

**INTRODUCTION**

People are a community's most valuable asset. They are the key element that allows the Township to function as a complete unit. This section of the Master Plan provides information about the population, housing, social and employment characteristics of Ross Township. By examining these factors, a clear picture of the Township's demographic conditions will emerge. Understanding these conditions provides both a valuable insight into the potential future state of affairs as well as a basis for projecting future needs in housing and land development.

**POPULATION**

**Population Trends**

The historic population trends for Ross Township from 1950 to 2000 are presented in Table II-1. These population figures exclude the Village of Augusta which, while primarily within the geographic boundaries of the Township, is not incorporated into this Plan. Table II-1 shows that the Township's population increased by 82 percent between 1950 and 2000, (Augusta, which had a 2000 population of 899, had an estimated 871 residents in the portion of the Village that is within Ross Township). About 15 percent of the Township's population growth over the past 50 years occurred between 1990 and 2000. Between 1950 and 1990, the Township's rate of population growth trailed the County's by about 11 percent, but by the year 2000, that differential in the rate of growth decreased to six percent. In effect, the Township grew at a slightly higher rate than the County between 1990 and 2000. That is depicted in Table II-2, which uses the data presented in Table II-1 to determine rates of growth in 10-year increments.

TABLE II -1 - HISTORIC POPULATION TRENDS

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1950- 2000
<b>Ross Township</b>	2,289	3,044	3,485	3,863	3,832	4,176	82.4
<b>Kalamazoo County</b>	126,707	169,712	201,550	212,378	223,411	238,603	88.3

SOURCE: 1950-2000 U.S. Census of Population



Table II-2 also shows that the County’s rate of growth has been more consistent than the Township’s over the past 50 years.

TABLE II-2 - HISTORIC POPULATION TRENDS PERCENT CHANGES

	% Change 1950- 1960	% Change 1960- 1970	% Change 1970- 1980	% Change 1980- 1990	% Change 1990- 2000
<b>Ross Township</b>	33.0	14.5	10.8	-0.8	9.0
<b>Kalamazoo County</b>	33.9	18.8	5.4	5.2	6.8

SOURCE: 1950-2000 U.S. Census of Population

The Michigan Department of Management and Budget has generated population projections for all counties within the state, including Kalamazoo County. Those projections for Kalamazoo County, which were published in 1996, have been calibrated in this Plan to conform to the 2000 Census and then adjusted for each of the projected five-year increments to the year 2020. Ross Township’s population forecast to the year 2020, based upon its average annual growth rate over the past 50 years (between 1950–2000) of 1.03 percent, is over 5,000. Table II-3 presents these projections.

It must be noted that the Township’s projections are based upon past trends and reflect the potential population counts that could occur if no specific policies are put into place that would either accelerate or slow the historic growth rate. The Township has determined that it desires a relatively slow rate of population increase over the next 20 years, with a target population of 6,000 or fewer residents. While this “target” exceeds the projected 2020 population depicted in Table II-3, the 2020 population of 6,000 is determined to be more realistic. This is due to the accelerated level of development that is likely to occur over the next 20 years. The population forecasts used in this Plan to define the land use needs of the Township over the next 20 years are identified in Section VII.

TABLE II-3 - POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2000 – 2020 BASED UPON HISTORIC TRENDS

	Census 2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	%Change 2000-2020
<b>Ross Township</b>	4,176	4,391	4,617	4,855	5,105	22.2
<b>Kalamazoo County</b>	238,603	242,838	246,272	249,540	252,582	5.9

SOURCE: 1990/2000 U.S. Census, Michigan Dept. of Management and Budget, Gove Associates (Township projections)

### Migration

Migration is the rate that the population moved into and out of the Township and further substantiates the rate of population increase. Table II-4 shows migration in Ross Township between 1985 and 1990, the latest time periods for which Census information is available. During this period, over 55 percent of the population remained in the same location. Of the 45 percent that did move, 20.8 percent moved within the County, with the remaining 23.1 percent moving from outside the County. Of these new residents, 15.6 percent came from a different county in Michigan, 6.4 percent came from a different state, and 1.1 percent resided previously outside the United States.

