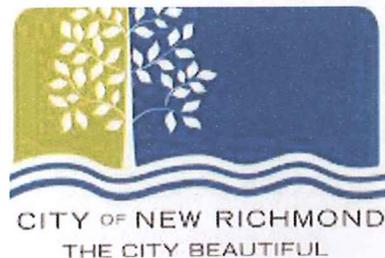


New Richmond Housing Needs Analysis Part 1

A Study of Comparison Cities to New Richmond
Based on the St. Croix River Crossing Project

Bryan Heth
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**UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN** **River Falls**
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
AND ECONOMICS

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Executive Summary

This study was conducted to determine the impacts, housing and otherwise, that the St. Croix River Crossing Project will have upon the City of New Richmond, WI. The project was ultimately split into two parts, analyzing similar cities to New Richmond and examining the current situation in New Richmond and how that might change after the completion of the bridge. The goal of this project was to find similar cities to the City of New Richmond where there was a bridge improvement or reconstruction project completed close to the city. Understanding how similar cities handled bridge projects can assist the City of New Richmond, as the city has an incredible opportunity to benefit from a project that increases accessibility into the Twin Cities metropolitan area, as well as the New Richmond area.

Literature review indicates that *Edge Communities* are growing faster than higher density downtown and urban locations, and New Richmond falls into this category (Nelson 2012). Edge Communities are those that are located at the outskirts of metropolitan areas and are usually connected by state and interstate highways. These communities that are growing are further away from key business and employment centers, resulting in an increase in commute time. This increase in commute time means that incentives are necessary to balance the equation, and a 10% increase in expected metropolitan wage increases the incentive to commute from a rural area by 7.5% (So et al., 2001). Increases in population have been followed with a shifting of housing type as the number of rental households nationwide grew from 31% in 2004 to 35% of all households in 2012 (Bravve 2015).

Important to this study is the ongoing work by Matt Kures and Tom Gillaspay with the University of Wisconsin Extension searching for impacts based upon the St. Croix River Crossing Project. This study investigates five different bridges that are identified as possible comparisons to the St. Croix River Crossing Project. The study followed strict criteria for identifying these bridges, the first being the project must replace or expand on an existing bridge and be located in a metropolitan statistical area. The bridge must also not be a major interstate crossing which would bring an increased traffic count. The best comparison in the study is the Highway 169 bridge, also known as the Bloomington Ferry Bridge, located to the Southeast of the Twin Cities. The study indicates that the largest impacts from the St. Croix River Crossing project will be the reduction in commute time. This will have an impact on New Richmond, but since the city is 15 minutes from the bridge crossing, the improvement in commute time will be greater for locations closer to the crossing such as Houlton.

The cities of Hastings, Jordan and Savage, MN were identified as comparison cities based upon population and locations near recent bridge projects. The Highway 61 bridge in Hastings was completed in 2013, and the Highway 169 bridge which connects Savage and Jordan with the Southwestern portion of the Twin Cities was completed in 1996. Population in 2014 according to the U.S. Census Bureau was 22,566 for Hastings, 5,970 for Jordan and 29,208 for Savage. A number of variables were examined in the current comparison of these cities including age and household statistics. One of the bigger differences in these comparisons is that New Richmond's housing market in 2013 was estimated to be 39% rented houses, compared to Savage which only had a rental rate of 13%. Jordan and Hastings fall between this range at 11%

and 23% respectively. Perhaps not surprisingly, the majority of homes are single family for every city in this study. New Richmond housing includes 32% multi-family homes and Hastings is the closest comparison city in this regard at 21% multi-family homes.

Interview questions were created and provided to representatives at each of the comparison cities, Laura Holey in Jordan, Justin Fortney in Hastings, and Bryan Tucker in Savage. Ms. Holey is a city planner in Jordan, Mr. Fortney is a city planner for Hastings, and Mr. Tucker is the planning manager for Savage. Ms. Holey and Mr. Fortney both provided feedback via email with Mr. Fortney indicating that Hastings did not prepare for the bridge project, and no impacts were observed for population or housing (personal communication, October 21, 2015). Ms. Holey responded with mixed feelings on how the bridge impacted Jordan, and said that the increase in housing and population may have been a result of the economy during the late 1990s. Mr. Tucker agreed to a phone interview and provided valuable information about the effects of the Bloomington Ferry Bridge on the City of Savage. He said that the city began preparing for the bridge project three or four years before the completion of the bridge, and that the preparation was mostly ensuring that the city had adequate sanitary sewer capacity. Mr. Tucker also said that he believes that the new bridge there had a definite impact on housing and population (personal communication, October 26, 2015).

Based upon the results of the interviews with the comparison cities, a direct comparison between Savage, Hastings and New Richmond was conducted as these two comparison cities fell on opposite ends of the spectrum. Jordan was not included in further analysis because

there was not a clear connection to the Bloomington Ferry Bridge for housing or population growth. Housing sales data from Redfin since 1992 was analyzed, and it became clear that New Richmond overall is more similar to Hastings in this regard than to Savage. Looking at where each city is located in relation to the Twin Cities metropolitan area reveals that Savage is much closer to the Twin Cities compared with both Hastings and New Richmond.

A key finding from the results of this study it is not anticipated that New Richmond will see a large amount of growth immediately following the bridge. The city will more than likely continue growing at around the rate that the city has been for the previous five to ten years. It is recommended that the city follow the lead that Savage has set in ensuring that the City of New Richmond is prepared in the event that population and housing increases faster than anticipated after the completion of the St. Croix River Crossing Project. Savage made sure they had enough area zoned for residential and commercial, but cautioned that they over planned for commercial and ultimately rezoned a portion of that land to residential. Housing permits increased and a large increase in multi-family homes were seen in the years following the completion of the bridge. The debt from updating infrastructure was also a key factor that the City of Savage had to deal with for a number of years after the bridge was completed to keep up with the increase in housing and population. New Richmond should remain flexible in their city planning measures in the years following the completion of St. Croix River Crossing Project, and look for continued growth in the Northeastern part of the Twin Cities metropolitan area as a sign that the growth may cross the river into New Richmond. The St. Croix River Crossing Project will be an important part of future growth in the region.

Purpose and Background

After many years of debate and disagreement between government policy makers, environmental groups, and the general public, the St. Croix River Crossing Project is underway and is scheduled to be completed in 2017. The completion of this bridge project is expected to have a large impact on commute times between the small towns and cities in St. Croix County in Western Wisconsin as new access will be available to the Twin Cities area in Minnesota and the jobs that are located in this region. The City of New Richmond Wisconsin is trying to determine the impact this bridge will have on the housing market, and overall economic development of the city once the bridge is completed. The purpose of this case analysis is to investigate cities that have recently gone through a similar infrastructure improvement as New Richmond is experiencing, focusing on bridge improvements/new construction projects that reduces commuting time from a rural area to a major metropolitan area. These cities should be similar in nature to New Richmond in population and distance from a major metropolitan area, but it will also be beneficial to look at cities that have gone through a similar infrastructure update that are different from New Richmond to provide a range of possible outcomes

The St. Croix River Crossing Project is a project that for many longtime local residents was one that should have been completed decades ago. The Stillwater lift bridge, built in 1931, is no longer sufficient to support the number of vehicles crossing the river that has increased dramatically in recent years because of tourism promotion in the City of Stillwater and commercial development taking place in Northwestern Wisconsin (Minnesota Department of Transportation). By the 1980s the Wisconsin and Minnesota departments of transportation had

begun putting together plans and outlines for a new bridge and several locations were put forth to replace the Stillwater bridge, and by the mid-1990s a project was in place to construct a bridge, but concerns from the National Park Service indicated that the project would have a significant negative impact on the scenic and recreational values of the river which by this time had been included in the National Wild and Scenic River System (Minnesota Department of Transportation). So the project was abandoned, and while repairs and updates were made to the old Stillwater lift bridge, the project to construct a new bridge was present in the background, but no significant strides were made.

The mid 2000's saw a major roadblock for the project as the National Parks Service approved for the first time a bridge project, but litigation from outside interests put a stop to the project again almost immediately (Divine Pioneer Press 2011). Another push for the bridge was made and by 2011 government leaders from both Minnesota and Wisconsin were on board with the increased sense of urgency for a new bridge. Minnesota governor Mark Dayton, U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar from Minnesota and U.S. Representative Ron Kind from Wisconsin were among those supporting the St. Croix River Crossing Project. Finally in March of 2012, President Barack Obama signed Public Law 112-100 which authorized the construction of an extradosed bridge, bypassing the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act which had previously been preventing the project from getting started (Public Law 112-100 Minnesota Department of Transportation 2012). Extradosed bridges are a cross between girder and cable style bridges (Benaim 2007). They are more commonly found in Europe and other parts of the world. Construction of the bridge began in late 2012 with initial site work and was expected to be completed in late 2016, but

because of delays on the project the expected completion date has been pushed back to 2017. The push back on the expected completion date is due to the complicated nature of the bridge, and is only the second major bridge of its kind, and fourth overall bridge built in the extradosed style. (Giles Star Tribune 2015). Once the bridge is completed, it is expected to have a large economic impact on the region, but it is unclear just how far reaching this impact will be.

Literature Review

Searching for relevant literature for this project proved to be a difficult endeavor as there is not much in the way of journal articles on the impact of bridge reconstruction and the housing impacts that occur from such projects. The search was expanded out to include building codes, zoning practices, land use and housing impacts which brought some useful articles and studies. However, as will be evident in the section on comparable cities, very little information, or none at all, was obtained from these cities on building codes as far as being relevant to the respective bridge project, so that will be discussed here only briefly.

The cities in this study, both the comparable cities as well as New Richmond, can be categorized as *Edge Communities* (Nelson 2012). According to Nelson and the article *Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Rural Planning, Zoning, and Development Codes*, Edge Communities are those that are located at the outskirts of metropolitan areas and are usually connected by state and interstate highways. This is important because in recent years these communities have been growing faster than the metropolitan areas that they are located near. It has also been shown that improvements in infrastructure that reduce commuting time will increase populations in

non-metropolitan areas (So, Orazem, and Otto 2001). In the study conducted by So et al. on working-age residents in 31 counties around the Des Moines metropolitan area, a number of interesting conclusions were made. This study found that commuters, overall, were younger, more educated and were found to have a higher income than non-commuters regardless of whether the commuting was from the rural area to the metropolitan area, or from the metropolitan area to the rural area. As would be expected, it was found that as commuting time increases, incentives (higher wages) are necessary to balance the equation, and a 10% increase in expected metropolitan wage increases the incentive to commute from a rural area by 7.5% (So et al., 2001). It was also concluded that highway and infrastructure improvements have a significant impact on non-metropolitan population as every 10% reduction in commuting time results in an increase in non-metropolitan population by 1.1% (So et al., 2001).

Furthermore, So et al. concludes that residents who live in rural areas are more willing to commute to metropolitan markets if they live within one hour's drive time, or if transportation improvements place them within one hour's distance. The study further concludes that improvements in transportation to metropolitan markets may also have a large economic impact on rural towns and cities as residents and businesses move to these areas because of improved access.

If a city is expecting an increase in population because of a reduction in commuting time after an infrastructure improvement, then a number of other factors should be examined to determine if the city is ready to handle the increase in population. Long term costs need to be taken into consideration, and include infrastructure construction and maintenance, emergency

services, updates to schools and other public buildings, and development of businesses and services that a growing population will use (Nelson 2012).

Furthermore, cities expecting an increase in population need to examine the current state of their housing market as the recent economic downturn has contributed to a shift in housing as the number of renting households grew nationwide from 31% in 2004 to 35% of all households in 2012 (Bravve 2015). According to Bravve, the number of rental households is also expected to increase by as many as 4.7 million by the year 2023. The same research has found that housing for low income individuals and families is also going to be increasing as 58% of new jobs in the post-recession recovery period are paying no more than \$13.83 an hour, and additional low income rental units will be needed to house these individuals (Bravve 2015). It is worse for those people in the extremely low income range with incomes at or below 30% of area median income, as there are only 31 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 extremely low income rental households (Bravve 2015). It is very important for all cities, especially those expecting an increase in population and an increase in jobs where low income is common such as child care providers, nursing home aides, retail clerks and receptionists, to evaluate their level of housing for this portion of the population (Bravve 2015).

Prior Study on St. Croix River Crossing

Before beginning analysis into cities that are similar in nature to New Richmond, it is important at this point to note that a study is currently in the process of being published by the University of Wisconsin Extension. This study is examining the potential impacts from the St. Croix River Bridge on communities in the immediate area of Wisconsin east of the bridge location. A summary of this study will be presented here as it provides important input into possible outcomes from the completion of the project. Everything presented in this section will be data and findings from the Extension study, authored by Matt Kures and Tom Gillaspay, except where the author's interpretation is explicitly mentioned.

The University of Wisconsin Extension Study has seven key findings, the first one being that infrastructure improvements can spark change, but alone cannot predict economic or population growth. A number of factors are at play when it comes to economic and population growth, among these are labor force, developable land and macroeconomic conditions of the local area as well as the country as a whole. Population growth near an infrastructure improvement such as a highway expansion or bridge improvement is also influenced by historical growth and by growth rates in neighboring municipalities. St. Croix County has been growing, sometimes rapidly and sometimes slowly, for a few decades now, and the new bridge will likely have an impact on this growth, but it will be difficult to identify how much of this growth will be attributable to the new bridge. This fact ties into the second key finding from the study in that population growth trends in the county and Twin Cities metropolitan area are changing, and that the changes are being driven by larger demographic and economic patterns.

The study has concluded that it is unlikely that growth rates will return to those seen in the 1990's and 2000's before the economic recession seen in recent years. That is not to say that the study believes growth will stagnate in the county, quite the opposite actually as key finding number three is that the county and the corridor communities (communities in the northern part of St. Croix county that are directly impacted by the new bridge) will continue to grow. Additionally, St. Croix County is projected to be the fastest growing county in Wisconsin through 2040.

The University of Wisconsin Extension study should simply be used as a tool, as should any study done on the changes expected from the completion of the bridge project. Key finding four supports this and says that population projections are not set in stone and should only be used as part of the strategy for policy development. Ultimately, the corridor communities will have the final say in how they want the bridge to impact their communities based on zoning ordinances, marketing, and financial incentives. Key finding number five from the study is that the bridge will increase access to jobs for those living in northern St. Croix County, but it is important for communities to attract residents based on access to other amenities other than a reduced commute times. Reduced commute times will be very important for a city like Houlton as jobs within 15 minutes increase from 3,800 to 22,700, within 30 minutes from 88,100 to 192,400 and within 45 minutes from 424,200 to 970,200. These increases occur because the average 20 minute commute penalty using the old lift bridge will be removed. For the City of New Richmond, the increase in available jobs will not be as significant because of a longer commute time. The number of jobs within a 15 minute drive time do not change when the St.

Croix River Crossing Project is the only variable and is constant at 8,000. Unlike the City of Houlton, New Richmond is approximately 15 minutes from the bridge crossing, so the new bridge will not have any impact on commute time in the 15 minute time range. Moving out to a 30 minute commute means that New Richmond is looking at an increase from 37,400 to 54,700 available jobs. A 45 minute commute sees the number of jobs jump from 150,600 to 210,600. Because the increase in jobs does not match those of a city like Houlton, New Richmond should also think about attracting residents based on amenities that the city can provide as well. Schools, crime rate, family activities and quality infrastructure will be important to bring in new residents. The study focuses on attracting residents and drive time for workers into the Twin Cities, but the same could be said for businesses that are being attracted to Western Wisconsin and the New Richmond area. Since the city is located an additional 15 minutes from the bridge crossing, any businesses looking to locate to the region, as well as the employees that would likely include drivers from the Twin Cities area, will be looking for business friendly cities and amenities for their workers.

Key finding number six from the Extension study is that while it should be expected that population growth will create a rise in demand for retail, hospitality, construction and real estate services, an increase in government services and employees will also occur. The study expects that the northern part of St. Croix County could support 750 to 850 private sector jobs in these industries over the next decade after the completion of the bridge, and new residential construction could bring 120 new jobs for every \$10 million in construction. The increase in residents will bring income to local governments, but historically St. Croix county has needed 45

to 50 local government employees for every 1,000 residents, the cost increase from adding additional government employees will need to be accounted for. While the bridge will likely bring an increase in population and business activity to the region, key finding number seven from the study is that the increase will likely be incremental and not all at once. It is also unlikely that large businesses will relocate to the area simply because of the bridge completion.

The University of Wisconsin Extension study also identified five bridge projects that have been completed in recent years that are similar to the St. Croix River Crossing Project.

1. Route 370 Corridor in St. Charles County, Missouri 1996
2. The Bloomington Ferry Bridge in Scott County, Minnesota 1996
3. The George P. Coleman Memorial Bridge in Gloucester County, Virginia 1995
4. The Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge in Charleston County, South Carolina 2005
5. The Blennerhassett Bridge between Wood County, WV and Washington County, OH 2008

These 5 locations were chosen based on a number of criteria laid out by the study. The project must replace or expand on an existing bridge and be located in a metropolitan statistical area. The bridge must also not be a major interstate crossing which would bring an increased traffic count. The study admits that with this criteria it is difficult to locate similar projects.

Having investigated each of these bridge projects the only project on this list that makes for a good comparison (location, cities on both sides of the river, bridge project etc.) to the St. Croix River Crossing project is the Bloomington Ferry Bridge which is on the south side of the Twin

Cities in Scott County. Similar to the Stillwater Bridge, the 169 bridge crossing the Minnesota River was outdated and was subject to shutdowns because of flooding during the spring time snow melt. The bridge also connects the outer suburbs and cities south of the Twin Cities with the downtown metropolitan area and the local economic conditions will be very similar to those seen on the east side of the Twin Cities with the completion of the St. Croix River Crossing Project.

The other bridges that the University of Wisconsin Extension study outlined are not useful in the sense that there is not a similar city to New Richmond found close to these bridge projects that can be used to draw comparisons. The 370 bridge project is perhaps the best alternative bridge on the list, but the problem with this bridge is that all of the cities that could be used along the short stretch that 370 runs are all much too big, and are far too close to the downtown St. Louis metropolitan area. Two of the cities investigated for the 370 bridge crossing were St. Charles and Hazelwood Missouri. These cities were estimated to have a population of 68,090 and 25,666. While the population estimate for Hazelwood is not a bad comparison, the city is located same side of the bridge as the major city, and is located right next to Saint Louis inside the highway 270 loop that circles the city.

