

CHAPTER 2

Township Social and Economic Characteristics

Population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of West Traverse Township in 2000 was 1,448 persons (735 male - 713 female), averaging 108.9 persons per square mile for the Township's 13.3 square miles of land area, an increase from 72.8 persons per square mile in 1990. This 2000 population density can be compared to 67.2 persons per square mile for Emmet County and 174.9 persons per square mile for the State of Michigan.

In discussing the population for West Traverse Township, however, it is important to note that the figure presented by the 2000 Census does not reflect the actual number of persons residing in the Township during the summer months. This situation can be seen throughout much of northern Michigan. The Census tally, taken on April first, does not count residents who winter elsewhere. Respondents are asked to declare a permanent residence different from their April location, if more than six months are spent at the alternate address.

In reviewing the social and economic information derived from Census data, the figures presented for housing characteristics show 437 units or 40.0 percent of the total 1,093 housing units as seasonal, recreational, or occasional use homes. With this in mind, it is reasonable to expect that the Township's resident population increases significantly during the summer months. If the seasonal dwelling units are occupied at a rate similar to the year-round units, the expected seasonal increase would be at least 1005 persons, based on the average household size of 2.3 persons per household in West Traverse Township. In addition, many summer visitors stay at private lodging places or at the homes of family or friends.

Table 2-1 provides population statistics for West Traverse Township and Emmet County for the period from 1960 to 2000. As can be seen, the Township has experienced significant population growth during each of the decades between 1960 and 2000, with the most substantial growth occurring between 1970 and 1980, when the township population more than doubled. More recently, between 1980 and 1990, the Township experienced growth of more than 12 percent and nearly 50 percent between 1990 and 2000. Emmet County, as a whole, has also experienced positive growth each decade since 1960, with the rate of growth ranging between approximately nine percent and 25 percent each decade.

Between 1990 and 2000 the Township experienced decreases in the percent of pre-school age residents (under 5) and family-forming age group (25-44) and an increase in the percent of school age (5-17) and young adults (18-24) in the Township. A significant increase is seen in the empty nester age group (45-54) and the 55-59, 60-64 and 65 and older age groups.

Table 2-1:
Population Changes 1960-2000
 West Traverse Township & Emmet County

	1960	Percent Change	1970	Percent Change	1980	Percent Change	1990	Percent Change	2000
Emmet County	15,904	15.2	18,331	25.4	22,992	8.9	25,040	25.5	31,437
West Traverse Twp.	326	28.8	420	104.5	859	12.7	968	49.6	1,448

Source: Bureau of Census.

Age Distribution and Racial Make-up

Information on age distribution within a population can assist the community in matching public services to community characteristics and in determining what, if any, special needs specific resident groups might have.

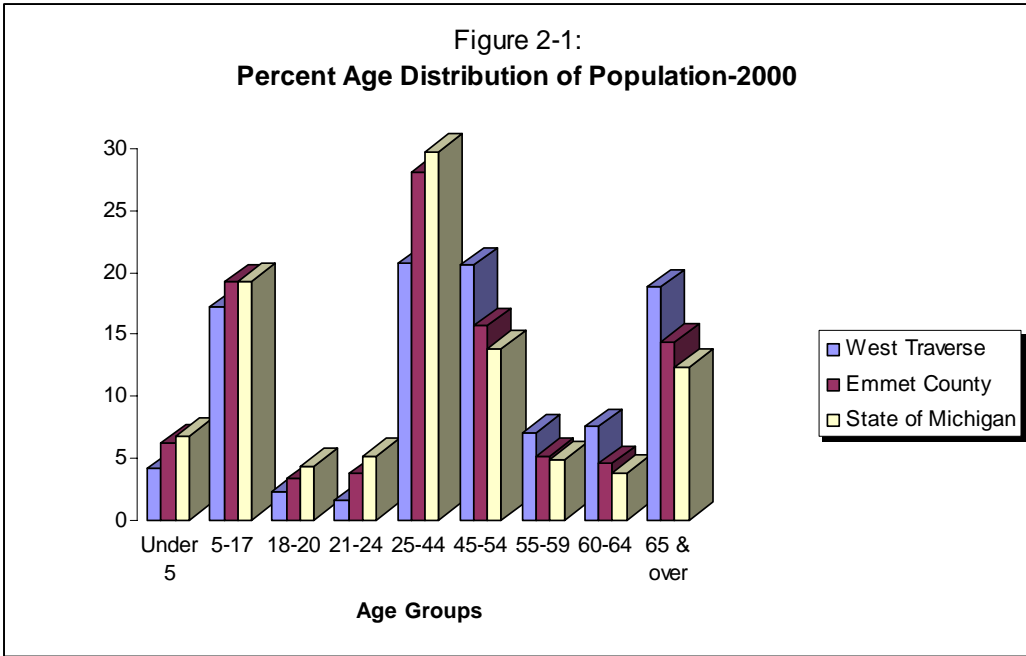
Age distribution for West Traverse Township in 2000 reflects a population with a significantly higher median age than that of Emmet County or the State of Michigan as a whole, as illustrated in Table 2-2. It appears that young adults in the college years (18-24) are somewhat under represented in the Township and County as compared with State of Michigan. The proportion of adults in the wage earning years (25-65) is very close to the County and State norms. Table 2-2 provides the statistical comparison of the age distribution for the Township, the County and the State, based on the 2000 Census.