TABLE II-4 - MIGRATION (1990 BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE IN 1985)

Residence in 1985	Ross Township	
	Size	% of Total
<b>Persons 5 Years and Older</b>	3,598	100
<b>Lived in Same House</b>	2,017	56.1
<b>Lived in Different House</b>		
<b>In Kalamazoo County</b>	748	20.8
<b>Different County in Michigan</b>	560	15.6
<b>Different State</b>	231	6.4
<b>Outside of United States in 1985</b>	42	1.1

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population

Overall, residential migration indicates a stable residential base for Ross Township. Such stability is beneficial for long-term planning and investment by Township officials and residents.



Although 2000 Census data on movership is not yet available, the increase in residential development activity within the Township during the past several years would indicate a substantial increase in new residents moving into the Township from other areas within and outside of Kalamazoo County.

**Age Composition**

The needs and lifestyles of individuals differ among age groups, and the demands for retail goods and services, as well as public or institutional programs, change with each age group. Table II-5 shows the composition of the Township's population by age group for 1980, 1990 and 2000 relative to Kalamazoo County. The Township's age distribution includes the Village of Augusta, hence the total population in Table II-5 is different than Tables II-1 and II-3.

TABLE II-5 - AGE DISTRIBUTION (ROSS TOWNSHIP AND KALAMAZOO COUNTY)

Age Group	Ross Township			Kalamazoo County		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
<b>Under 5 Years</b>	214	234	250	14,602	16,550	15,447
% of Total	5.5	6.1	5.0	6.9	7.4	6.5
<b>5-9 Years</b>	245	256	352	14,992	15,562	16,254
% of Total	6.3	6.7	7.0	7.1	7.0	6.8
<b>10-14 Years</b>	371	257	417	16,336	14,218	16,453
% of Total	9.6	6.7	8.3	7.6	6.4	6.9
<b>15-19 Years</b>	375	212	333	22,198	18,922	20,363
% of Total	9.7	5.5	6.6	10.5	8.5	8.5
<b>20-24 Years</b>	235	175	148	27,780	24,195	25,197
% of Total	6.1	4.6	2.9	13.1	10.8	10.6
<b>25-34 Years</b>	583	543	453	37,209	37,858	32,311
% of Total	15.1	14.2	9.0	17.5	16.9	13.5
<b>35-54 Years</b>	1,069	1,266	1837	43,193	55,482	66,604
% of Total	27.7	33.0	36.4	20.3	24.8	27.9
<b>55-64 Years</b>	414	430	599	17,159	19,965	18,826
% of Total	10.7	11.2	11.9	8.1	7.6	7.9
<b>65 + Years</b>	357	459	658	18,909	23,659	27,148
% of Total	9.2	12.0	13.0	8.9	10.6	11.4



<b>Total</b>	3,863	3,832	4176	212,378	223,411	238,603
<b>Median Age</b>	33.6	37.5	41.7	27.5	31.0	32.7

SOURCE: 1980, 1990, 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

According to Table II-5, Ross Township has experienced consistent changes in the proportion of some age groups and variations in the proportional composition of other age groups. Over the past 20 years there has been a consistent increase in the number of residents under the age of 9, although the proportion of the total population under the age of 5 has varied. The number of residents between the ages of 10 and 19 decreased between 1980 and 1990 and increased between 1990 and 2000. Residents between the ages of 20 and 34 have been declining over the past two decades, both in actual numbers and proportionally. This age group made up over 21 percent of the Township’s population in 1980 and by the year 2000 comprised only 12 percent of those living in Ross Township. All age groups over 35 have consistently increased in number and proportion over the past 20 years. While there is a general similarity in the proportional distribution of age groups between the County and Township, it is significant to note that there is a substantial disparity between the two jurisdictions among those in the 20-24 age group. That disparity is also becoming more significant in the 25-34 age group.

Overall, the Township’s residents are getting older. This increase in older residents as a percentage of total Township residents is reflected in the consistently higher median age over each decade between 1980 and 2000. Every 10 years, the Township’s median age increases by about four years. During that period it has been substantially higher than the median age of the County’s population in general, by an average of about six years in 1980 and 1990. In 2000, that disparity increased to an average of nine years. This pattern of an aging population represents the on-going nation-wide trend of older populations, as the members of the "baby boom" generation are beginning to reach retirement age and their off-spring, the "echo generation" are fewer in number. There is, however, the beginning of a second "baby boom" generation occurring. These are the children of the "echo generation." This trend will likely result in a lowering of the median age in most communities after the next several decades.