The George P. Coleman Memorial Bridge in Gloucester County, Virginia provided another city that had potential, Gloucester Point VA. The population in 2010 was 9,402 and no estimate was available for 2014. Investigating further though Gloucester Point is actually a Census Designated Place, and is not incorporated as a city. Further investigation found that there is no website for

the city and there is no local government outside of the county level. For this reason, the decision was made that it would not match significant criteria. Additionally, a number of other towns further away from the Newport News/Norfolk VA area did not result in any towns that were incorporated.

The Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge in South Carolina sits next to the Charleston SC metropolitan area. The closest city to the bridge is Mt. Pleasant SC, but the population here is 77,796. Moving out from Mt. Pleasant did not result in any other city that appeared to be a reasonable comparison to New Richmond. Wando is the next closest town, but search results didn't find the town on the Census website which did not bode well for comparison. Awendaw was also investigated, and this town was on the census website, but the population here is only 1,356 as of the 2014 estimate. Moving even further away from the metropolitan area and looking at McClellanville, the population here is only 520 people as of 2014. This is about an hour drive from Charleston, so it did not make any sense to continue searching further.

The Blennerhassett Bridge between Wood County, WV and Washington County, OH makes for the least amount of comparison to the St. Croix River Crossing. Based upon how the bridge lies across the Ohio River, analysis would make sense to study a city on the Ohio side as the largest city in the area is Parkersburg WV with a population of 30,981 as of the 2014 estimate. Right there it does not make for a viable comparison, as that is nowhere close to the population of Minneapolis and St. Paul combined at 704,847. Looking into a few cities on the Ohio side of the river did not result in any comparison cities. The town of Torch did not show up on the Census

website, and Coolville is a township of about 490 residents as of the 2014 estimate. Dunham also did not appear on the Census website.

The Ohio River Bridges Project

The St. Croix River Crossing is not the only major bridge project currently in progress in the United States. A similar project is currently underway crossing the Ohio River at Louisville, connecting Ohio and Kentucky. Two bridges are being constructed as part of this project. The downtown bridge project is replacing a current bridge and will connect downtown Louisville with Jefferson Indiana and the new bridge will run parallel with the existing Kennedy Bridge. The second bridge, also known as the East End Crossing will be a new bridge located about 8 miles east of Louisville along the Ohio River and will join Prospect Kentucky and Utica Indiana. The Downtown crossing is scheduled to be completed in 2016. In addition to being constructed within the same timeframe as the St. Croix River Crossing, the Ohio River Bridges Project is similar in that one of the bridges is being replaced, it is crossing a major river, and it is connecting a major metropolitan area with an adjoining state.

As part of the project, an economic impact study has been completed looking at expected outcomes associated with the two new bridges. Although similar to the St. Croix River Crossing project, this study should be viewed as a resource only, and not as something that will completely predict the economic impact of the project for New Richmond or the rest of Western Wisconsin. Similar to the University of Wisconsin Extension study on the St. Croix River

Crossing Project, all information provided in this section of the case analysis is directly from the Economic Impact Study of the Ohio River Bridges Project which was developed by the Economic Development Research Group, Inc. out of Boston Massachusetts first published in early 2014.

The Ohio River Bridges economic study focused on a few key items that were thought to be important drivers of the regional economic impact resulting from the completion of the two new bridges. These factors include construction, market access, transportation efficiency/operations, tolls and land use. The construction impact is seen as being a short term boost to the economy while the bridges are being constructed and work to the surrounding infrastructure and roadways leading up to the river crossing locations. Market access is enhanced as businesses are able to access a larger market, in this case enhanced access is available to a number of local and regional trade centers including Indianapolis, Frankfort, Columbus, and Cincinnati. Tolls are looked at in this study as a negative impact on the regional economy and land use examines the strategic development of land in the area and the specific uses that cities and counties should be employing. Transportation efficiency/operations is the reduced costs that businesses and households and see and travel times and costs are reduced as congestion is eased and commute times are shortened. This is the same expectation seen with the St. Croix River Crossing Project, in that the reduction of commute times is a large factor in the expected economic surge with the completion of the bridge. Unfortunately no commute times or expected increase in jobs were provided in this study to use as comparison to the University of Wisconsin Extension study.

Two of the cities discussed in the study are cities that were identified as possibly comparison cities to New Richmond. Charlestown, which is expected to be impacted by the east end bridge, and Sellersburg, which should see impacts from both bridge projects, located to the north of Louisville KY in southern Ohio. Charlestown has been planning for the bridge project for 12 years, and has been taking steps to prepare for the expected increase in population from the project. More than a decade ago, the city started attracting developers of higher end homes by rezoning areas of the city for larger residential lots and also created a large commercial district along portions of 3 highways that are situated in the city. They also completed construction of a new sewer treatment plant in 2001 that has enough capacity so that the city could double in population. For Sellersburg, a large impact of the east end bridge will be a broader area of marketability for Ivy Tech Community College which is located in Sellersburg. Increased access to the college is expected to boost enrollment and in turn is expected to have a favorable impact on revenues for the city. The city is expecting to see an increase in population because of easier access to the Kentucky side of the river and is planning on seeing growth in all sectors including residential, commercial and industrial construction, although the study does not indicate to what level this growth is expected.

Similarly Situated Communities

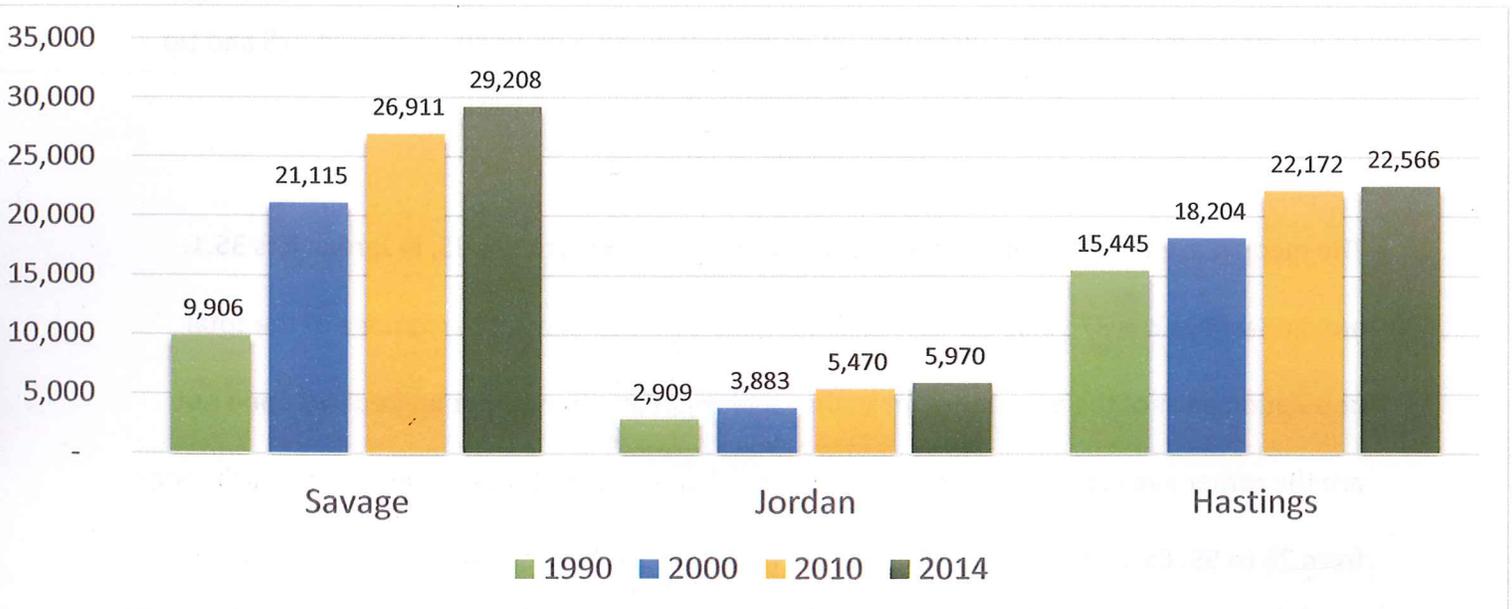
Based upon the University of Wisconsin Extension study and independent research into bridge and other highway infrastructure improvement projects, a number of cities have been identified that draw a reasonable level for comparison to New Richmond and the St. Croix River Crossing Project. The best comparisons available are locations within or near to the

Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington Metropolitan Statistical Area, as this is the region that New Richmond will be receiving increased access to with the completion of the St. Croix River Crossing Project. In this area, two different bridge projects and three different cities have been identified that are similar in nature to New Richmond, and that should provide useful comparisons from which to draw conclusions. The Bloomington Ferry Bridge, Highway 169, crosses over the Minnesota River in the Southwestern portion of the Twin Cities area, and the Highway 61 bridge crosses over the Mississippi River in the Southeastern portion of the Twin Cities area. Both projects replaced bridges that were of significant age, and were unable to meet growing demand from commuters. In addition, the 169 bridge often flooded in the spring after the winter snow melt, which further complicated the commute impact for those traveling to and from Scott county and the Twin Cities. The Highway 169 Bridge, otherwise known as the Bloomington Ferry Bridge, was completed in 1996, and the Highway 61 Bridge at Hastings was completed in 2013. Following Highway 169 to the south, two cities were identified as comparison cities, Savage and Jordan. For the Highway 61 Bridge, Hastings serves as a good city to analyze. What follows is an analysis of these similarly situated communities, starting with a comparison of how each city currently stands based on population and housing characteristics. All data in this section was taken from the U.S. Census Bureau, as well as the American Community Survey 2009 to 2013 estimates which reflect a more up to date version of some housing and population data as official census numbers are only taken every ten years. This data has been condensed when necessary to present it in a more usable form.

The cities of Savage, Jordan, and Hastings MN were chosen because of their proximity to a bridge reconstruction project, but were also chosen because of their location near the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Similar to New Richmond WI, all cities take somewhere between 30 and 55 minutes to reach the heart of the Twin Cities depending upon traffic (Google Maps 2015), and this serves as a reasonable range of time for a comparison on the corresponding housing markets in each city.

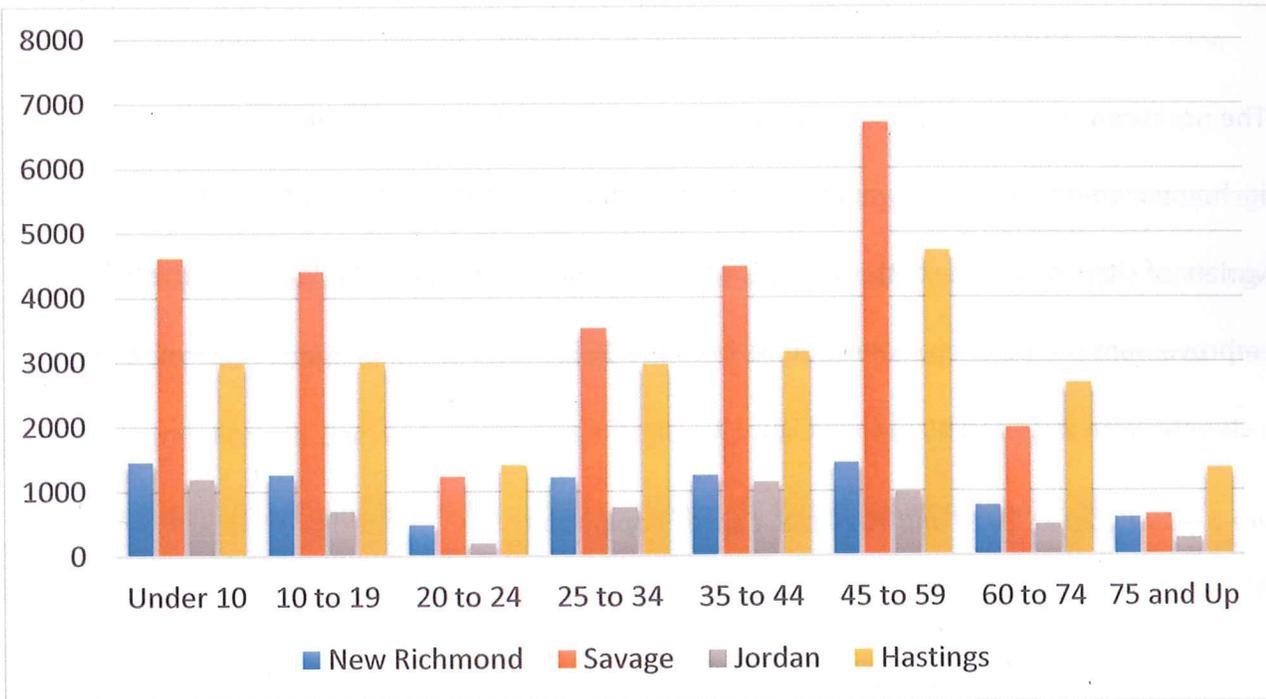
The next area to look at is population data for each city. While an exact match with New Richmond would be ideal, it would be near impossible to expect such a city to exist, and a variety of cities makes for better analysis when examining how each city dealt with the bridge improvement project. Population counts from the 1990, 2000 and 2010 census, as well as an estimate from 2014 can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2014 U.S. Census Population



As seen in the population data, the three chosen cities differ quite a bit from each other. Total population for each city is displayed above the bar for all census data as well as the 2014 estimate. Savage and Hastings have significantly more people living in their cities, and Jordan is a few thousand fewer in total population compared to New Richmond. Population for these cities can be further broken down into age ranges and can be seen for each city in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Population by Age Range 2013



The median age for residents in New Richmond is 33.4, in Savage it is 35, in Jordan it is 35.1, and in Hastings it is 37 years of age. Figures 3 through 6 depict what percentage of the total population each of the age ranges make up each city. A few things that immediately pop out are the rather even spread in population for New Richmond for those under 19, and each range from 25 to 59. Each of the other cities have a larger spread between these age ranges. Also noteworthy is that the largest portion of the population for both Savage and Hastings is the 45

to 59 year old segment. Not surprisingly, both the college age segment as well as the 75 and up segment are the smallest for each city.

