

INTRODUCTION

Ross Township is a General Law Township with a Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and four Trustees. The Township Hall is located on M-89 near the southeastern corner of Gull Lake. As a General Law Township, Ross Township has only those powers granted to them by state statute. Those include the ability to hire a manager, assessor, police or fire chief, superintendent and other necessary personnel. Townships are mandated to administer assessments, hold elections, and collect taxes. They are also required to be responsible for financial administration, including budgets, accounting, investments and deposits. In addition, townships may enact and enforce ordinances, including zoning. The Township manages the use of land under the Ross Township Zoning Ordinance, which is administered by the Township's Supervisor. Therefore, the Township has the sole responsibility for the development of its zoning ordinance and map.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES**Police and Fire Protection**

The Ross Township Police Department, the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police provide police protection of the Township. The Township currently has one full-time and two-part time police officers. The Police Department is located in the south end of the Township Hall/Fire Department and has two patrol vehicles. The number of annual calls fluctuates, increasing in some years and decreasing in others. In 2000, there were 549 complaints, of which 142 were criminal, 70 were vehicle crashes and 337 were for miscellaneous services. In 2001 the number of complaints decreased to 469, including 198 criminal, 67 vehicle crashes and 294 miscellaneous services. The Township Police Department works closely with the Sheriff's Department and also coordinates with the Michigan State Police. In 1999, the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department responded to 372 calls in Ross Township. In the year 2000 the Sheriff's Department responded to 366 service calls plus 129 traffic accidents. Car/deer and property damage accidents, for a total of 495 calls, were the most frequent vehicle accidents. False alarms comprised almost a quarter of the service calls in 2000 for Sheriff's Department. Other predominant reasons include malicious destruction of property, general non-criminal activity and suspicious occurrences.

Ross Township maintains a 26 member paid volunteer Fire Department. The Fire Department was combined with the Village of Augusta's Fire Department in 1982.



There are two fire stations serviced by the Fire Department: Ross Township Hall is the location of the northern station and Augusta Village Hall is the location of the southern station. The Department has eight primary fire vehicles. At the Ross Township station there is one tanker, one pumper, one brush truck and one rescue vehicle. The Village of Augusta station has two pumpers, one brush truck and one rescue vehicle.

Schools

Ross Township is served by two school districts: Gull Lake and Galesburg/Augusta. Three buildings of the Gull Lake Community Schools are located in Ross Township: Kellogg Elementary (318 student enrollment in February, 2001) and the Gull Lake Middle School (522 student enrollment in February, 2001), both on 40th Street and the Hazel Wildermuth Building (13 alternative education student enrollment) on East D Avenue. The Hazel Wildermuth Building also houses the school district's administrative offices. The Galesburg/Augusta School District maintains two school buildings in the Village of Augusta: Augusta Intermediate (193 student enrollment) and Augusta Middle School (304 student enrollment).



Parks and Recreation/Natural Areas

Parks and Recreation facilities and programs within Ross Township are administered through various jurisdictions. A portion of the Fort Custer Recreation Area is located within Ross Township, along the southern side of the Kalamazoo River (see Map IV-1). This facility, which is under the jurisdiction of the Michigan DNR, is primarily located in Charleston Township and contains 22 miles of hiking trails, 20 miles of mountain bike trails and 16 miles of bridle trails. These trails are also available for cross-country skiing. There are also five cabins that are available. The Kellogg Biological Station, under the jurisdiction of Michigan State

University, encompasses 4,065 acres and includes the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, Kellogg Farm, Kellogg Biological Laboratories, and the KBS Conference Center. Over 1,400 acres of the Biological Station are located in Ross Township in sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The Kellogg Experimental Forest, which encompasses 716 acres in the southcentral portion of the Township in sections 21, 23, 27, and 28, is also associated with the Biological Station. The Bird Sanctuary is located east of Gull Lake, providing an open space environment for nature lovers.

These holdings provide multiple use recreation functions as well as ecological and environmental research functions. The Kellogg Forest is open to the public and



provides for such activities as bow hunting, fishing, biking, hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and interpretive trails. The Bird Sanctuary provides guided tours and non-formal workshops for school groups and the public. Brook Lodge, which is also owned and operated by Michigan State University, encompasses a substantial amount of natural forest area (565 acres in sections 28 and 29).

A portion of the North Country National Scenic Trail that is scheduled to run from New York to North Dakota (for a distance of 4,600 miles) is located in Ross Township. In Michigan, the trail is proposed to run more than 600 miles between Hillsdale County at the Ohio border and Gogebic County in the Upper Peninsula. The segment of the trail in Ross Township runs for approximately 11.5 miles between the eastern Township boundary on Dickman Road (B.L. 96) in Section 36 to the intersection of 39th Street and Baseline Road in Section 5 (see Map IV-1). The portion of the trail between Augusta and Baseline Road is in place and users currently have to use the bike path on Dickman Road east to Battle Creek. Eventually, the trail will run through the National Cemetery property parallel to Dickman Road. The trail runs through both private and institutional properties and consists of a combination of two-track roads, mowed hayfields and dirt paths, as well as road shoulders. The basic parameters of the trail consist of an 18-inch wide dirt path with a four-foot horizontal and eight-foot vertical vegetation clearance. Signs include a kiosk on the Kellogg Biological Station property and one currently being installed at the trailhead in Augusta. Volunteer members of the North

Country Trail Club maintain the trail, with equipment donations by the National Park Service. There are no motorized vehicles allowed on the trail, which is used primarily for hiking in the summer and cross-country skiing in the winter.