Using Michigan Department of Management and Budget population age projection for Kalamazoo County and applying them to the 2000-2020 population projections, a generalized picture of future population age distribution for the Township can be obtained. Table II-6 presents the estimated age distribution projections, and indicates a continuing aging of Ross Township's population. The median age increases from 37.5 in 1990 to an estimated 43.2 in 2020.

TABLE II-6 - PROJECTED AGE DISTRIBUTION ROSS TOWNSHIP 2000-2020

Age Group	Ross Township			
	1990	2000	2010	2020
<b>Under 5 Years</b>	284	252	297	336
% of Total	6.4	5.0	5.7	6.0
<b>5-9 Years</b>	267	353	307	336
% of Total	6.9	7.0	5.9	6.0
<b>10-14 Years</b>	244	419	417	391
% of Total	6.5	8.3	8.0	7.0
<b>15-19 Years</b>	325	333	328	464
% of Total	5.5	6.6	6.3	8.3
<b>20-24 Years</b>	415	146	182	207
% of Total	5.1	2.9	3.5	3.7
<b>25-34 Years</b>	649	454	469	615
% of Total	15.3	9.0	9.0	11.0
<b>35-54 Years</b>	952	1,837	1,927	1,761
% of Total	31.8	36.4	37.0	31.5
<b>55-64 Years</b>	291	601	594	699
% of Total	10.7	11.9	11.4	12.5
<b>65 + Years</b>	406	656	688	783
% of Total	11.8	13.0	13.2	14.0
<b>Total</b>	3,832	4,176	4,617	5,105
<b>Median Age</b>	37.5	41.7	42.6	43.2

SOURCES: 1990-2000 U.S. Census, Michigan Dept. of Management and Budget, 1996, Gove Associates Inc 2000



**Summary**

The population of Ross Township has grown over the past 50 years with the population count fluctuating over each 10-year period. As households continue to be attracted to suburban and rural areas, it is anticipated that the growth of the Township's population will continue. While there have been relatively substantial variations among 10 year growth increments, a more accurate predictor of future population growth is the long-term trends of the past 50 years. Those trends reflect an annual growth rate of 1.03 percent. Projecting that long-term rate over the next 20 years, the Township could expect a 2020 population of over 5,000. Current residents and Township leaders have indicated a desire for a "slow growth" approach to future development, which includes a population "target" for the year 2020 that would generally conform to the projected long-term trends.

The Township's residents continue to get older, following a national trend. This aging of the population is manifested to a greater degree in the Township than in Kalamazoo County in general, with the disparity in median age between the two jurisdictions increasing significantly during the 1990s, to the point where the average resident in the Township is nine years older than the average resident in the County.

**HOUSING****Household Composition**

The number and type of households within the Township influence the social and economic dynamics of the Township and consequently impact the quantity and character of land development. Households are the standard unit of measurement for evaluating and projecting the number of housing units, retail sales and community facilities and services. Table II-7 shows the growth trends in the number of households in Ross Township between 1980 and 2000.

Between 1980 and 2000, households in the Township increased at an annual rate of 2.3 percent, which was greater than the average annual population growth during this decade of 1.5 percent. This differentiation between household and population growth is a trend seen in many communities across Michigan and the nation, and is caused by a decrease in the number of individuals living in each



household (average household size). Therefore, even while the population of a community increases slowly, stabilizes or declines, the number of households will increase.

The composition of a household is reflected in the number of people living within a residence as well as the relationship between them. A household may consist of a married couple with or without children, a single parent with children, two or more unrelated people living in a dwelling and sharing household responsibilities, or a person living alone.

Table II-7 depicts the composition of households in the Township in 1980, 1990 and 2000, reflecting a number of characteristics and trends that should be considered in planning for the future. Although the number of households has increased between the three periods, traditional two-parent family households (households comprised of a family with a husband and wife), while increasing in actual numbers, have proportionally decreased from 93.1 percent in 1980 to 86 percent in 2000. That is a result of an increase in the number of single persons and one-parent households, which reflects a national trend that has been occurring since the 1960s.