Figure 3 – Hastings Age Range Percentage 2013

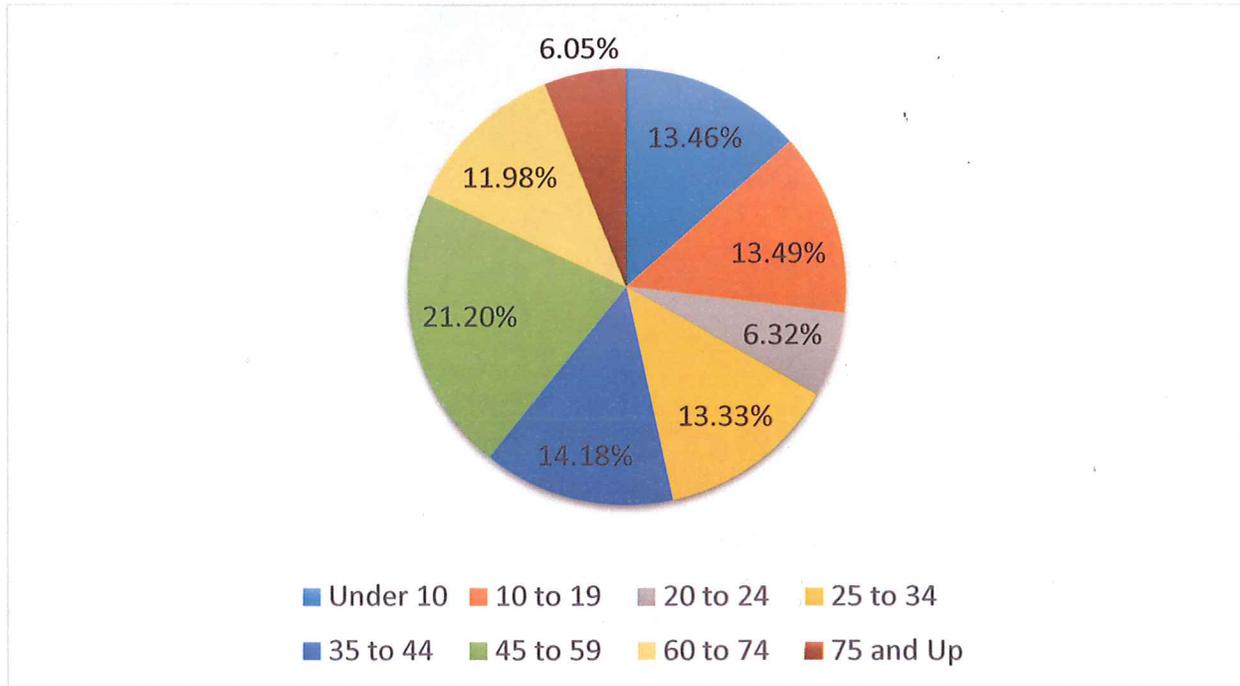


Figure 4 – Savage Age Range Percentage 2013

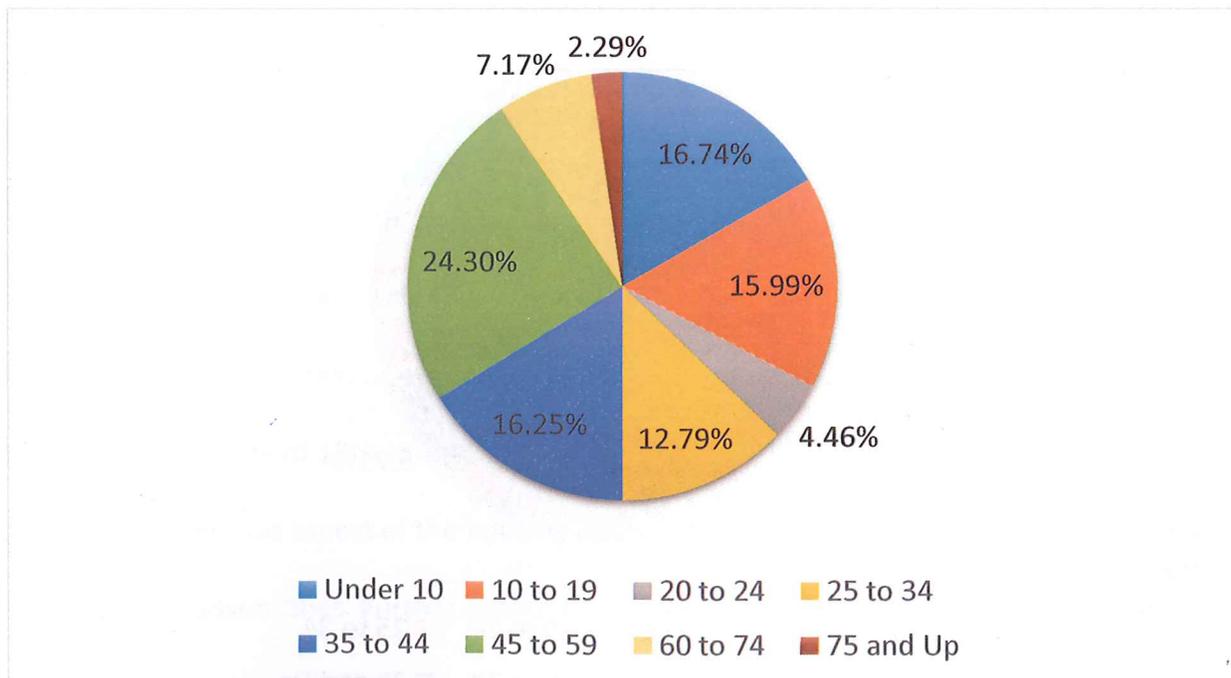


Figure 5 – Jordan Age Range Percentage 2013

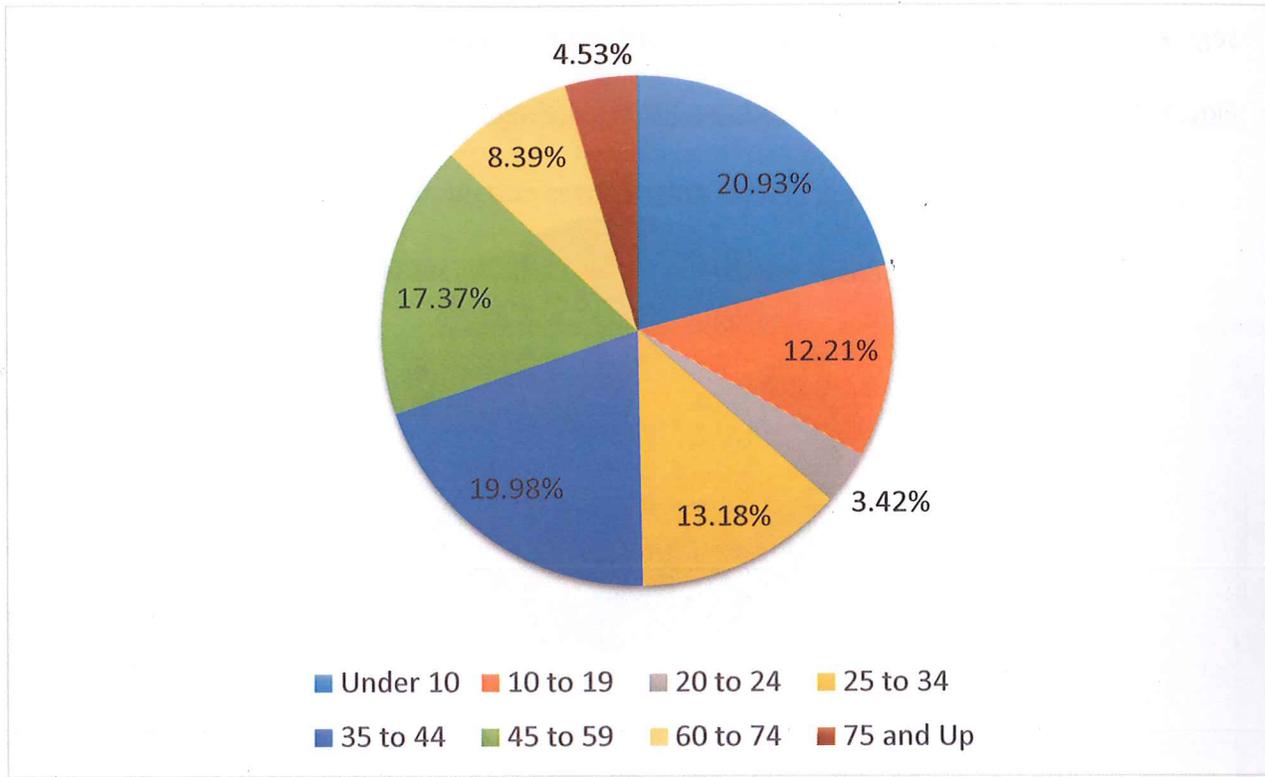


Figure 6 – New Richmond Age Range Percentage 2013

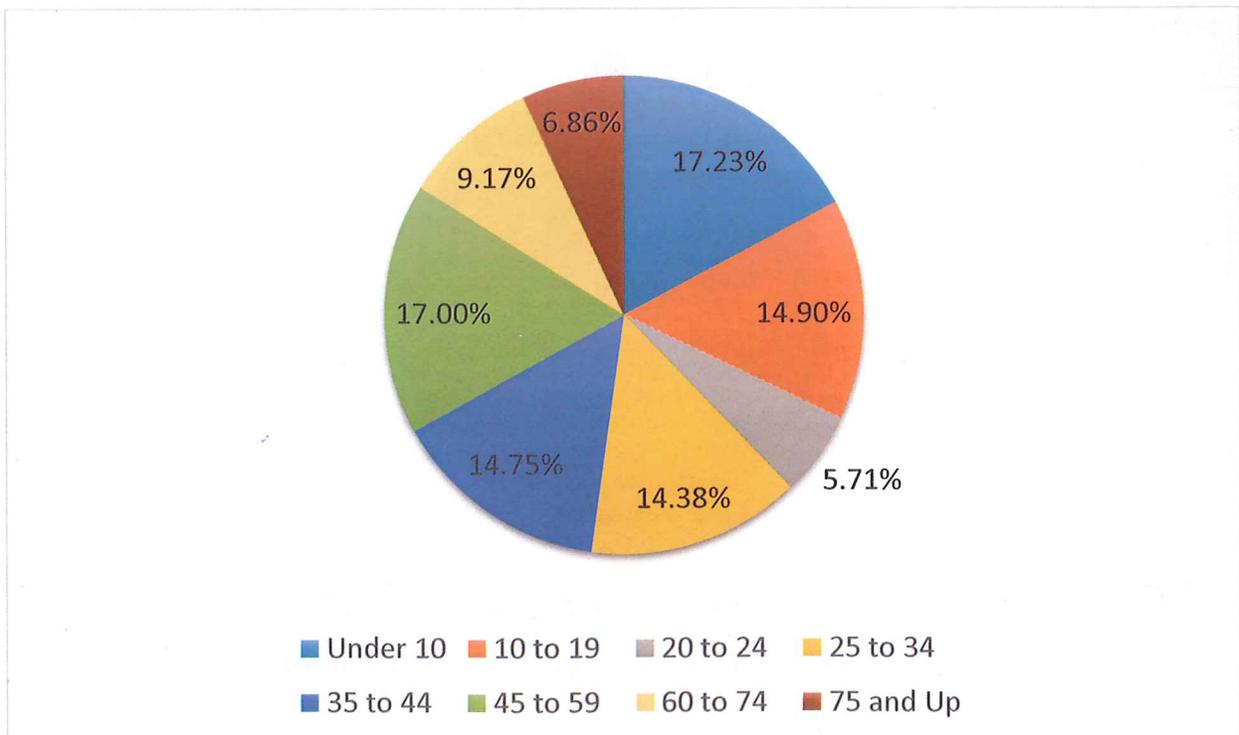
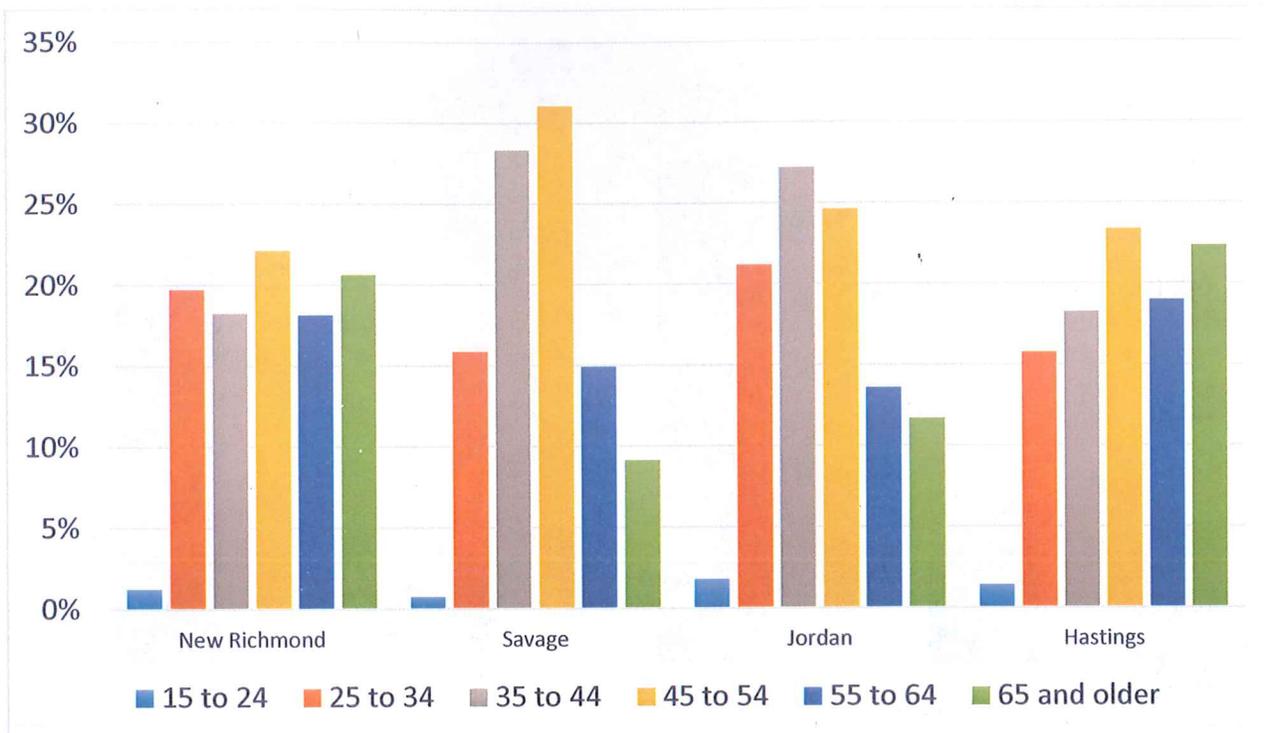
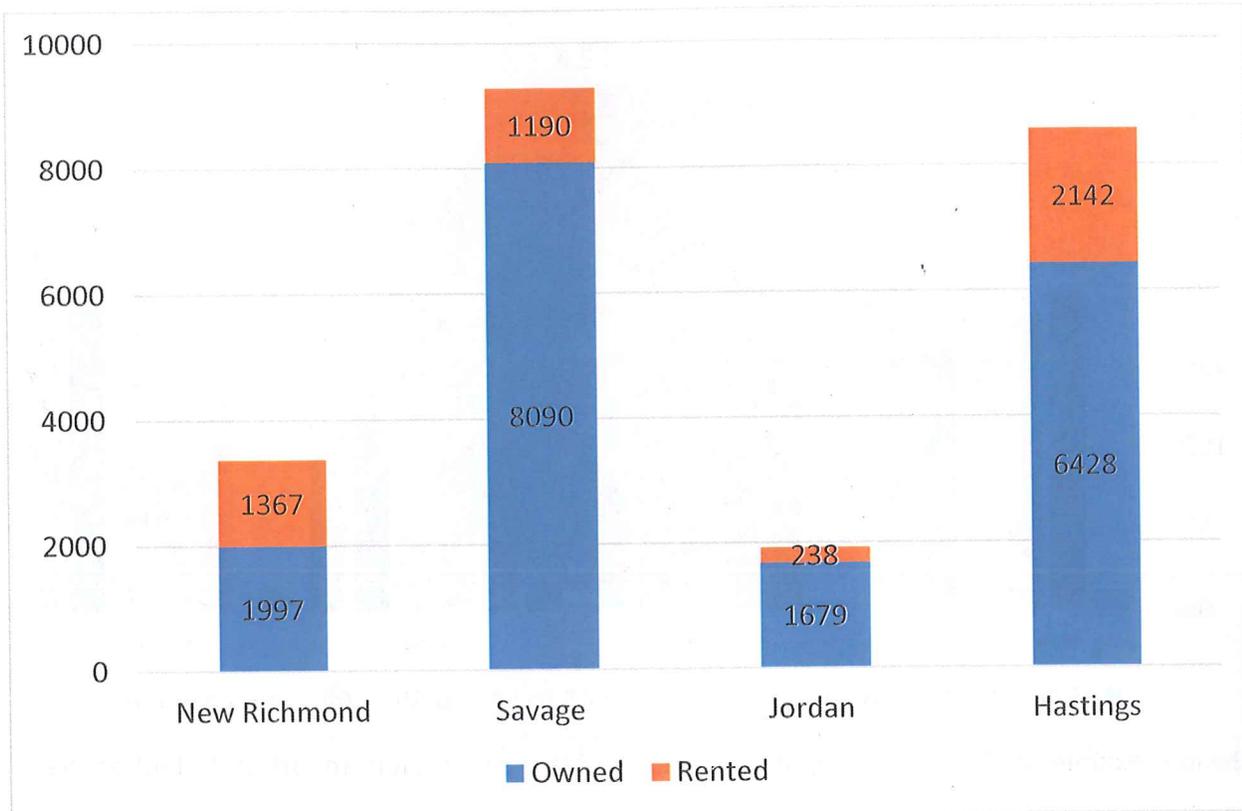


Figure 7 – Household Percentage by Age of Owners 2010



Besides examining the current population in each of these cities, it is important to look at the current housing situation in each of these cities. The 2010 census indicates that New Richmond had 3,421 houses, Savage had 9,116 houses, Jordan had 1,871 houses and Hastings had 8,735 houses. Figure 7 shows the age of the household owner by percentage of total households and Figure 8 on page 28 breaks the total housing down further into houses that are owned and those that were rented as of the 2013 American Community Survey estimate data from the census bureau. Notice here the large discrepancy between each of the cities where New Richmond's housing market at that time was 39% rented houses, compared to Savage which only had a rental rate of 13%. Jordan and Hastings fall between this range and sit at 11% and 23% respectively. This aspect of the housing market in New Richmond is clearly very different from the comparison cities. Further breaking down the housing numbers allows for analysis of

Figure 8 – Houses Owned vs. Houses Rented 2013



single family homes versus multi-family and mobile home structures in each of these cities based upon the 2013 ACS estimated housing data. Figures 9 through 12 on pages 29 and 30 shows the breakdown of this data based on a percentage of total homes for each city. The majority of homes are single family for every city in this study. New Richmond housing includes 32% multi-family homes and Hastings is the closest comparison city in this regard at 21.3% multi-family homes. Besides Jordan at 14.1% of total homes being mobile, this is a fairly insignificant number of houses for the rest of the cities.