Ross Township owns and maintains Ross Township Park, a 3.5-acre facility on the east shore of Gull Lake, north of B Avenue in Section 6. The park is open to the public using an entrance fee and contains a picnic pavilion with restrooms, a paved parking area and lake access for swimming. The majority of annual passes sold in 2001 were for users that lived outside of Ross Township.

Library

The McKay Library is located in the Village of Augusta. The library serves both Augusta and Ross Township, which supports the library through an annual half-mill payment agreement. The library is housed in a 2,300 square foot building containing 23,000 books, CD's, tapes, and magazines. It is operated by two-full time and one part-time librarian and currently is open five days a week, with plans to expand to six days. The library is part of the S.W. Michigan Library Cooperative and has issued 825 cards to patrons. The total number of patrons exceeds 825, as one card may be used for a family or an individual. In 2001, 33,800 pieces of material were circulated. Currently, there are no plans for expanding the library building.

Medical Services

There are three major regional medical centers available for Township residents, located in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek: the Borgess Medical Center of Kalamazoo, Bronson Methodist Hospital of Kalamazoo, and Battle Creek Health Systems in Downtown Battle Creek. All three are within 15 to 30 minutes driving time.

The Township's rescue vehicle (ambulance) is housed at the Township Fire Station on M-89.

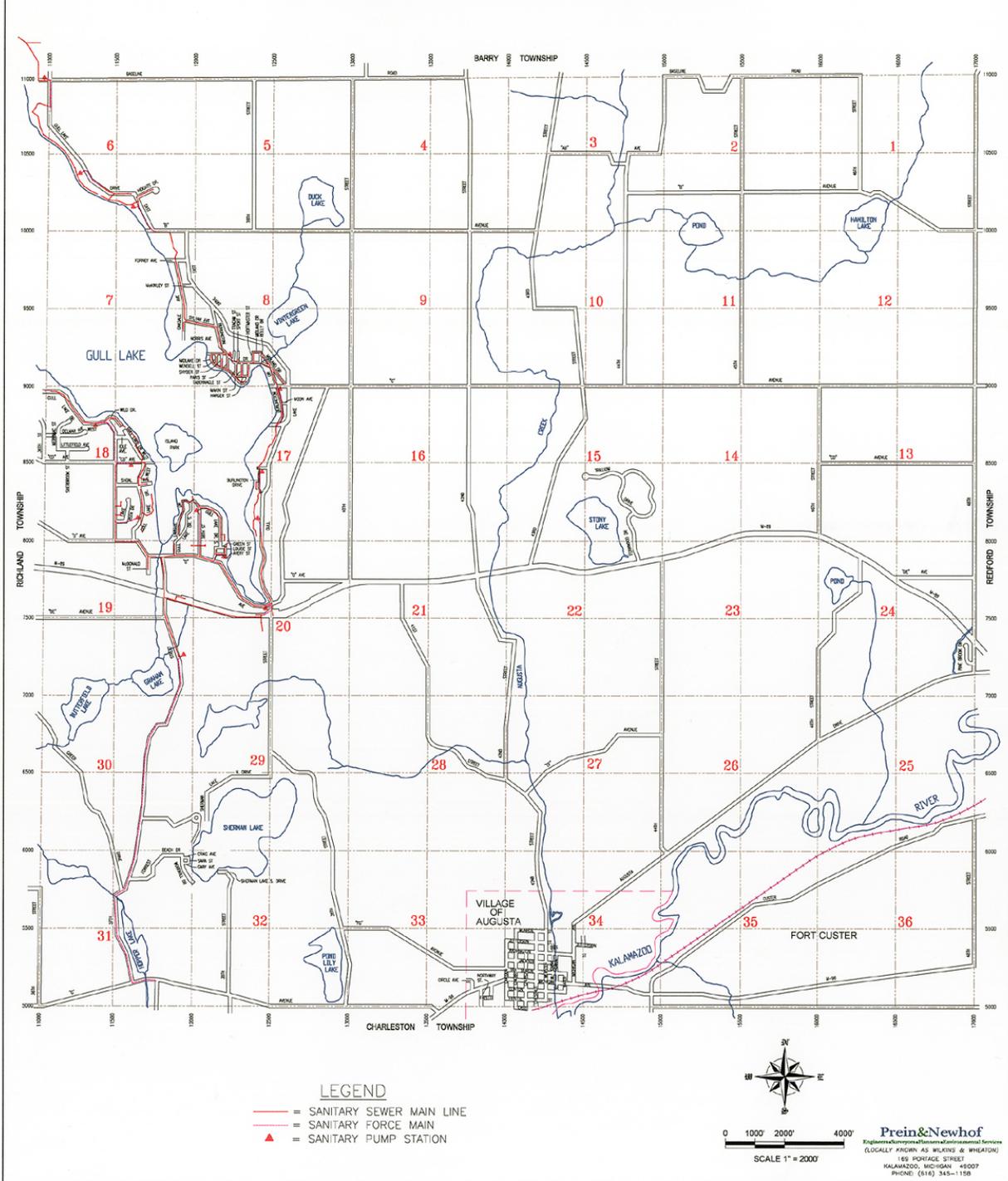
Utilities

Ross Township is served by Consumers Power for its electric power needs. Currently, there is no public water service for the Township. The Gull Lake Sewer and Water Authority provides sanitary sewer services to all of Gull Lake and the Richland Township. The system generates about 150 million gallons of waste per year, which is transported to the City of Kalamazoo waste treatment plant in the northeast section of the city via a 12" main within the M-89 right-of-way. All of the system's effluent is run through a main pump station on 37th Street, south of DE Ave, to the treatment plant. The station's capacity is 600 gallons per minute, with an average flow of 285 gallons per minute, indicating a substantial capacity remaining at the station. Within Ross Township, the system essentially runs west of Gull Lake Drive East (between Gull Lake Drive East and the lake), along Gull Lake Drive West on the west side of the lake, along D Avenue and Gull Lake Drive South on the south end of the lake. Also, a line runs parallel to M-89 from 38th Street to 37th Street (see Map III-1). These are all gravity sewer lines. There is also a force main sewer line which runs in a north/south direction along 37th Street between Graham Lake and G Avenue. A gravity sewer line runs south for about one mile along 42nd Street from Brook Lodge in Augusta to the Village of Augusta border (see Map III-2). This is part of the Village of Augusta sewer system, which is also tied into the city of Kalamazoo waste treatment plant.

Current potential expansion plans for the system include extending the line to serve 20 new homes in an area between Moon Avenue and C Avenue (Half Moon Park) in Section 17. Another possible area for expansion in the near future is a 30 unit residential development under consideration near 37th Street and G Avenue. As the Township develops in accordance with this Plan, there may be demands for additional sewer system expansion. This is particularly applicable if more dense residential cluster/open space developments are constructed within the Township.