The number of married couple families with children under 18 has increased both in number and percentage of married couple families over the past 10 years, indicating a stabilizing effect on households and reflecting an increased propensity of married couples to have children (related to the second “baby boom” phenomenon mentioned earlier). Between 1980 and 2000, there has been a steady increase in the number of female-headed households, the result of a continuing high rate of divorce and out-of-wedlock births. This segment of the population is the most vulnerable to financial instability and the need for social services. Nonfamily households continued to increase during the decade of the 90s, accelerating the trend that occurred between 1980 and 1990. The majority of those households (80%) were comprised of single persons, and the proportion of those who are over the age of 65 actually declined between 1990 and 2000. During the same period, as identified in Table II-6, there was an increase in the

number of residents in that age group. This would indicate elderly couples are tending to live longer.

TABLE II-7 - HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

	Ross Township		
	1980	1990	2000
<b>Number of Households</b>	1,390	1,493	1,680
<b>Family Households</b>	1,108	1,139	1,249
% of Total Households	79.7	76.3	74.3
<b>Married Couples</b>	1,031	1,021	1,094
% of Families	93.1	89.6	87.6
<b>With Children Under 18</b>	466	416	398
% of Married Couple Families	45.2	36.5	36.3
<b>Female Head of Household</b>	43	86	103
% of Families	3.9	7.6	9.8
<b>With Children Under 18</b>	N/A	56	71
% of Female Household Families	N/A	65.1	68.9
<b>Nonfamily Households</b>	272	354	431
<b>One Person</b>	229	284	448
<b>65 and Older</b>	N/A	122	155
% of One Person Household	N/A	43.0	34.6

SOURCE: 1980/1990/2000 U.S. Census of Population

### Housing Occupancy

Between 1980 and 2000, there was a net increase of 271 units, or 16.1 percent, within the housing stock in Ross Township, compared to a 20.9 percent increase in households (290) during that period. Typically, most communities experience a greater increase in the number of housing units than the number of households over a defined period of time. In Ross Township's case, the reverse implies that during that 20-year period, a substantial number of seasonal homes (primarily around the major lakes) were converted to year-round units. This helped to increase the

overall quality of the Township’s housing stock, as well as the average value of a home.

Table II-8 presents Ross Township’s total occupied- and renter-occupied housing between 1980 and 2000. The Township experienced an increase in owner-occupied housing units between 1980 and 2000, growing from 77.7 percent of the entire housing stock to 87.8 percent during this period. This is a positive trend for Ross Township, as residents who own their own homes create a more stable environment, one where they have a vested interest in their community’s future.

TABLE II-8 – ROSS TOWNSHIP HOUSING UNITS 1980 - 1990

	1980	1990	2000
<b>Total Units</b>	1,684	1,797	1,955
<b>Occupied Units (Year-round)</b>	1,485	1,493	1,676
<b>% of Total</b>	88.2	83.1	85.7
<b>Owner-Occupied Units</b>	1,154	1,265	1,471
<b>% of Occupied</b>	77.7	84.7	87.8
<b>Renter-Occupied Units</b>	236	228	207
<b>% of Occupied</b>	15.9	15.3	12.4

SOURCE: 1980, 1990, 2000 U.S. Census of Housing and Social Characteristics

Almost nine out of 10 housing units were occupied year-round in 2000. The balance were either used for seasonal occupancy or were vacant and for rent or for sale. This reflects the character and geographic location of Ross Township. Located between Kalamazoo and Battle Creek, the Township is considered more of a “bedroom” community than a summer or winter resort area. Although the Township’s lakes, particularly Gull Lake, are recreation resources, the majority of those who use the lakes are year-round residents and those who live in nearby communities within easy commute distance to the Township. Consequently, seasonal residents comprise only a small portion of the Township’s population.