Figure 9 – Savage Percentage of Home by Type 2013

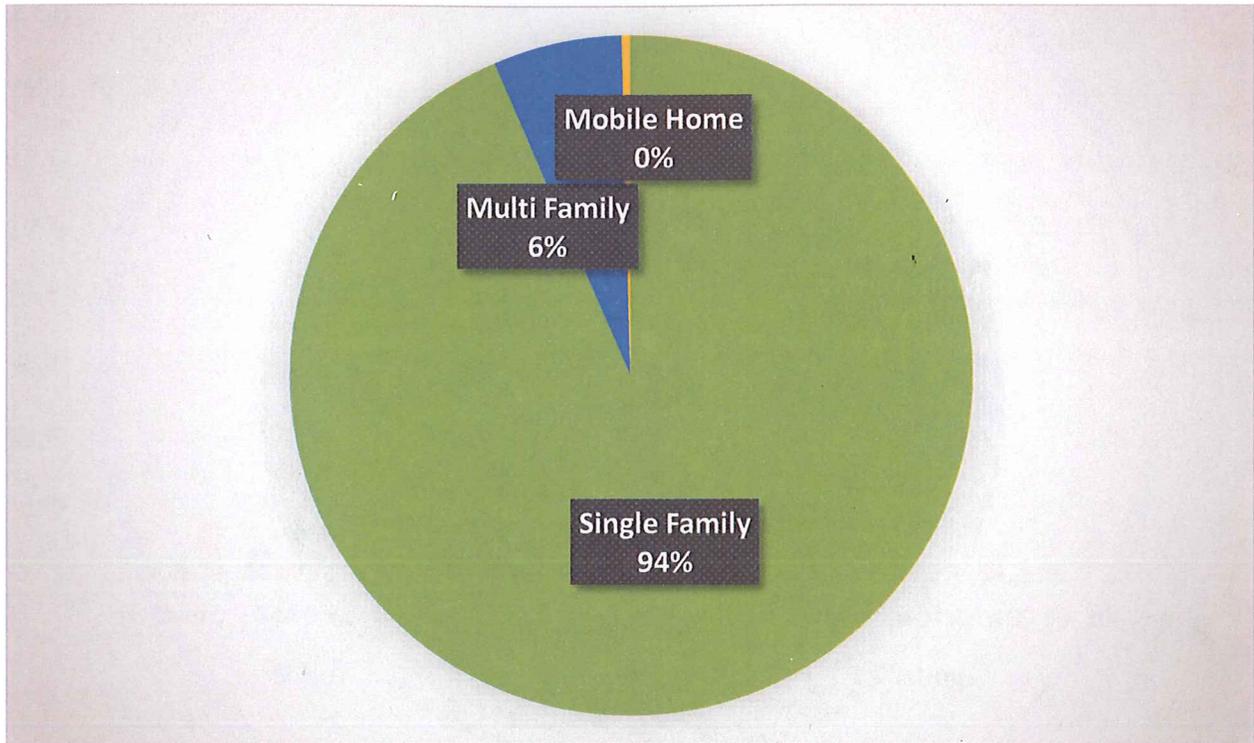


Figure 10 – Jordan Percentage of Home by Type 2013

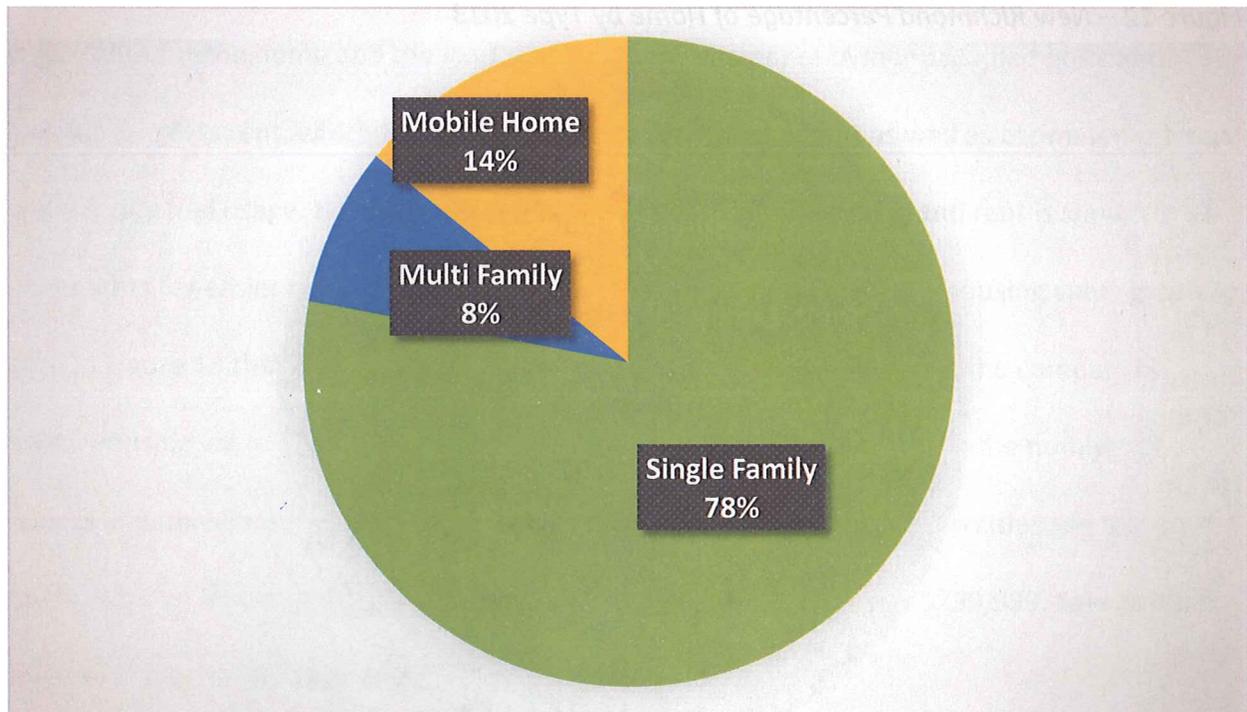


Figure 11 – Hastings Percentage of Home by Type 2013

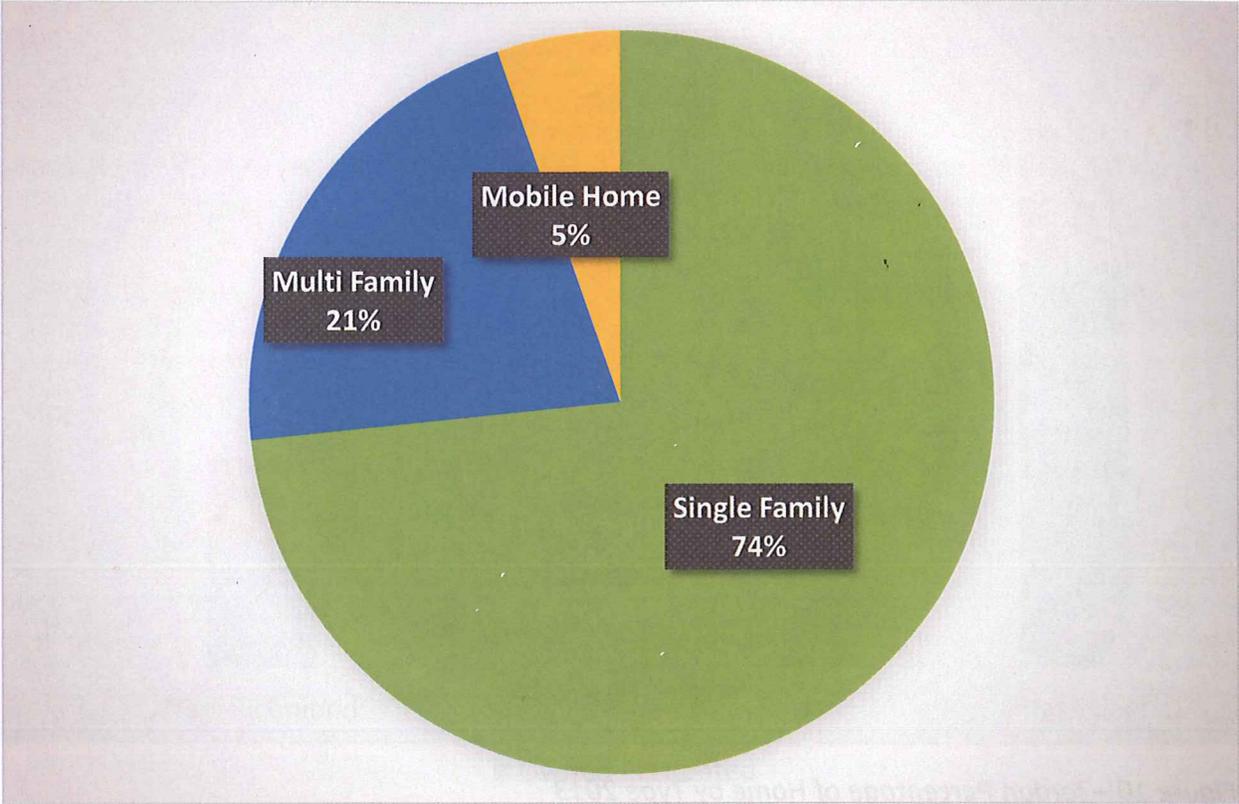


Figure 12 – New Richmond Percentage of Home by Type 2013

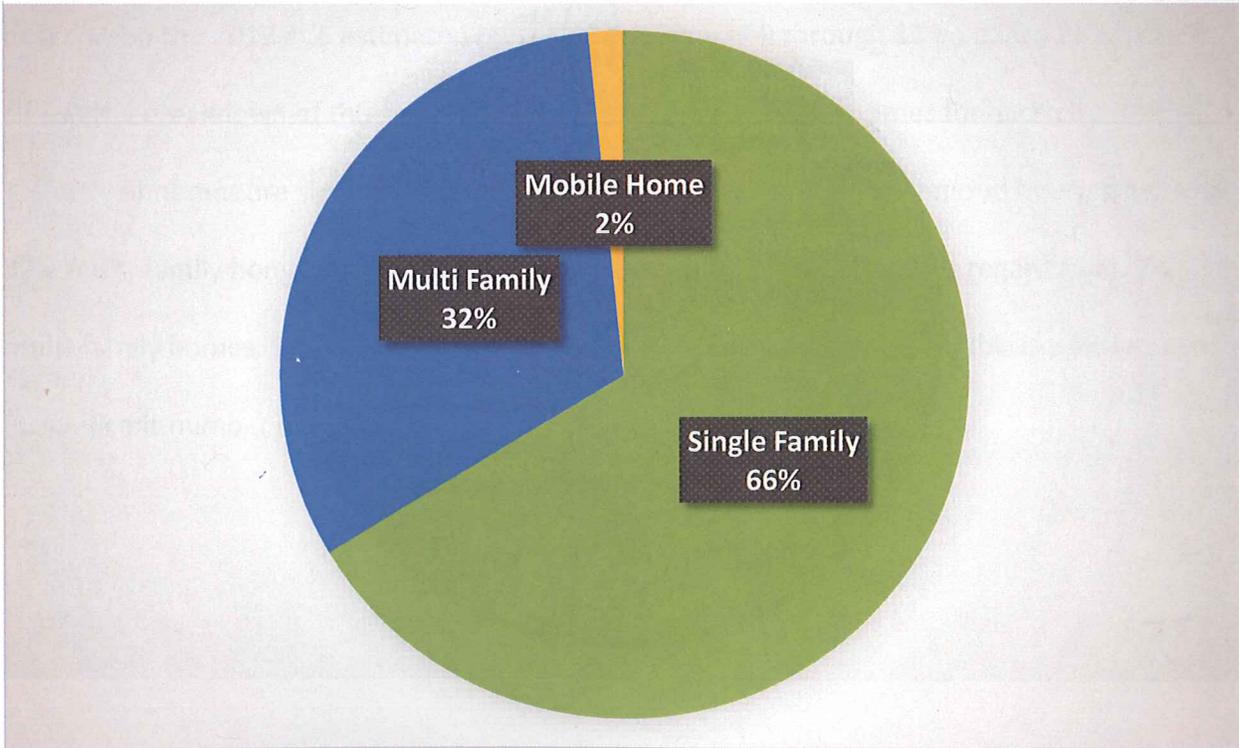
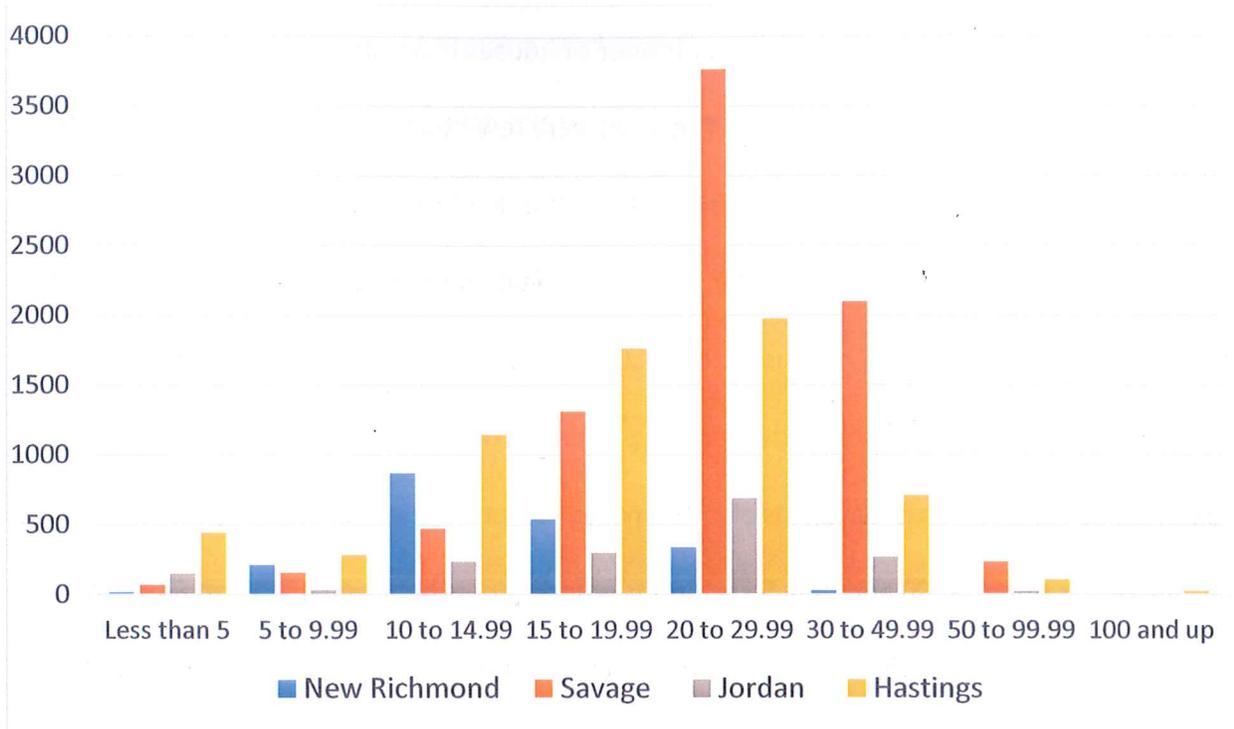


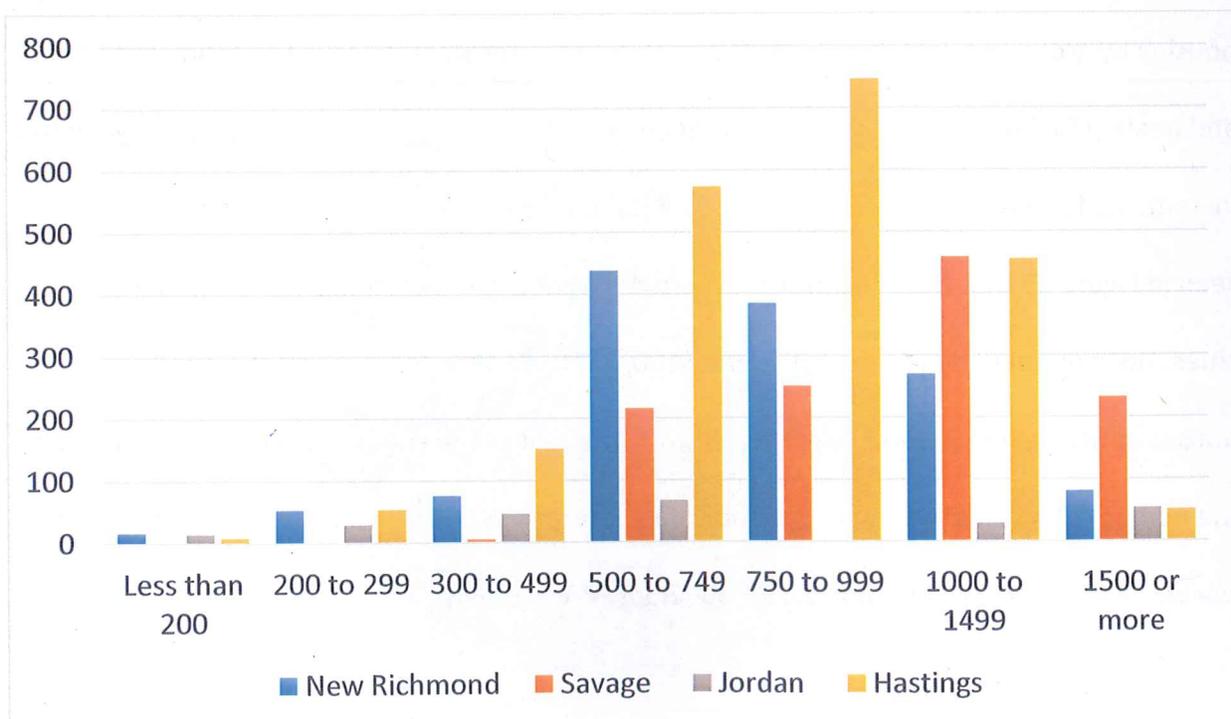
Figure 13 – Number of Houses based on Housing Value 2013 in \$10,000



Moving forward with the current housing analysis brings us to an examination of housing by value, both for the home and the land that the home sits on, of owner occupied units and housing by gross rent, which includes the contracted monthly rent as well as estimated utilities and heating fuel usage. Housing value is shown in \$10,000 increments and rent is shown in \$1 increments for easier representation of the data. It is apparent from the housing value graph seen in Figure 13 that New Richmond is quite different in this regard from the comparison cities. Housing value numbers peak in the \$100,000 to \$149,999 range and the number of houses in with values greater than this falls off. The rest of the comparison cities see a peak in the number of houses with an estimated value between \$200,000 and \$299,999. Savage leads the way in this value range with over 3,500 houses found here.

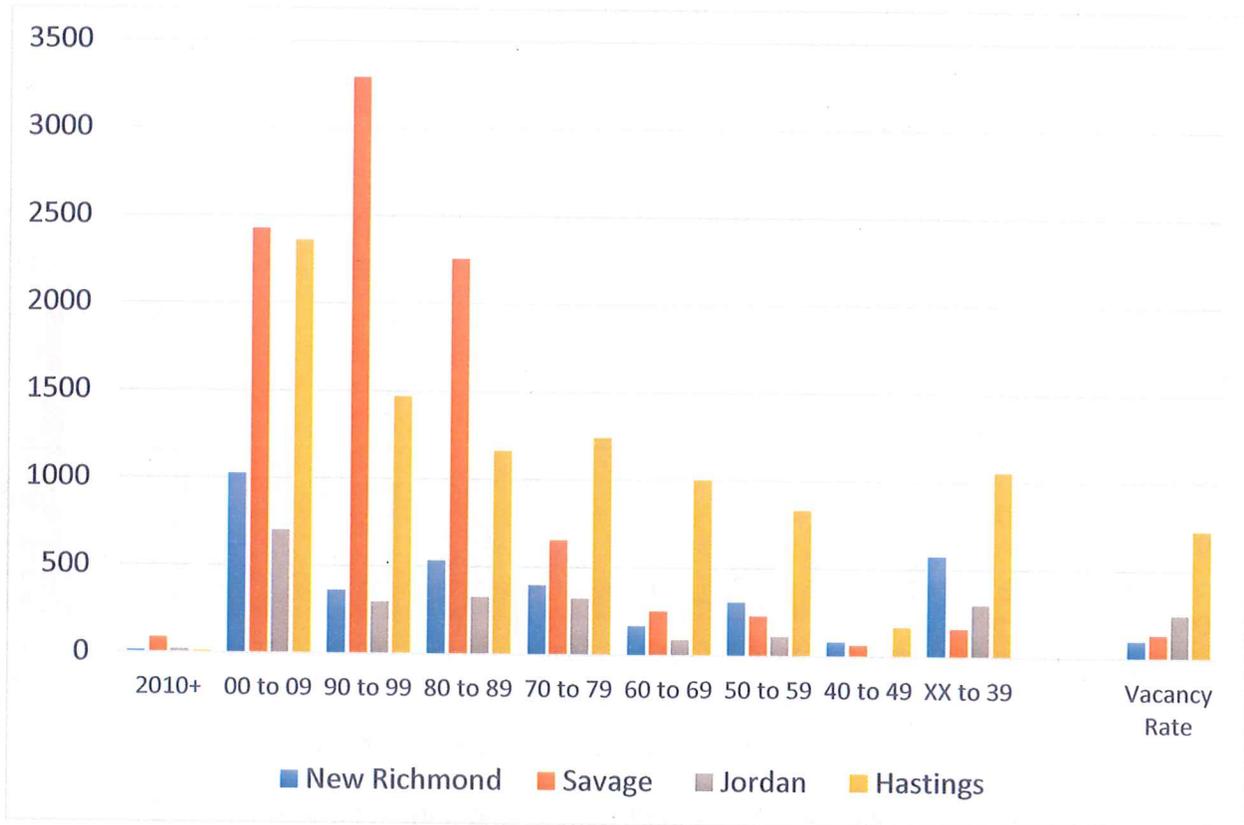
A similar level of discrepancy between New Richmond and the rest of the comparison cities can be seen in Figure 14. This graph shows the number of houses in a range of gross rent from less than \$200 a month to more than \$1,500. There are very few houses in each of these cities that are renting for less than \$500 a month. New Richmond peaks in the \$500 to \$749 range with 438 houses to rent in this category. Jordan also sees a peak in this same range with 67 houses. Savage increases in number of houses to the \$1,000 to \$1,499 range where a peak of 459 houses are estimated to rent for, with Hastings peaking in the category before this at \$750 to \$999 and 746 rental houses. Savage is also estimated to not have any rental properties where monthly rent is under \$300 and only 5 such units where rent is between \$300 and \$499. While there is not a consensus difference between New Richmond and the comparison cities in the current rental market, the city currently falls behind the others in terms of average monthly rental costs.

