

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 adopt plans and enact and enforce ordinances, including zoning. The Township manages the use of land through the Ross Township Master Plan and implementation of the Ross Township Zoning Ordinance. The Township Board is responsible for the adoption of its master plan and zoning ordinance/map, with recommendation from the Township Planning Commission.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES**Police and Fire Protection**

The Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police provide police protection of the Township. The Township currently contracts with the County for one car/40 hours of coverage per week. State Police involvement is largely dependent upon the nature of the complaint/violation. In 2019, there were a total of 2441 dispatched law enforcement events; with 816 of them being Citizen Initiated and 1625 of them being Officer Initiated. Traffic stops and property damage accidents, for a total of 636 calls, were the most frequent vehicle-related events. Alarms comprised almost a 15% (111) of the Citizen Initiated service calls in 2019. Other predominant types of events included property checks, general non-criminal activity and suspicious occurrences.



Ross Township maintains a 20-member paid volunteer Fire Department. All Department volunteers are licensed as Medical First Responders (MFR). 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 seven primary fire vehicles and a rescue boat. One tanker, two pumpers, and one rescue vehicle are housed at the Ross Township station. The Village of Augusta station houses one pumper, one brush truck, one rescue vehicle and the rescue boat. The Augusta-Ross Township Fire Department is funded by a 1 mill fire levy that must be renewed by voters every five years.

Schools

Ross Township is served by two school districts: Gull Lake Community Schools and Galesburg/Augusta Community Schools. One building of the Gull Lake Community Schools is located in Ross Township: Kellogg Elementary on 40th Street. The remaining school facilities of the district are located in neighboring Richland Township. The Galesburg/ Augusta School District



maintains one school building in the Village of Augusta: Galesburg-Augusta Middle School on Van Buren Street, with the remaining facilities located within the City of Galesburg to the south of Ross Township.

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 3,033-acre park, which is under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Natural



Resources (MDNR), features three lakes, the Kalamazoo River, a campground, a swimming beach, boat rentals, paddling and fishing opportunities, and more than 25 miles of multi-use trails popular with mountain bikers, equestrians, hikers and dog sledders.

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 W.K. 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. The undeveloped portion of the former Brook Lodge site encompasses a substantial amount of natural forest area (483 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 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 and contains a picnic pavilion with restrooms, a playground, benches, a library kiosk, a paved parking area and lake access for swimming. The majority of annual passes sold in 2019 were for users that lived outside of Ross Township.

Library

The McKay-Dole 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 and offers books, magazines, audio materials, and CDs, as well as access to a statewide library resource sharing system, the Michigan e-Library, computer terminals and a copy machine available for public use. It is operated by two-full time librarians and is currently open six days a week. The library is part of the S.W. Michigan Library Cooperative. Currently, there are no plans for expanding the library building.

Medical Services

There are four major regional medical centers available for Township residents, located in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek: Borgess Medical Center of Kalamazoo, Bronson Methodist Hospital of Kalamazoo, Bronson Battle Creek Hospital and

Fieldstone Center of Battle Creek Health System in Downtown Battle Creek. All four 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

Currently, there is no public water service within the Township. The Gull Lake Sewer and Water Authority provides sanitary sewer service to the area surrounding Gull Lake and 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.