### Age and Value of Housing

The quality and cultural significance of a community's housing stock is reflected in the age of that stock. The period during which much, if not most, of the housing units were built often reflect a popular architecture for that time. The types of materials that were standard in home construction during a particular period affect the structural quality of housing. For example, houses that were built up through the first part of the 20th Century used full-dimension lumber or timbers, giving greater strength to the structural integrity of the building. Some older houses typically used mass dimensions of various types of hardwood for interior finishes that is difficult or cost-prohibitive to obtain today.

The distribution of the age of Ross Township's housing stock can be seen in Table 11-9.

TABLE 11-9 - AGE OF HOUSING STOCK BY YEAR BUILT

Year Built	# of Housing	% of Total
1939 or earlier	675	28.6
1940-1949	253	10.7
1950-1959	361	15.3
1960-1969	212	9.0
1970-1979	323	13.7
1980-1989	324	13.7
1990-1999	214*	9.0
*Estimated from Township records 1990-11/30/99		

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population

According to Table 11-9 approximately 45 percent of the Township's housing stock has been constructed since 1960. This is the general time frame during which residential building permits were first required. The remaining 55 percent were built in 1959 or earlier, with over 28 percent built before 1940. An estimated 9 percent, or 214 houses, were built between 1990 and 1999.



Table 11-10 presents the median market value of owner-occupied housing in both Ross Township and Kalamazoo County for 1980 and 1990. 2000 Census data for detailed housing characteristics, including value, has not yet been released. The median market value of owner-occupied homes is another good indicator of both housing quality and demand. In 1980, the median housing value of a home in Ross Township was 38.5 percent higher than the overall median housing value in the County. By 1990, this proportion decreased, but was still significantly different, at 31 percent. This reflects, to some degree, an increased demand for housing and the construction of more upper scale priced homes in the County overall relative to the Township. On the other hand, the Township's homeowner vacancy rate in 2000 was 1.0 percent compared to 1.6 percent in the County. An important consideration is the fact that the housing value data in the Census is derived from asking a random sample of Census survey respondents what they believe the value of their home to be. That information, which is subjective, can significantly skew the true value of housing within a jurisdiction.

TABLE II-10- ROSS TOWNSHIP MEDIAN OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING VALUE

	1980	1990	% Change
<b>Ross Township</b>	\$56,500	\$82,000	45.1
<b>Kalamazoo County</b>	\$40,800	\$62,600	53.4

SOURCE: 1980, 1990 U.S. Census of Housing

Rental housing can be a significant contributor to the perception of housing quality in a community. Table 11-11 highlights the median monthly contract rent paid to landlords in the Township and County in 1980 and 1990. By reviewing contract rent, an indicator of housing quality, as well as the availability of supply and demand for rental units can be implied.

TABLE II-11 – MEDIAN MONTHLY CONTRACT RENT

	1980	1990	% Change
<b>Ross Township</b>	\$201 (\$339*)	\$375	10.6
<b>Kalamazoo County</b>	\$213 (\$360*)	\$372	3.3
<b>* Number represents rent amount in 1990 dollars, based upon the Consumer Price Index</b>			

SOURCE: 1980, 1990 U.S. Census of Housing



According to Table II-11, the median monthly contract rent rate in the Township is generally the same as found within the County as a whole. However, the percent change in rent between 1980 and 1990 indicates that Ross Township's supply of rental housing has not kept up with demand (hence a 10.6 percent increase in median monthly contract rent rates). Kalamazoo County, during the same period, had a lower median monthly contract rent change of 3.3 percent, indicating rental housing has been more in line with overall demand.

**Summary**

Housing in Ross Township grew at an annual rate greater than the average annual rate of population growth. This is not uncommon, as decreasing household size continues to be a national trend, which impacts a continuing need for housing. According to U.S. Census and Ross Township records, approximately 538 homes were built in the Township between 1980 and 1999.

The median market value of owner-occupied housing in Ross Township grew by 45 percent between 1980 and 1990, which was lower than Kalamazoo County's growth rate of 53 percent over the same period. However, the Township's overall median housing value was 31 percent higher in 1990 than the County as a whole (\$82,000 vs. \$62,600), indicating that while the value of the housing stock in the Township is generally higher than in the County overall, that value differential is diminishing. This could be due to a higher proportion of upper-scale housing being built in the rest of the County, a relatively lower demand for housing in the Township, or the inherent anomaly associated with the Census survey.