Figure 14 – Housing by Rent 2013 in \$1



The next analysis of the current housing market in New Richmond and the three comparison cities will focus on the years in which the current housing was constructed as well as housing income levels. As seen in Figure 15, New Richmond saw a significant increase in housing

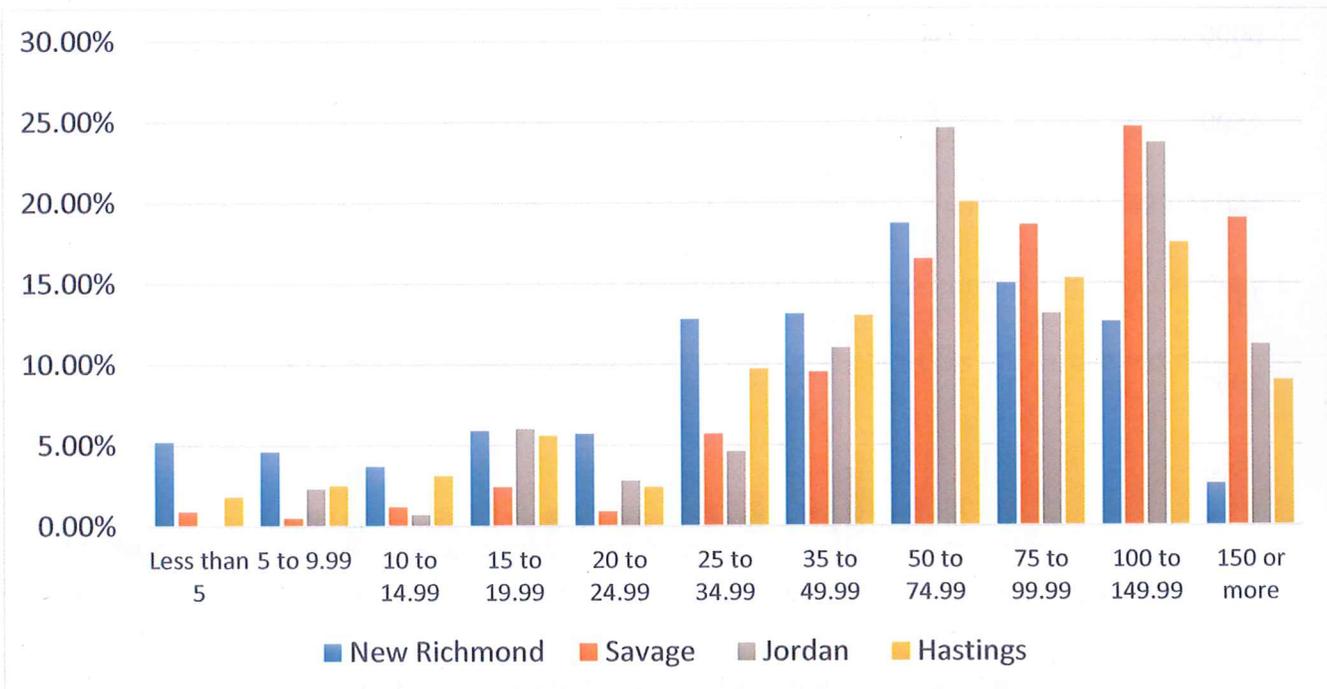
Figure 15 – Housing by Year Built and Vacancy Rate 2013



construction between 2000 and 2009 topping out at just over 1,000 new homes. The comparison cities also saw home construction sales peak within the previous two periods compared to all previous years as Hastings had 2,359 homes constructed and Jordan built 702 new homes in the 2000 to 2009 time frame. Savage peaked in the 1990 to 1999 timeframe with 3,290 houses, but has continued strong into the 2000 to 2009 period with 2,424 homes. Home construction numbers are down after 2010 as solid numbers have not been established yet for this current timeframe. New Richmond has the lowest current estimated number of

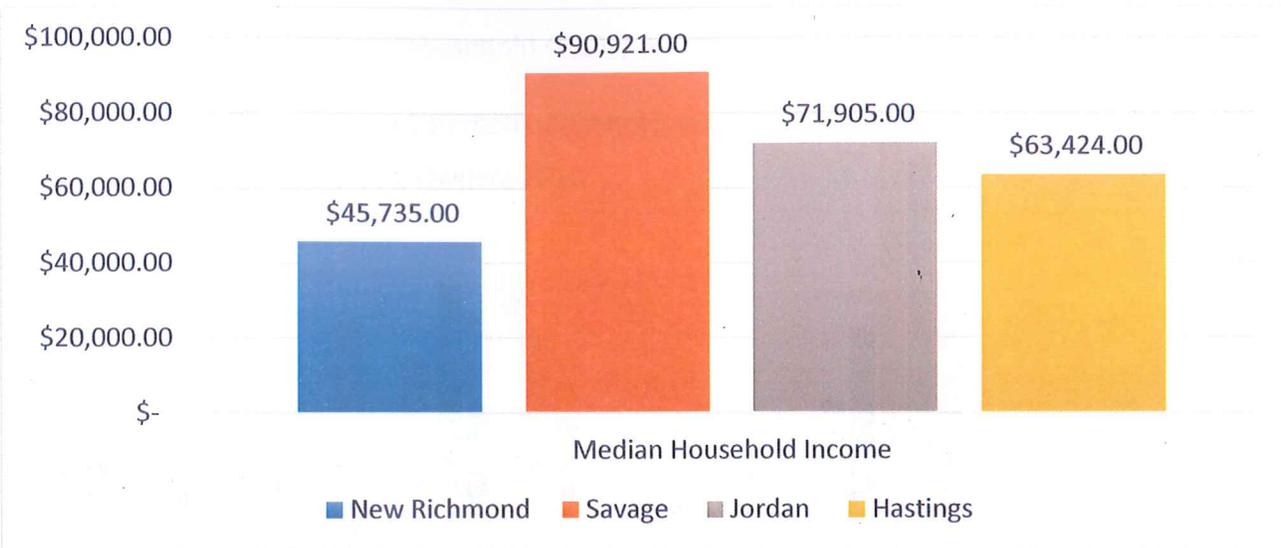
vacant homes at 98, and Hastings has the most vacant homes which is estimated to be around 726 based on ACS figures. Household by average income shows that on the whole, New Richmond is lower on average than the comparison cities as the city leads the way in percentage of households that make \$24,999 or less and peak at between \$50,000 and \$74,999 a year, as can be seen in Figure 16. Hastings also peaks in this category, but stays strong on

Figure 16 – Housing by Income 2013 in \$1,000



incomes above this level whereas New Richmond falls off and by the \$150,000 and greater range less than 5% of households in New Richmond reside in this category. Jordan has two peaks in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 and again at the \$100,000 to \$149,999 range where Savage peaks in estimated household income. Median household incomes can be seen in Figure 17 which confirms the analysis that New Richmond has the lowest median income of the four cities.

Figure 17 – Median Household Income 2013



The 2010 census offers an analysis of the age of householders both for owner and renters in each of the four cities. It should come as no surprise that the number of household owners in the 15 to 24 age range is very low for each city as seen in Figure 18 on page 34. For New Richmond, Jordan, and Hastings the age spread on household owners is pretty evenly distributed, but for Savage there is a large increase in the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 age groups. For those who are renting in each of these cities, Jordan has the least amount of renters, as seen in Figure 19 on page 34, which is not surprising considering it is the least populous city being studied. But overall New Richmond and Savage have about the same number of renters and the age spread is not that significant between the two cities. Hastings on the other hand has quite a few more renters, especially between the ages of 25 and 54, and again with those residents who are 65 and older. It is suspected that the need for retirement and assisted living to be much higher in Hastings than it is in the other cities.

Figure 18 – Household by Age of Owner 2010

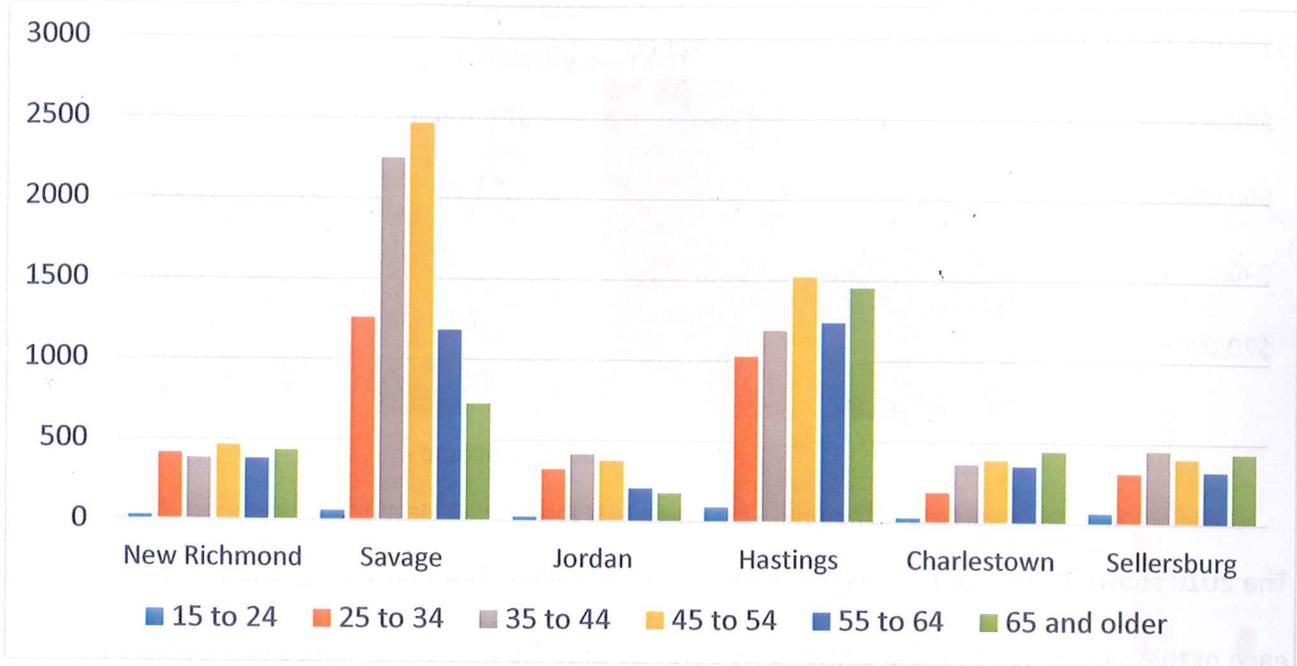
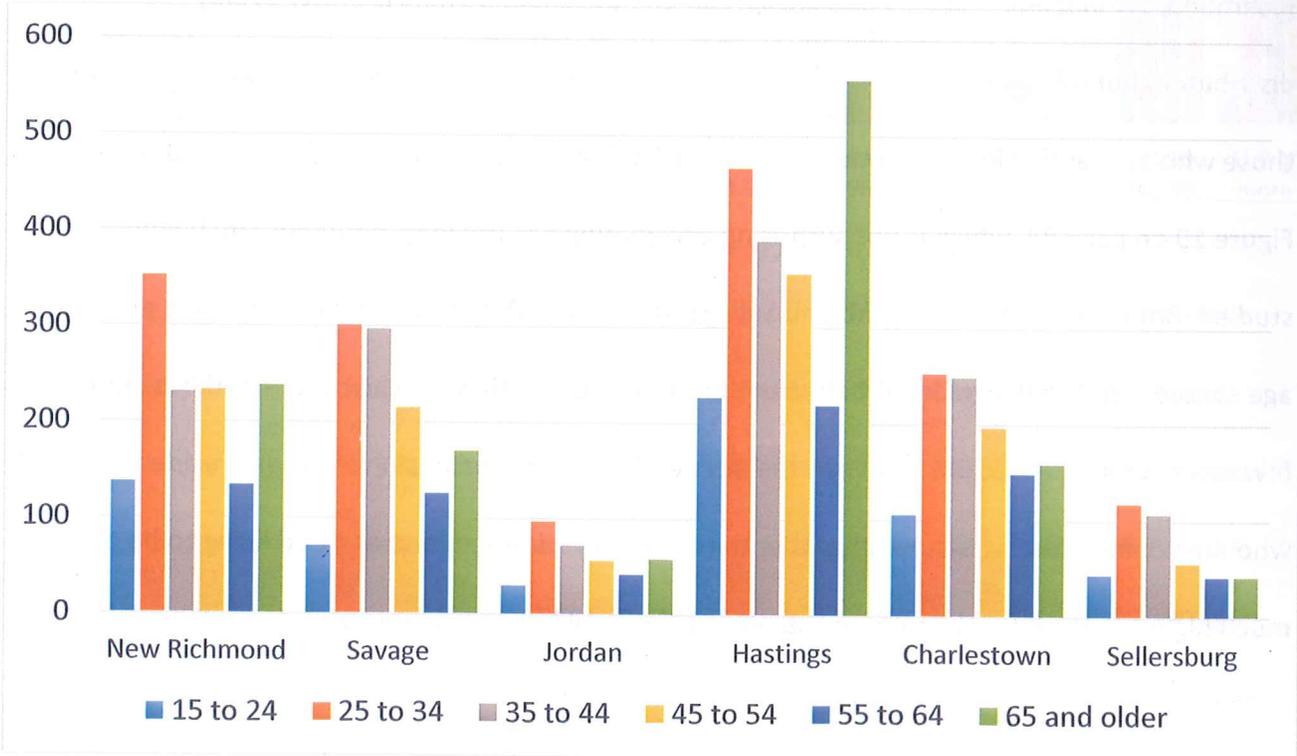


Figure 19 – Household by Age of Renter 2010



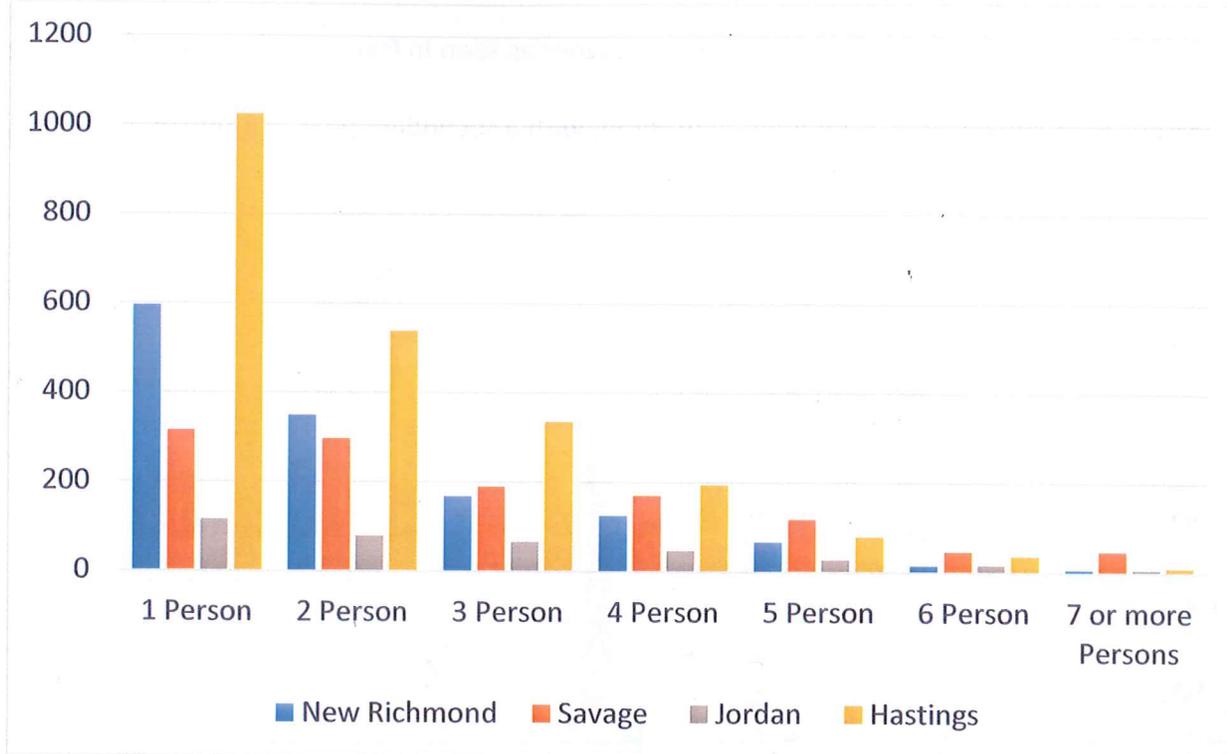
The 2010 Census also provides the necessary data to examine household size based on number of people living in the house. Household size by owner as seen in Figure 20 does not offer any surprises. Each city peaks at a 2 person household, with a secondary peak at 1 person for New

Figure 20 – Household by Size Owners 2010



Richmond and Hastings, and a 4 person peak for Savage and Jordan. After a 4 person household, the numbers for 5, 6, and 7 or more people in a house fall off rather quickly. The only real conclusion that can be drawn from household size by owner is that a 2 person house is the most common. For renters, as seen in Figure 21 on page 38, the most common number of people in a household is only 1 person, which would leave one to believe that there are a lot of single space apartments, especially in Hastings and New Richmond. Hastings leads the way in 2 person and 3 person rental households. Increasing the number of people in a rental household causes the numbers to fall off quickly again and at the 7 or more level, there are 10 or fewer such houses in Hastings, Jordan and New Richmond, while Savage has 47 such residences.

Figure 21 – Household by Size Renters 2010



The last area to touch on for New Richmond and the three comparable cities is the current state of affordable and assisted care housing. In Jordan there are two facilities that provide low income housing, the Britland and Schule House. Both facilities require that a family be making 50% or less of the Area Median Income, which for a family of four in Jordan is \$86,600 (affordablehousingonline.com). The City of Jordan also has an assisted living facility called Oak Terrace. The search for affordable housing in Savage did not yield much in the way of results as the closest listings were centered in Burnsville MN which is east of Savage (publichousing.com and lowincomehousing.us). The Village Commons housing complex in Savage has a limit on income based upon the number of occupants, as well as student status rates. The limit on a one person apartment is an income of \$34,620 or less, and for four people is \$49,380 (villagecommons-savage.com). Glendale Place and The Hamilton are two 55+ living facilities

that are also located in Savage, and there is an assisted living facility called Cherrywood Pointe. Hastings has two facilities for low income families, Guardian Angels Block Development and Hastings Marketplace Phase 1. It also has one facility for very low income families called Oak Ridge Manor. Similar to Savage, in order to qualify for rent assistance at Oak Ridge Manor, the family needs to be at or less than 50% of the Area Median Income which is also at \$86,600 for the City of Hastings. Hastings also offers assisted living care through Augusta Care Hastings Campus and Regina Senior Living.

