program, please refer to the drafts of Chapters II through VI of the comprehensive plan report, which are posted on the comprehensive plan website: [www.sewrpc.org/smartgrowth/walworthcounty/](http://www.sewrpc.org/smartgrowth/walworthcounty/)*

---