## EDUCATION AND ECONOMICS

### Education and Occupation

The level of formal education and occupational status are among the factors that define the ability of an individual or a household to be financially productive and contribute to the quality of life in their community. Typically, a person's occupation is related to the amount and type of education he or she achieved. Table 11-12 lists the educational attainment of Ross Township and Kalamazoo County residents in 1980 and 1990. This information is not yet available for the year 2000.

Educational levels increased in Ross Township between 1980 and 1990, with a significant increase in the population earning additional knowledge via post-high school education, be it a four year college or an Associate Degree. In 1990, almost 32 percent of the Township's population had a Bachelors Degree or better, substantially higher than the County's average of 23.2 percent.

TABLE II-12 – EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT - PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER

Highest Educational Level Attained	Ross Township		Kalamazoo County	
	1980	1990	1980	1990
<b>Less than 9<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	214	57	12,139	7,324
% of Total	7.2	1.9	10.4	4.3
<b>9 – 12 Grade/No Diploma</b>	348	177	16,115	19,145
% of Total	11.8	6.0	13.8	11.3
<b>High School Graduate</b>	1,056	898	40,096	44,096
% of Total	35.7	30.5	34.4	26.1
<b>Some College or Associate Degree</b>	503	880	21,371	59,135
% of Total	17.0	29.9	18.3	35.1
<b>Bachelors Degree</b>	836*	609	26,857*	24,451
% of Total	28.3	20.6	23.0	14.5
<b>Graduate/Professional Degree</b>		327		14,739
% of Total		11.1		8.7
<b>*Graduate/Professional Degree included in this category</b>				

SOURCE: 1980/1990 U.S. Census of Population - General Social and Economic Characteristics



The higher a person's educational attainment, the more likely he or she is employed in higher paying professional or executive/managerial occupations. Table 11-13 compares the occupational characteristics of Ross Township and the County for 1990. This information is not yet available for the year 2000.

TABLE 11-13 – OCCUPATIONS

	Ross Township	Kalamazoo County
	1990	1990
<b>Executive, Administrative, Managerial</b>	460	13,484
% of Total	22.3	12.1
<b>Professional Specialty</b>	411	18,418
% of Total	19.9	16.6
<b>Technicians and Related Support</b>	81	4,702
% of Total	3.9	4.2
<b>Sales</b>	285	13,431
% of Total	13.8	12.1
<b>Administrative Support</b>	244	16,960
% of Total	11.8	15.3
<b>Private Household Services</b>	10	401
% of Total	.5	.4
<b>Protective Services</b>	9	1,253
% of Total	.4	1.1
<b>Other Service Occupations</b>	178	14,592
% of Total	8.6	13.2
<b>Farming/Forestry/Fishing</b>	40	1,839
% of Total	1.9	1.7
<b>Precision Production/Craft and Repair</b>	168	10,126
% of Total	8.1	9.1
<b>Machine Operators, Assemblers, Inspection</b>	72	8,504
% of Total	3.5	7.7
<b>Transportation and Material Moving</b>	62	3,331
% of Total	3.0	3.0
<b>Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Laborers</b>	45	3,886
% of Total	2.2	3.5

SOURCE: 1980, 1990 U.S. Census of Social and Economic Characteristics



In 1990, occupations in the Executive, Administrative and Managerial field made up over 22 percent of all residents surveyed in the Township. That is over 10 percent higher than the County as a whole, and represents a more financially healthy and well educated community population base than the County in general. At almost 20 percent, the second largest occupational category among Ross Township residents is Professional Specialty, another well-paying occupational category, defined as white collar workers who are employed in special, technical fields (such as an environmental engineer). Sales occupations rank third among Township residents, with 13.8 percent of the total surveyed. For Kalamazoo County, Professional Specialty is the highest occupation at 16.6 percent, with the more service-oriented Administrative Support category second highest at 15.3 percent.

Farming accounted for only 1.9 percent of occupations for Ross Township, close to the County as a whole at 1.7 percent. This is reflective of a decrease in full-time farming in the Township and the increased urbanization of the Township and the County as a whole.