Interview Results

Having completed an initial investigation of Jordan, Savage and Hastings MN as comparisons cities for New Richmond, interview questions were put together and sent to city employees at each of these cities. The list of questions as well as responses from each city can be seen in the Appendix. With the help of Danielle Campeau, contact was made with each of these cities. Contacts for these cities included Justin Fortney the city planner in Hastings, Laura Holey one of the city planners for Jordan, and Bryan Tucker the city planning manager for Savage. The information that was received from each city was varied, as Hastings does not believe that the bridge has had any impact on the housing market in the city and suggested that other locations might be better suited towards comparison (personal communication, October 21, 2015).

Ms. Holey in Jordan provided general answers to my questions and also provided information on new home construction by year starting in 1995. In 1995, 18 new homes were constructed in Jordan, increasing to 58 and 57 in 1997 and 1998 respectively. Between 2000 and 2005, 87, 87,

91, 78, 95 and 90 new homes were built in each consecutive year. Ms. Holey indicated that the strong growth in homes during the timeframe after completion of the bridge may have been “partially due to the bridge, but also due to the economy and growth in the region” (personal communication, October 21, 2015). Other than the increase in home permits and construction, nothing else was noted from Ms. Holey about how the city prepared for the project, as no specific studies were undertaken and no changes or improvements to city services were made as a direct result of the Bloomington Ferry Bridge project.

Mr. Tucker in Savage agreed to a phone interview with myself and Danielle, and the result of this interview was a wealth of information. No studies were conducted by the City of Savage on potential impacts of the Bloomington Ferry Bridge project, but the city did plan for growth starting 3 or 4 years before the project took place. The biggest improvement the city made was to ensure that there would be enough sanitary sewer capacity. Mr. Tucker indicated that Savage was experiencing slow to moderate population and home growth before the project, and the large growth that the city has experienced did not start until after the completion of the bridge and he believes that the bridge improvement is the main reason for the growth. At that time, Mr. Tucker said that many of the new residents were moving into town from north of the bridge, specifically the Bloomington and Richfield areas and they continued to work north of the bridge. He also indicated that early on after the completion of the bridge that mostly single family homes were being constructed, but that eventually it was a townhome/single family spilt on new construction. Savage had to revise their comprehensive plan in 2000, after the last updates were completed in 1990, mainly to make sure there would be adequate area

zoned for expected continued increase in housing. Mr. Tucker told us that in the early 1990s there was limited commercial zoning in Savage, but that this really expanded after the bridge, and that the city has a Target and Cub Foods as a direct result of the bridge. He also cautioned though that they over planned for commercial and industrial zoning and ultimately rezoned some of the land to residential. (personal communication, October 26, 2015).

The biggest challenge for the City of Savage, according to Mr. Tucker, was that the project debt from new roadways and services lingered for many years after the completion of the bridge. It was tough for the city budget, but was never a cause for concern for the city. A new initiative in the last five years is for the City of Savage to increase job availability south of the river to create local jobs and reduce commute times for their residents. The increase in population has already nullified the reduction in commute times that was seen from the bridge improvement, and currently sits at about 35 to 40 minutes for the average Savage commuter. Mr. Tucker estimated that this commute time is probably similar to what it was before the Bloomington Ferry Bridge was completed. Savage is also trying to increase local jobs as a part of Scott County's 2030 goal to have 50% of the county residents working inside the county. Mr. Tucker also provided some data on housing permits and population for the city, and these can be seen in Figures 22 and 23 on page 42. It is clear from the interview with Mr. Tucker at Savage that he and the city feels that the bridge project there had a strong impact on housing and city growth in the years following the completion of the bridge. The City of Jordan is on the fence as to whether or not the same Bloomington Ferry Bridge had a direct impact on the city. The number

Figure 22 – Residential Permits in Savage by Year. Courtesy of Bryan Tucker City of Savage

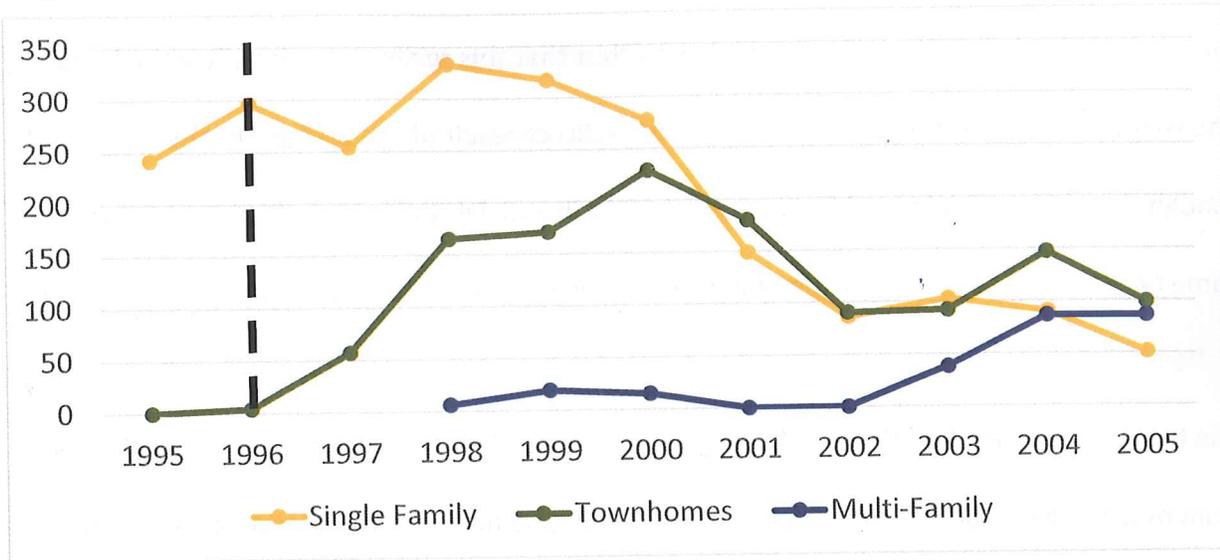
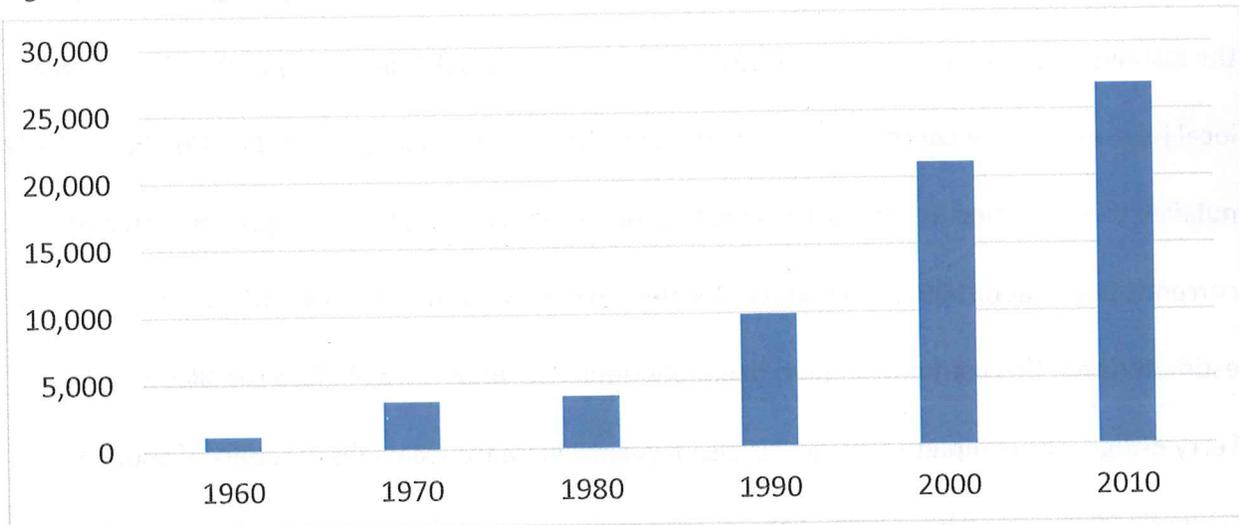


Figure 23 – Savage Population by Year. Courtesy of Bryan Tucker City of Savage



of houses that were constructed in Jordan definitely increased in the years following 1996, but as Ms. Holey said, they are unsure how much of that growth can be attributed to the bridge and how much is simply the result of a strong economy and growth in the region. Mr. Fortney and the City of Hastings believe that no direct impacts were seen because of the Highway 61 bridge project, and that very well could be the case. Perhaps though since the project finished in 2013, there has not been enough time to fully understand the impact of the bridge, and perhaps the city would feel differently if asked again in another couple of years.

Comparing Hastings and Savage to New Richmond

Attention now turns towards why the outcomes of Hastings' and Savage's respective bridge projects fall on opposite ends of the spectrum. Mr. Tucker in Savage is convinced that the project had a direct impact on housing and area development, while Mr. Fortney in Hastings believes that no impacts could be linked to the bridge. The City of Jordan fell in between these two extremes, but a lack of conclusive interview data limits the analysis that can be done to determine how much impact the bridge really had on development and from here on the focus will fall on Hastings and Savage. To understand why these two cities, Hastings and Savage, are so different from each other, a direct comparison will be completed. A comparison will also be made to New Richmond to determine if one of the cities would make a better comparison for future prediction. This comparison will include housing sales statistics from the website Redfin which is a real-estate company that tracks housing sales. Sales data on homes, condominiums, multifamily homes, and townhomes were pulled for each of these cities, with some sales data going back as far as 1992. Unless noted otherwise, all data presented here was obtained from Redfin's real-estate website.

The data found on Redfin's website was robust and included type of structure, address, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, listing price, selling price and square footage of the structure. The data was split into houses, condominiums, multifamily structures and townhomes. A good way to compare the varying structures across cities is by the price the structure sold for per square foot of building. In order to accomplish this, the selling prices of the homes had to be converted into current dollars as sales data went back to 1992. A yearly average housing price index for

the Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington MN-WI MSA for all housing transactions was utilized to adjust the selling price by the year that the property was sold to 2014 dollars. Figures 24 to 32 show total housing sales and price per sq. foot data for all housing based on timeframe sold.

Figure 24 – Single Family Housing Sales All Years (1992-2015)

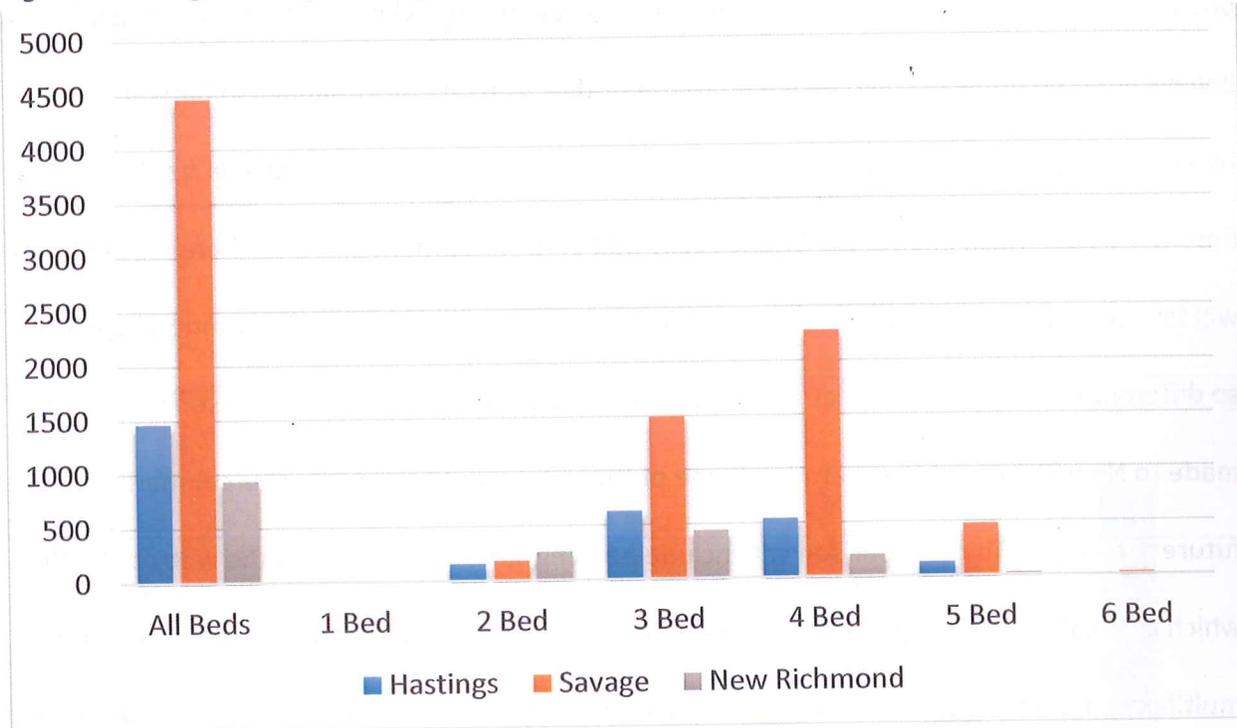
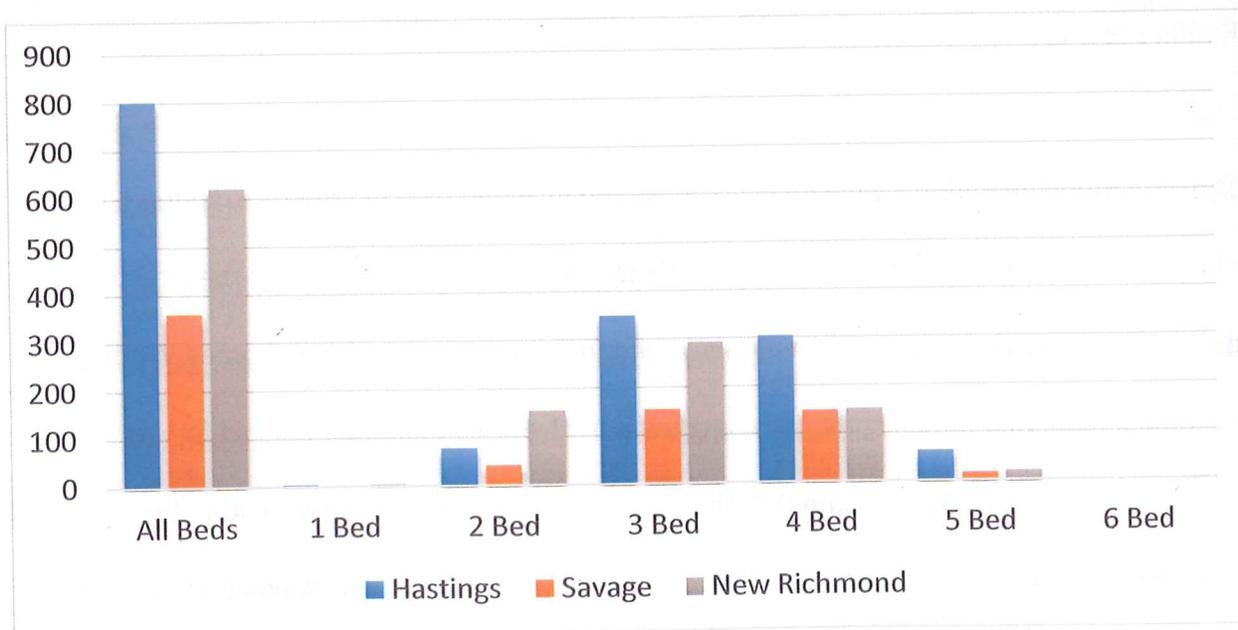


Figure 25 – Single Family Housing Sales Five Years Before Bridge Completion



For each type of residential structure, sales data was examined for all available years going back to 1992. A focused examination of housing sales for a five year period before each bridge was built was completed to provide a view of the housing market in each city leading up to the completion of the bridge. Single family housing analysis was completed up to 6 bedrooms, and only out to 4 bedrooms for condominiums and townhomes as data fell off quickly as bedrooms increased. For multifamily homes, data was limited so an analysis was performed only on all bedrooms and over the full range of years.