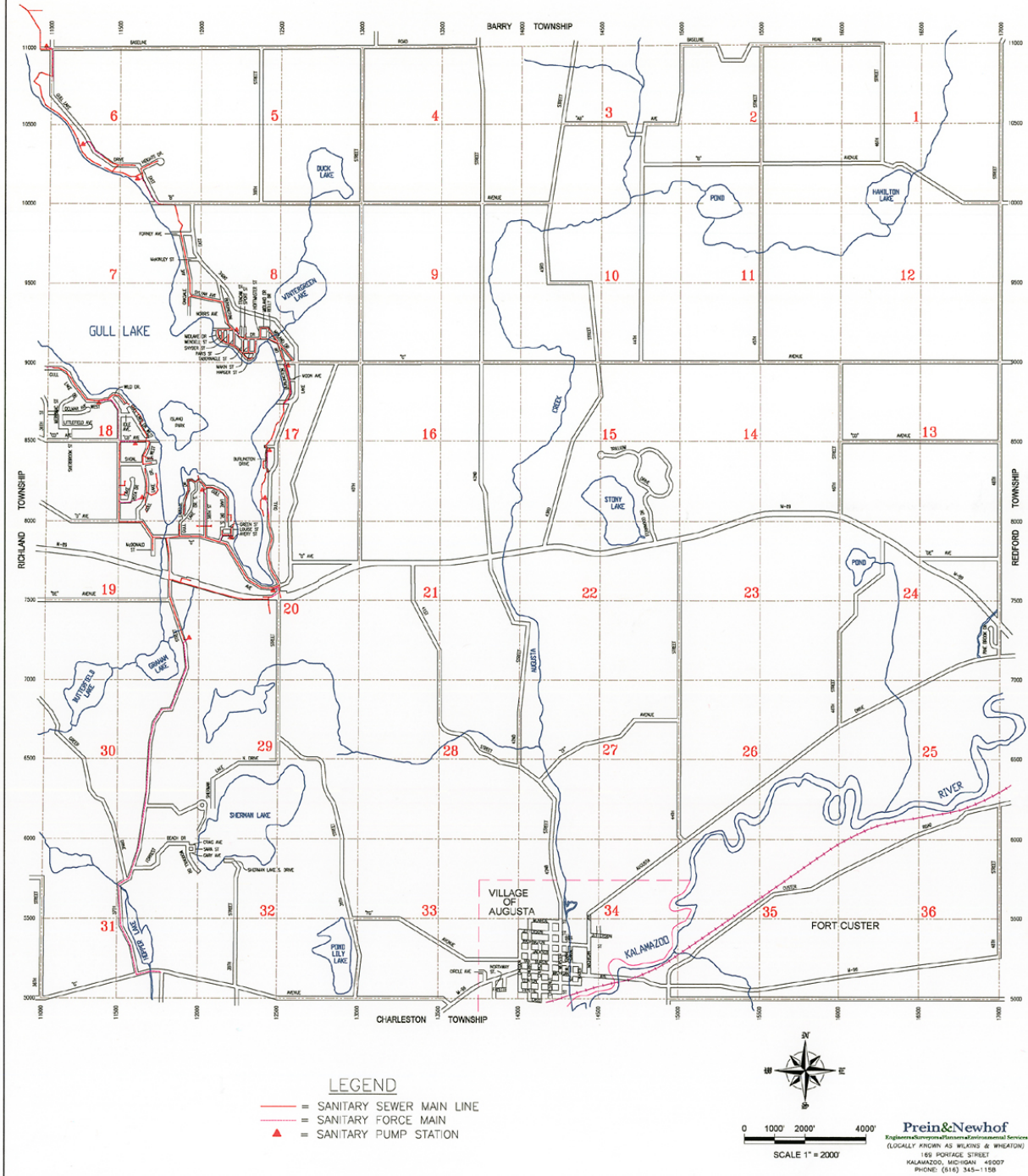


As the Township develops in accordance with this Plan, there may be demands for additional sewer system expansion. This is particularly applicable if dense residential developments are constructed within the Township.

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 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.

Ross Township is located entirely within the joint electric and gas service area of Consumers Energy. The primary cable TV provider in the Township is Comcast. In addition to the option for internet delivery through the cable provider, wireless broadband or Wi-Fi (connection to the internet using radio signals instead of cables), satellite internet (internet access provided by geostationary communication satellites), and DSL (internet connection over standard telephone lines), are available in the Township through a number of providers.

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



TRANSPORTATION**Roads**

M-89 is the major corridor 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, in 2018 M-89 had an average daily trip count of 9,900 at its western entry into the Township and an average daily trip count of 5,300 as it extends through the Township.



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 served by two major airlines with flights to major hubs with worldwide connections. The airport is self-sufficient and has a significant economic impact on

Southwest Michigan. There are over 20 daily arrivals and departures, enplaning and deplaning an average of 265,000 passengers every year.