Public sewer and water systems can serve to generate additional development in designated sections of a community or they can serve to protect the environment in areas that are currently developed. In Ross Township, the Gull Lake sewer service area was established to protect the lake and its shoreline from contamination due

MAP III-1
SANITARY SEWER MAP OF
ROSS TOWNSHIP
KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN



Prein & Newhof
Engineers, Surveyors and Environmental Services
(LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED IN MICHIGAN)
159 PORTAGE STREET
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49007
PHONE: (616) 345-1150

to the intensity of development around the lake. It was not constructed to promote additional development around the lake and that is still the Township's policy. This policy will be retained for all lakefront development within the Township; that is, sewers will not be promoted in lake areas to facilitate additional lakefront development, but rather be constructed as necessary to protect lakes from contamination that may result from such development.

TRANSPORTATION

Roads

M-89 is the major route that runs east/west across the central section of Ross Township, just south of Gull Lake, connecting Richland to Battle Creek and the Kalamazoo/Calhoun County border. 42nd Street (State Road 601) is a north/south roadway, which connects the Village of Augusta to the Kalamazoo/Barry County border. M-96 runs east/west through the southeast corner of the Township connecting Augusta with Battle Creek. According to MDOT, M-89 had an average daily trip count of 9,000 in 1996, 9,300 in 1997 and 1998, and 9,500 in 1999.



Minor collectors include Augusta Drive, which runs southwest from the eastern border of Ross Township to the Village of Augusta and M-96. G Avenue is an east/west roadway between the Village of Augusta and Comstock Township, and is connected to the north/south Ross Township roads of 37th, 38th and 39th streets. Baseline Road, an east/west road, defines the northern border of Ross Township to Barry and Johnstown Townships in Barry County. East and West Gull Lake Drive is a minor collector which circles Gull Lake, providing lake residents access to M-89, Richland Township and Barry Township.

Rail

Running along the southeastern corner of Ross Township is the Conrail Line, connecting Kalamazoo and Battle Creek. This line is used for both freight and limited Amtrak passenger service between Detroit and Chicago. There are no points within the Township where either freight or passenger trains stop and it is not likely that there will be any in the future.

Air

The Kalamazoo-Battle Creek International Airport is the closest commercial passenger air-carrier airport to the Township. It is located approximately 15 miles from the center of the Township in the southeast corner of Kalamazoo. The airport is serviced by five commuter airlines with non-stop flights to Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Minneapolis and Pittsburgh as well as direct flights to 20 other cities. There are over 75 daily arrivals and departures, enplaning and deplaning over 512,000 passengers in the year 2000.