At the time of the 2000 Census, the median age for West Traverse Township was 47 years, which is up from a median age for the Township residents of 38.5 in 1990. The median age (2000 Census) for the Township is notably higher than that of Emmet County at 38.9 years, and significantly higher than the State, 35.5 years. Additionally, it is important to remember that these statistics do not include the seasonal resident population, which is likely to have a larger proportion of older persons.

According to the 2000 Census data the racial make-up of the Township is primarily white (1,414 persons). Native Americans are the primary minority population (22 persons), with a small number of Blacks (2 persons), Asians (1 person) and other races (12 persons).

Table 2-2: Population Age West Traverse Township, Emmet County, State of Michigan - 2000					
Age	West Traverse Twp.	Township %	Emmet Co.	County %	State %
Under 5	60	4.1	1,944	6.2	6.8
5-17	249	17.2	6,025	19.2	19.3
18-20	34	2.3	1,055	3.3	4.3
21-24	24	1.6	1,169	3.7	5.1
25-44	300	20.7	8,830	28.1	29.8
45-54	299	20.6	4,926	15.7	13.8
55-59	101	7.0	1,590	5.1	4.9
60-64	109	7.5	1,403	4.5	3.8
65 & over	272	18.8	4,495	14.4	12.3
Total	1448	99.8	31,437	100.2	100.1
Median age	47.0		38.9		35.5

Note: Due to rounding, percents may not equal 100
Source: Census of Population and Housing 2000.



Income and Employment

Income statistics for the 2000 Census reflect information from the 1999 calendar year, because the Census was taken in April of 2000. Historically, income levels for the Northern Michigan fall behind those found in the State as a whole, however during the decade between 1990 and 2000, the median household income for the Township rose significantly to surpass the statewide median household income. Table 2-3 compares income statistics for West Traverse Township to Emmet County and the State.

Table 2-3: Income Statistics (in 1999 dollars) West Traverse Township, Emmet County and State of Michigan				
	Median Household Income		Per Capita Income	
	2000	1990	2000	1990
West Traverse Township	\$ 64,167	\$36,477	\$ 31,136	\$17,589
Emmet County	\$ 40,222	\$33,764	\$ 21,070	\$16,361
State of Michigan	\$ 44,667	\$40,260	\$ 22,168	\$18,370
Source: 2000 Census				

Employment data on the civilian labor force is compiled on a monthly and annual basis by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Office of Labor Market Information. Table 2-4 compares the civilian labor force statistics for the County and State from 2000 to 2006. This Employment data is no longer available at the Township level. As the statistics show, the unemployment rate for Emmet County has traditionally been higher than that of the State.