For single family homes, there is a large discrepancy between New Richmond and Hastings, and again from Hastings to Savage. There was about a \$20 per square foot difference between New Richmond and Hastings, and another \$20 per square foot increase between Hastings and Savage. For the five year period before the respective bridges were completed in each city, 1992 to 1996 for Savage, 2009 to 2013 for Hastings and 2011 to 2015 for New Richmond, the differences in price per square foot shows the same story. New Richmond is closer to Hastings

Figure 26 – Average Price per Sq. Ft Single Family Homes All Years (1992-2015)

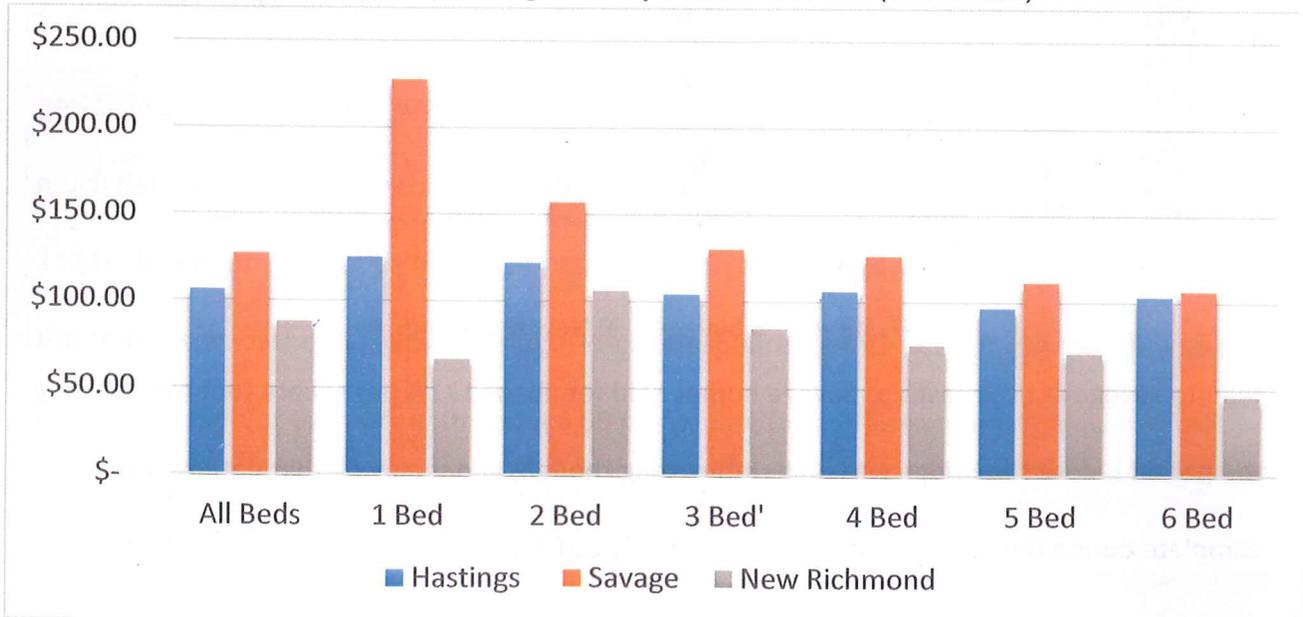


Figure 27 – Average Price per Sq. Ft Single Family Homes Five Years Before Bridge Completion

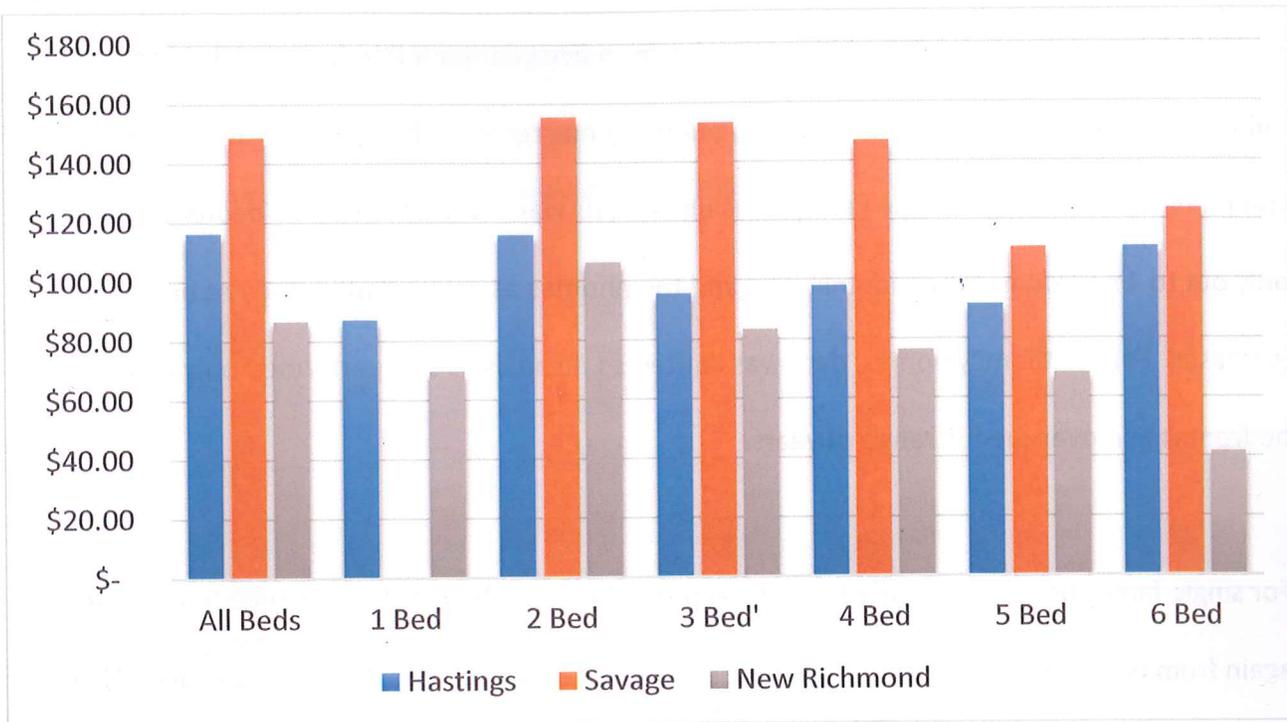
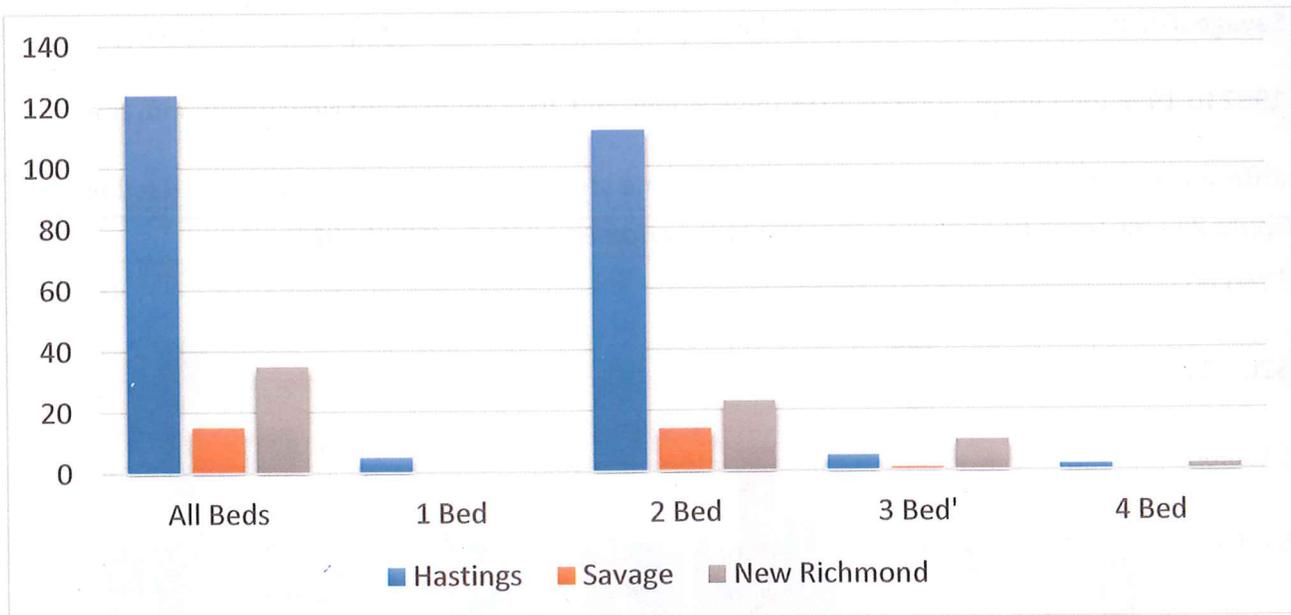


Figure 28 – Condominium Sales All Years (1992-2015)



than to Savage in both cases as Savage homes sold for about 171% per square foot more during the period before the bridge was built. Interesting though, and it may be that data was less complete during the early 90s, but there were only 361 housing sales during the pre-bridge

Figure 29 – Average Condominium Price per Sq. Ft All Years (1992-2015)

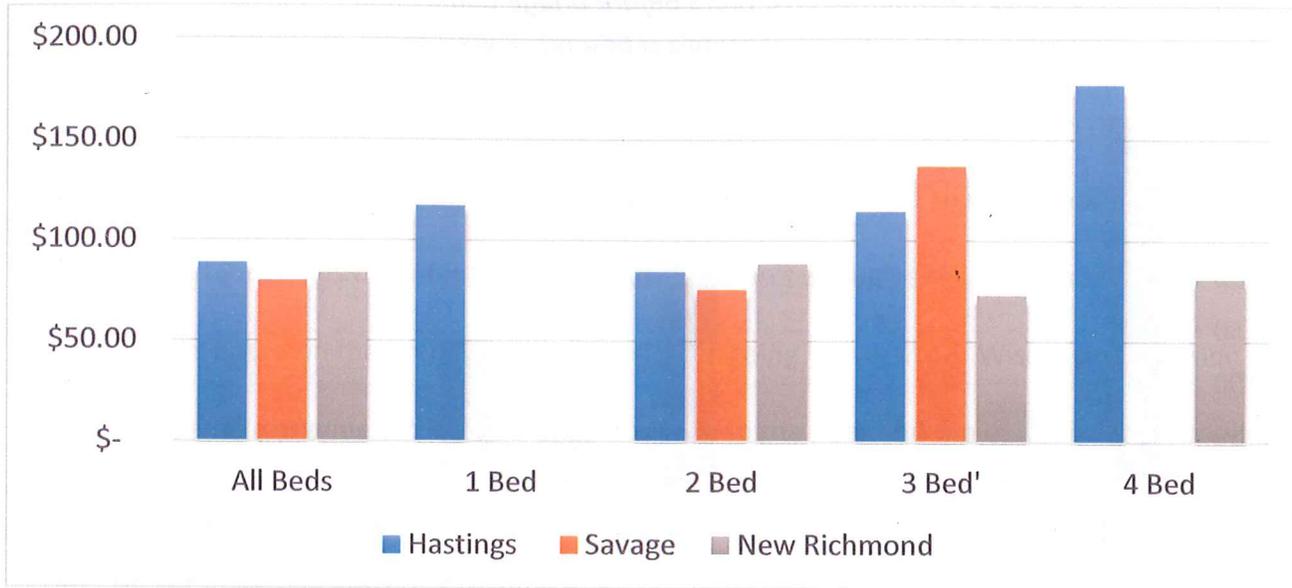
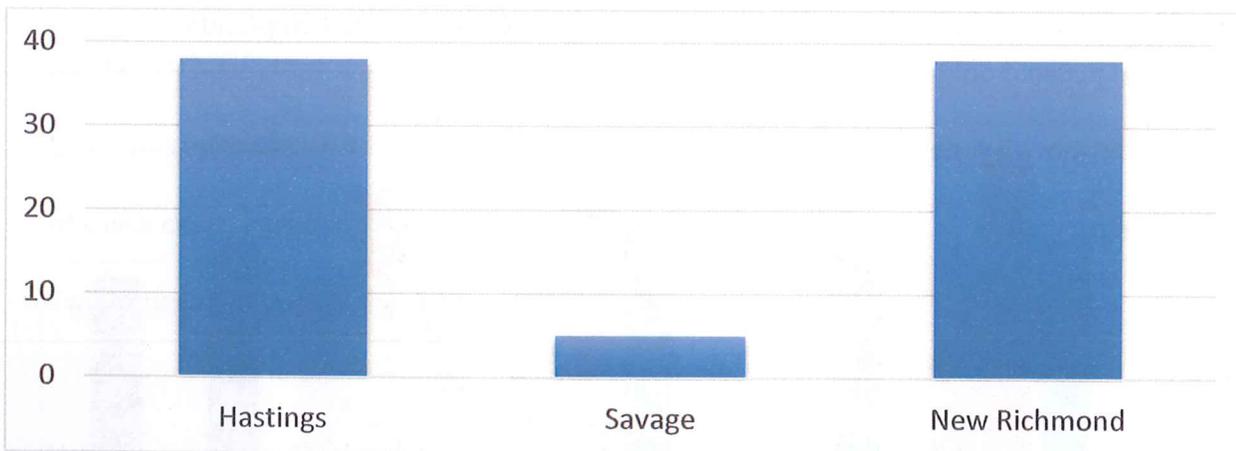


Figure 30 – Multi-Family Housing Sales All Years (1992-2015)



period in Savage compared with 802 in Hastings and 621 in New Richmond. There was not much data to work with for condominiums in these cities, but Hastings is an anomaly here with 112 two bedroom condos sold over all years, with 55 of those coming in the five years before the completion of the Highway 61 Bridge. Price per square foot for condos is pretty close over the full data set for each city with about a \$9 per square foot difference separating the cities. Multifamily homes yielded even less data than condominiums as only the full set of years for sales was examined, and even then only five were sold in Savage. Average price per square foot

Figure 31 – Total Sales Townhomes Five Years Before Bridge Completion

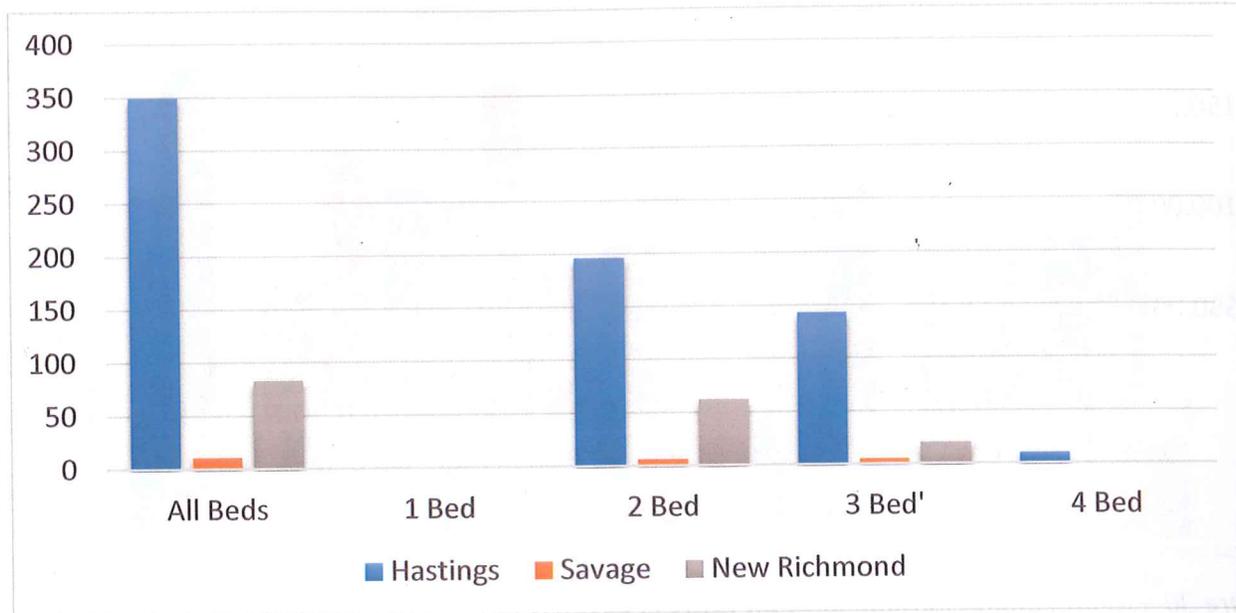
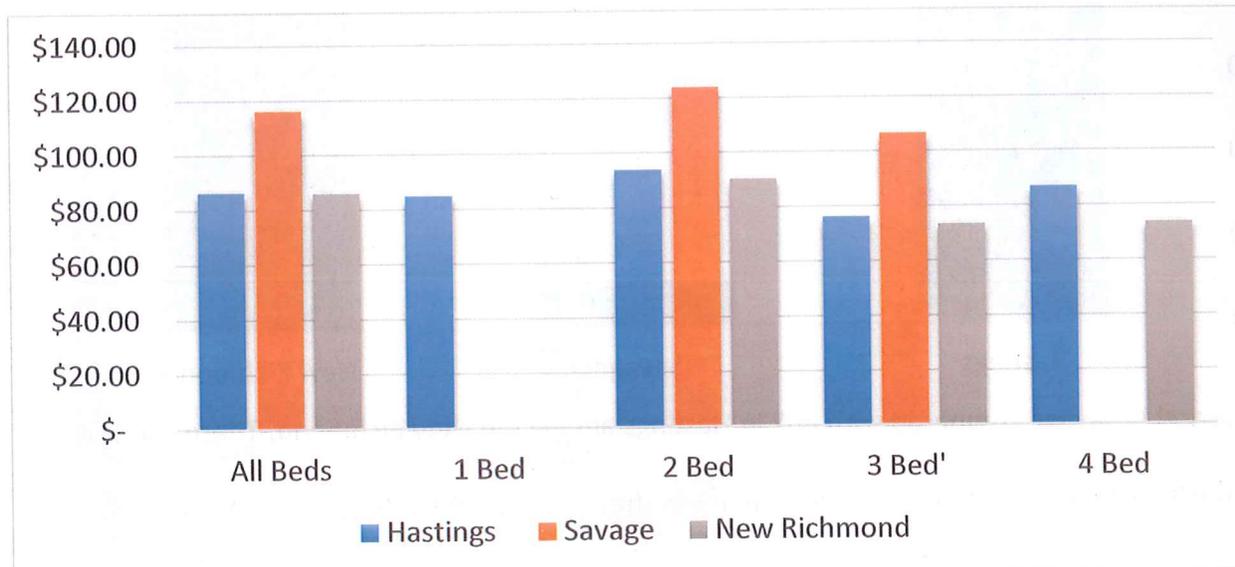


Figure 32 – Average Price per Sq. Ft Townhomes Five Years Before Bridge Completion



for multiple family structures ranged from \$59.05 for Hastings to \$70.16 for New Richmond and up to \$101.34 for Savage. Townhomes that have been sold have more complete data for the full set of years compared to the 5 years leading up to the respective bridge projects. There is enough data in the 5 year set though to notice that New Richmond is far closer to Hastings

compared to Savage, but there were only 11 total sales of townhomes for Savage. The price per square foot shows again that New Richmond is similar to Hastings in this category.