Significant local employers include Fort James Corporation in Parchment, Pharmacia Corporation in Kalamazoo/Portage, the Federal Center and Kellogg Corporation in Battle Creek, Imagyn Medical Technologies in Richland, Eaton Corporation in Galesburg, and the Target Distribution Center in Charleston Township, all outside of Ross Township. The Kellogg Biological Station and Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service are major institutional entities within the Township, employing people in the teaching and environmental research communities.

#### **Location of Employment**

Beyond the type of work residents do, the location of employment also contributes to the character of the Township. Table 11-14 shows the number and proportion of employed residents who work either within Ross Township, or outside the Township borders. Over 73 percent of Ross Township residents are employed outside the Township, with approximately 26.6 percent working somewhere within

the Township. Data for location of employment for the year 2000 is not yet available.

TABLE 11-14 – GENERAL LOCATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR ROSS TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS - 1990

	#	% of Total
<b>Employed in Township</b>	553	26.9
<b>Employed in Remainder of Region</b>	963	46.9
<b>Worked Outside of Region</b>	537	26.2

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing - STF3A

Travel time to work is important for anyone looking to locate within a community. It also can help be a measure about where most of the jobs are located in relationship to the Township. Table 11-15 lists the travel times to work for Ross Township residents.

TABLE 11-15 – TRAVEL TIMES TO WORK - 1990

Minutes	#	% of Total
<b>Less than 5</b>	82	4.0
<b>5 – 9</b>	196	9.5
<b>10 – 14</b>	225	11.0
<b>15 – 19</b>	242	11.8
<b>20 – 24</b>	432	21.0
<b>25 – 29</b>	280	13.6
<b>30 – 34</b>	275	13.4
<b>35 – 39</b>	57	2.8
<b>40 – 44</b>	67	3.3
<b>45 – 59</b>	70	3.4
<b>60 – 89</b>	37	1.8
<b>90 or Greater</b>	5	0.2
<b>Work at Home</b>	85	4.1

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population

According to Table 11-15, approximately 35 percent of Ross Township residents commute to work in 19 minutes or less. This likely indicates that most of the jobs outside of the Township are located in neighboring cities and townships, including the cities of Battle Creek and Kalamazoo.

**Income**

Household income is an important measure of the economic well being of Ross Township, helping to determine the quality and quantity of retail goods and services purchased both within the Township and surrounding areas. Table 11-16 lists the median household incomes for the Township and Kalamazoo County, and indicates that household income in the Township in 1990 was significantly higher than the County as a whole. When adjusted for inflation, Kalamazoo County shows a -1.4 percent change in median household income between 1980 and 1990, while Ross Township's median household income grew by 12.4 percent over the same period. Household income data through the 2000 Census has yet to be released.

TABLE 11-16 – MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES, 1980/1990

	1980*	1990	% Change
<b>Ross Township</b>	\$41,350	\$46,475	12.4
<b>Kalamazoo County</b>	\$31,505	\$31,060	-1.4
<b>*Income adjusted for inflation as 1990 dollars</b>			

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population - STF3A

Table 11-17 projects the median household incomes for Ross Township and Kalamazoo County between 1990 and 2000. The Claritas System estimates that Ross Township will continue to out-perform the County as a whole. Ross Township's median household income grew by almost six percent between 1990 and 2000, while Kalamazoo County saw an increase of four percent during the same period.

TABLE 11-17 – ESTIMATED MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES, 1990/2000

	1990*	2000	% Change
<b>Ross Township</b>	\$51,770	\$54,771	5.8
<b>Kalamazoo County</b>	\$33,806	\$35,158	4.0
<b>*Income adjusted for inflation as 2000 dollars</b>			

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population - STF3A, Claritas Systems 2000, Gove Associates 2000

**Summary**

Ross Township has a healthy educational and income base. Educational attainment for the Township is generally higher than the County as a whole. Occupations for Ross Township residents indicate a higher percentage of Executive, Administrative and Managerial professionals than in the overall County, indicating an equally higher income level due to these better paying professions. Indeed, median household income in Ross Township was significantly higher than Kalamazoo County during the 1980-1990 period, and it is projected that this trend will continue through the year 2000.