Based upon the analysis of housing sales data, it would appear that New Richmond is closer in this regard to Hastings than it is to Savage. But there isn't enough similarity to really draw any conclusions based on the housing sales data. The ongoing University of Wisconsin Extension study makes the argument that the closer a town is to the river and the St. Croix River Crossing Project, the more the impact of a new bridge will be felt. Additionally, during the interview with Mr. Tucker in Savage, he indicated that most of the increase in population and subsequent housing construction came from individuals who moved to the city from Bloomington and Richfield. These cities are located within 10 miles to the north of the Bloomington Ferry Bridge. Using this information it became clear that it would be informative to take a look at where each of these cities, including New Richmond, are located in relation to their bridge projects and the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Using the website Free Map Tools, a radius was drawn around each city to use as comparison. The 10 mile radius maps for Savage, Hastings and New Richmond can be seen in Figures 33, 34 and 35 on page 50. 10 Miles was chosen because that is the approximate distance from which many residents moved into Savage after the completion of the Bloomington Ferry Bridge. In these 10 mile radius images, it is clear that Savage does indeed reach into the southern portion of the Twin Cities metropolitan area inside the 694/494 loop. This supports the interview data that was obtained from Mr. Tucker in Savage. The same map for Hastings shows that a 10 mile

radius fails to stretch to the Twin Cities loop, reaching just into Cottage Grove on the Northwest side of the radius was obtained from Mr. Tucker in Savage... New Richmond is similar to Hastings as seen in Figure 35. A 10 mile radius around the city only stretches to the St. Croix River, and does not extend to the Stillwater Lift-Bridge, or the new St. Croix River Crossing Project. Extending the radius out to 25 miles yields additional information about where these

Figure 33 – 10 Mile Radius Savage

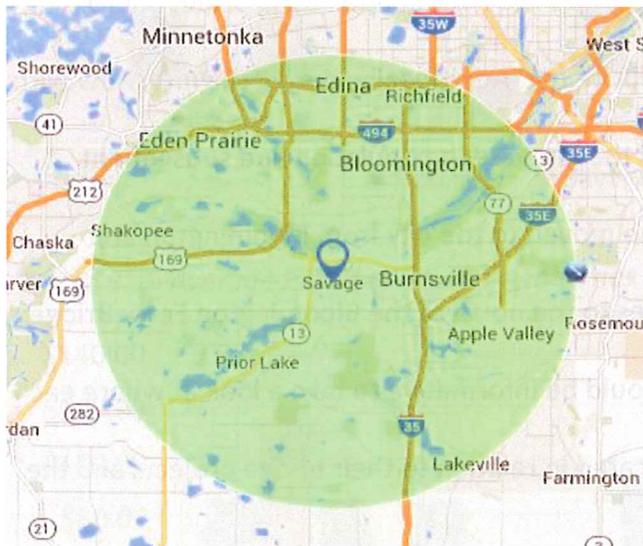


Figure 34 – 10 Miles Radius Hastings

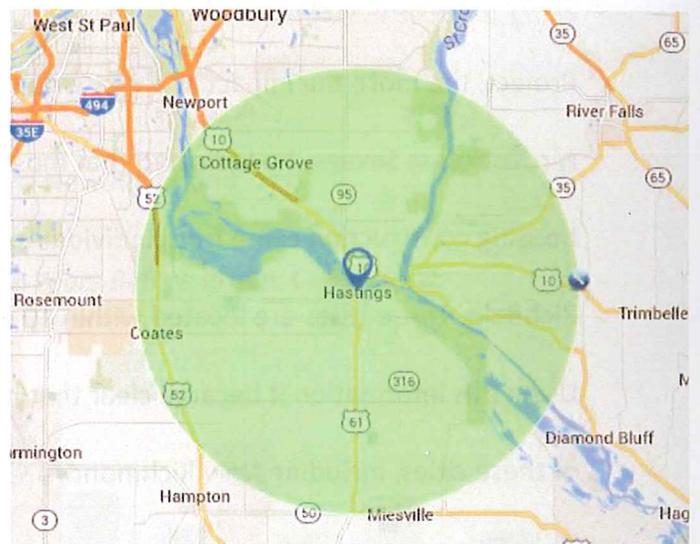
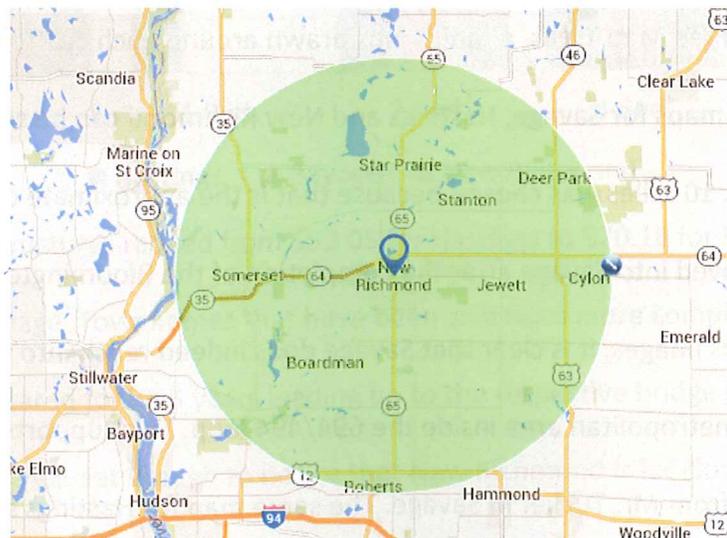


Figure 35 – 10 Mile Radius New Richmond



cities stand in comparison. These images can be seen in Figures 36 to 38. At a 25 mile radius, Savage covers the majority of the Twin Cities area, especially the Southwest side of the metro area. This means that most of the metro area can be accessed relatively easily from Savage. At 25 miles Hastings covers approximately the Southeastern half of the Twin Cities. At this distance is where New Richmond really shows that it is different than Savage, as it only reaches into the Northeastern edge of the 694 loop into White Bear Lake/North St. Paul.

Figure 36 – 25 Mile Radius Savage

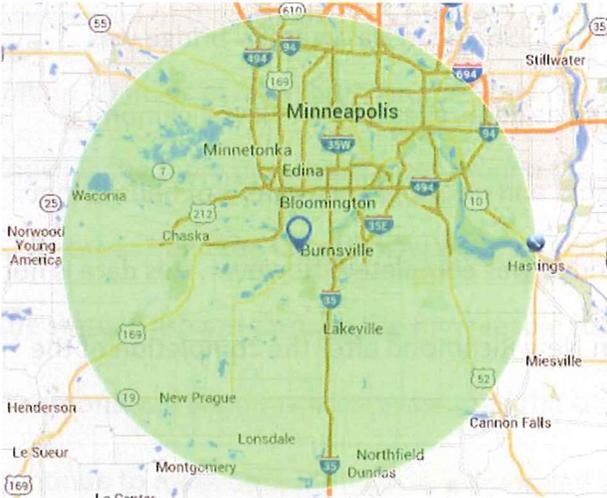


Figure 37 – 25 Mile Radius Hastings

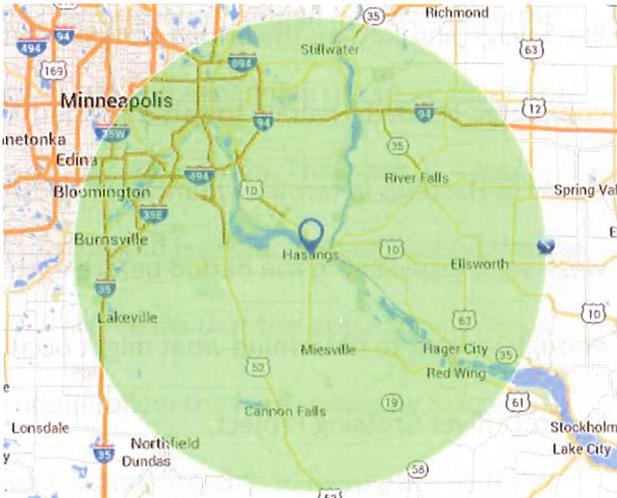
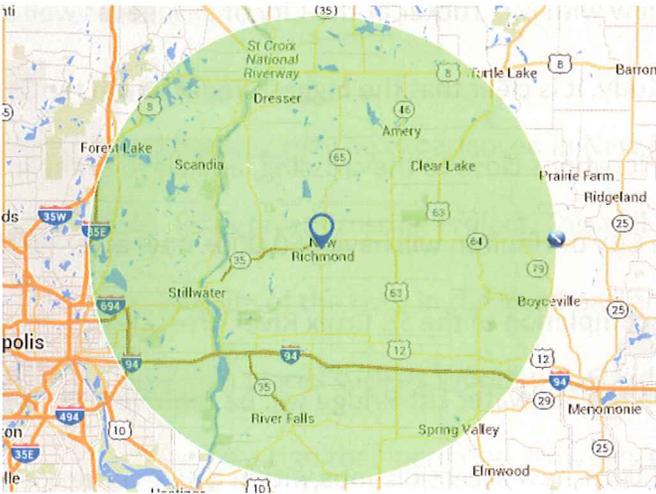


Figure 38 – 25 Mile Radius New Richmond



Recommendation for City of New Richmond

Drawing on the comparison cities that were examined in this study leads to interesting, and at times, surprising results for the City of New Richmond. In terms of population, New Richmond is closest to Savage before the completion of the Bloomington Ferry Bridge, and to Jordan after the completion of that bridge. Hastings is located on the Eastern side of the Twin Cities, and as such is a closer comparison strictly based on location relative to the metropolitan area. Housing sales in Savage, Jordan, Hastings as well as New Richmond were analyzed during all years since 1992, and during the five year period before the completion of each respective bridge project. For Savage and Jordan, the bridge was completed in 1996 and in Hastings the bridge was completed in 2013. Overall, the study of housing sales data revealed that New Richmond is closer to Hastings in terms of number of houses sold and price per square foot of houses that were sold, especially in the period before each bridge was completed. However, this data is not enough in itself to determine what might occur in New Richmond after the completion of the St. Croix River Crossing Project.

Based upon the interview with Mr. Tucker at the City of Savage, as well as the University of Wisconsin Extension study, it is clear that the biggest impact from the St. Croix River Crossing Project will likely be in locations close to the crossing, and close to the immediate Twin Cities area. For example, the City of Houlton will have 650,000+ new accessible jobs within a 45 minute drive after the completion of the St. Croix River Crossing Project, because the average 20 minute penalty from the Stillwater Lift-Bridge will be removed. In comparison, New Richmond will have 75,000+ new accessible jobs within a 45 minute commute. Distance from

the river definitely makes a difference. When reviewing the 10 mile and 25 mile radius maps around Savage, Hastings and New Richmond it is obvious that New Richmond is much further removed from the Twin Cities compared to the two cities on the extremes of impacts seen from their respective bridge projects. That said, New Richmond is again more similar to Hastings, and again, distance from the Twin Cities metropolitan area makes a difference.

Based upon the results of this study of comparison cities, New Richmond will continue to see a growing population and housing market, but not at the levels seen in Savage after the completion of the highway 169 bridge. There simply is not a large enough population center within 10 miles of New Richmond to draw residents from, and expanding out to 25 miles only touches the more populated areas around the Twin Cities metro area. That said, St. Croix County has been the fastest growing county in Wisconsin and is projected to continue leading the state in growth through the foreseeable future. This means that the population in New Richmond will continue to increase, and the city should follow the lead shown by Savage and continue to make sure that public utilities and infrastructure are able to keep pace with the increasing population.

A greater impact on population and housing may be experienced in New Richmond in the long term after the completion of the St. Croix River Crossing Project. This will be determined based upon what happens on the Minnesota side of the river in the Northeastern portion of the Twin Cities area. If continued growth is seen in places such as Woodbury, Oakdale, Lake Elmo, Oak Park Heights and Stillwater, that could be a sign that increased growth is getting ready to move

across to the Wisconsin side, similar to what happened in Savage with the expansion from Bloomington and Richfield. It will likely take a few years for this expansion, if it does indeed continue to expand, so the City of New Richmond is in the right timeframe to begin planning for such an expansion as Savage was when they started planning three years in advance.

New Richmond should also remain flexible in city policy and planning measures to ensure that enough land is designated for residential development, but also so that commercial development opportunities are not ignored. Single family homes, as well as rental properties, are likely to be the most popular housing structure at least in the short term. However, attention should be paid to the increase in townhomes that Savage experienced, as this could be a popular form of housing moving into the future. If the City of New Richmond wants to increase the rate at which the city is growing, a recommendation would be made to increase amenities and services to draw in more residents and offset the longer commute time compared to a city like Houlton which is closer to the St. Croix River Crossing Project.

Appendix A – Interview Answers from Justin Fortney in Hastings MN

Questions	Answers
<p>Were any impact studies or research conducted prior to project completion? Were these studies helpful?</p> <p>Follow up – Are these studies available?</p> <p>Do you know where I can get a copy?</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>What did the city do to prepare for the completion of the project?</p> <p>Follow ups – Did the city collaborate with neighboring communities on impact studies?</p> <p>On resource planning?</p> <p>On zoning?</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Did the population increase after completion of the project? If so, why do they believe that is? If not, why do they believe that is?</p>	<p>Has not been reported yet. Likely will be an increase not related to bridge replacement.</p>

<p>Were there any unforeseen problems as a result of the project?</p> <p>Follow up – So sewers and public works were able to keep up with increased demand?</p> <p>Did the schools had enough capacity?</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>What types of housing existed before the project?</p> <p>Follow Up – Was an inventory taken of housing before the project?</p>	<p>NA, no change</p>
<p>How did housing change after the project? (Workers, retirees, luxury homes, apartments etc.)</p> <p>Follow Up - Was a decrease seen in a segment of the market?</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>What changes to zoning were necessary to facilitate the shift in housing needs?</p> <p>Follow Up – Were any changes necessary for building codes?</p>	<p>NA</p>

<p>Were any other infrastructure improvement projects completed to coincide with the completion of the bridge project?</p> <p>What about amenities such as internet service?</p>	<p>None, other than minor changes to roads and parking associated with the bridge.</p>
<p>In regards to public services, how did the police department handle the completion of the project? Correctly staffed?</p> <p>How did the fire department handle the project?</p> <p>How did the schools handle the project?</p>	<p>na</p>
<p>How have the demographics of the city changed? Expected or unexpected?</p>	<p>None reported, but none likely</p>
<p>What were the biggest overall challenges of the project?</p>	

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The City of Hastings bridge project does not seem similar to the St. Croix River Bridge from Stillwater for a housing needs analysis perspective. While they are both impressive bridges, ours involved no changes to highway alignment and was not expected to increase daily trips much at all. I think you will have to look nationally for a project similar to yours, to see the impacts that you may experience there.

Appendix B – Interview Answers from Laura Holey in Jordan MN

Questions	Answers
<p>Were any impact studies or research conducted prior to project completion? Were these studies helpful?</p> <p>Follow up – Are these studies available?</p> <p>Do you know where I can get a copy?</p>	<p>No studies were done to my knowledge</p>
<p>What did the city do to prepare for the completion of the project?</p> <p>Follow ups – Did the city collaborate with neighboring communities on impact studies?</p> <p>On resource planning?</p> <p>On zoning?</p>	<p>Plan for potential growth through our comprehensive planning.</p>
<p>Did the population increase after completion of the project? If so, why do they believe that is? If not, why do they believe that is?</p>	<p>Yes our population grew and building permits increase and this may have been partially due to the bridge but also due to the strong economy and growth in region</p>

<p>Were there any unforeseen problems as a result of the project?</p> <p>Follow up – So sewers and public works were able to keep up with increased demand?</p> <p>Did the schools had enough capacity?</p>	<p>No unforeseen problems.</p>
<p>What types of housing existed before the project?</p> <p>Follow Up – Was an inventory taken of housing before the project?</p>	<p>In 95 and 96 we had 18 and 31 new homes permits respectively.</p>
<p>How did housing change after the project? (Workers, retirees, luxury homes, apartments etc.)</p> <p>Follow Up - Was a decrease seen in a segment of the market?</p>	<p>The number of permits increased after the project completed. In 2002 permits increased to 91 new homes. Please see table attached.</p>
<p>What changes to zoning were necessary to facilitate the shift in housing needs?</p> <p>Follow Up – Were any changes necessary for building codes?</p>	<p>None to my knowledge</p>

<p>Were any other infrastructure improvement projects completed to coincide with the completion of the bridge project?</p> <p>What about amenities such as internet service?</p>	<p>None to my knowledge</p>
<p>In regards to public services, how did the police department handle the completion of the project? Correctly staffed?</p> <p>How did the fire department handle the project?</p> <p>How did the schools handle the project?</p>	<p>No changes directly connected with this bridge project.</p>
<p>How have the demographics of the city changed? Expected or unexpected?</p>	<p>Population grew at an increased rate relative to the economy.</p>
<p>What were the biggest overall challenges of the project?</p>	<p>Overall growth management.</p>

Appendix C – Interview Answers from Bryan Tucker in Savage MN

Questions	Answers
<p>Were any impact studies or research conducted prior to project completion? Were these studies helpful?</p> <p>Follow up – Are these studies available?</p> <p>Do you know where I can get a copy?</p>	<p>Nothing done by Savage</p> <p>Check with state</p>
<p>What did the city do to prepare for the completion of the project?</p> <p>Follow ups – Did the city collaborate with neighboring communities on impact studies?</p> <p>On resource planning?</p> <p>On zoning?</p>	<p>Plenty of sanitary sewer capacity – The city planned for growth 3 or 4 years in advance.</p> <p>No other projects or planning took place</p>
<p>Did the population increase after completion of the project? If so, why do they believe that is? If not, why do they believe that is?</p>	<p>Yes, significant growth. Pretty sure the growth was due to the bridge. Growth before the bridge was completed was slow to moderate, didn't take off until after the bridge was completed.</p> <p>Many people moved from Bloomington and Richfield(north of the bridge) and work north of the bridge</p> <p>Lots of residential platting during this time</p>

<p>Were there any unforeseen problems as a result of the project?</p> <p>Follow up – So sewers and public works were able to keep up with increased demand?</p> <p>Did the schools had enough capacity?</p>	<p>No – infrastructure was in place. Saw 500 building permits a year – stretches city staff thin</p> <p>Savage schools were good, Burnsville and and Prior Lake had to build new schools</p>
<p>What types of housing existed before the project?</p> <p>Follow Up – Was an inventory taken of housing before the project?</p>	<p>Young families before the bridge Mostly single families</p> <p>No inventory was taken of housing until 2000, # of permits issued is a good indicator of type and number of housing</p>
<p>How did housing change after the project? (Workers, retirees, luxury homes, apartments etc.)</p> <p>Follow Up - Was a decrease seen in a segment of the market?</p>	<p>Early on after bridge mostly increase in single families, shortly after it was a townhome/single family 50/50 split</p> <p>Bedroom Community</p>
<p>What changes to zoning were necessary to facilitate the shift in housing needs?</p> <p>Follow Up – Were any changes necessary for building codes?</p>	<p>Had to redo comprehensive plan in 2000 (last time this was done was 1990) Designated more areas for residential growth Needed to make sure there would be adequate area</p> <p>Early 90s not much commercial zoning, exploded after the bridge but they overplanned for commercial and industry. Ended up rezoning for housing Target/Cub Foods because of bridge</p>

<p>Were any other infrastructure improvement projects completed to coincide with the completion of the bridge project?</p> <p>What about amenities such as internet service?</p>	
<p>In regards to public services, how did the police department handle the completion of the project? Correctly staffed?</p> <p>How did the fire department handle the project?</p> <p>How did the schools handle the project?</p>	<p>Continued adding staff Police and Fire employees determined by set # per capita – Additional taxable population made the expansion of workers possible</p>
<p>How have the demographics of the city changed? Expected or unexpected?</p>	
<p>What is the cities overall experience with building permits? Are there strict guidelines the city uses when issuing permits?</p> <p>Has there been any input from the public on new construction?</p>	

What were the biggest overall challenges of the project?

Project debt for roadways/services lingered for many years after completion of bridge
Tough for the city budget, but was never a cause for concern for the city

New initiative in the last 5 years to increase job availability south of the river to reduce traffic commutes – Want to create local jobs as the increase in population has only caused an increase in commuters across the bridge and the current avg. commute time is 35-40 minutes. Thinks the commute time was the same as before the bridge
2030 goal for 50% of Scott County Residents to work in the county

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