Table 2-4: Civilian Labor Force Comparisons and Unemployment Emmet County and State of Michigan –2000, 2002, 2004, 2006								
	County				State (in 1,000's)			
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2000	2002	2004	2006
Labor Force	18,050	18,426	19,883	20,556	5,144	5,040	5,051	5,081
Employed	17,065	17,116	18,285	18,850	4,953	4,725	4,695	4,730
Unemployed	985	1,310	1,598	1,706	190	315	356	351
Unemployment Rate	5.5%	7.1%	8.0%	8.3%	3.7%	6.2%	7.0%	6.9%
Source: DLEG, OLMI, Annual Averages								

Another method of describing the economic characteristics of a community is to analyze the employment by occupations. A comparison of occupational employment for the Township, County and the State is presented in Table 2-5.

Table 2-5: Employment (by Occupation) West Traverse Township, Emmet County and State of Michigan - 2000					
Occupation	West Traverse Twp		Emmet County		State
	#	%	#	%	%
Management, professional, and related occupations	253	37.4	4,661	30.7	31.5
Sales and office occupations	204	30.1	4,059	26.7	25.6
Service occupations	95	14.0	2,809	18.5	14.8
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	73	10.8	1,828	12.0	9.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0	0	70	0.5	0.5
Total	677	100.0	15,204	100.0	100.0
Source: 2000 Census.					

As shown by the data above, the majority of the jobs for the Township, County and State are classified as *management, professional and other related occupations*. In 2000, these jobs comprised approximately 37 percent of the total related jobs held by Township residents and compared with roughly 31 percent both for the County and the State. This slightly higher percent at the Township level is likely a contributing factor to the higher median household income (see Table 2-3).

Education

Of the 1,066 persons in West Traverse Township over 25 years of age, 95.5 percent have attained an education of high school graduate or higher, while 43.4 percent have also attained a bachelor's degree or higher. This level of educational achievement is somewhat higher than the County, with 81.4 percent of the population having earned a high school diploma and 19.2 percent a bachelor's degree or higher. The Township educational levels for high school diplomas are well above the State level of 83.3 percent and 21.7 percent for high school and bachelor's degree respectively.

Housing Stock and Property Values

An evaluation of housing stock and property values can be very beneficial in determining community characteristics or housing needs. For example, a large percentage of seasonal housing units are indicative of an increased seasonal population, as is the case of West Traverse Township.

Statistics from the 2000 Census show a total of 1,102 housing units for West Traverse Township: 1,028 single-family units, 57 units in multi-family structures, and 17 mobile homes. Multi-family housing represents approximately five percent of the housing stock, while mobile homes are less than two percent of the housing stock in West Traverse Township.

The lure of lakefront living on Little Traverse Bay of Lake Michigan, combined with the abundant farmland, forestland, and wildlife in the Township, has attracted many seasonal residents to West Traverse Township. When compared to the State as a whole, seasonal housing in the Township and County is significant, as shown in Table 2-6. While the percent of housing units used seasonally decreased between 1990 and 2000 in West Traverse Township, the actual number of seasonal units increased.

Table 2-6: Seasonal Housing Characteristics West Traverse Township, Emmet County and State of Michigan – 1990 and 2000							
	Total Units			Seasonal Units		% Seasonal	
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	1990	2000
West Traverse Township	808	1,093	35.3	419	437	51.9	40.0
Emmet County	14,731	18,554	25.9	4,382	5,039	28.7	27.2
State of Michigan	3,847,926	4,234,279	10.0	223,549	233,922	5.8	5.5
Source: 2000 Census							

Household Size

Census data from 2000 shows West Traverse Township has a household size of 2.3 persons per household, compared with 2.44 persons per household in Emmet County and 2.56 persons per household for the State of Michigan as a whole. These figures are a significant change from prior decades. In 1990 the household size for West Traverse Township was 2.67 persons, compared to 2.58 for the County and 2.66 for the State. This trend to smaller households is important, because it creates a demand for additional housing units, even in the absence of numerical increase in population.

Ownership

In West Traverse Township, 87.4 percent of the permanently occupied housing units are owner-occupied, compared with 75.6 percent at the County level and 73.8 percent at the State level. The renter-occupied housing in West Traverse Township accounts for 12.6 percent of the total housing units (median rent \$663), compared with State level of 26.2 percent and median rent of \$546.

Housing Value

Another comparative measure for housing is value, as shown in Table 2-7. The median value of owner-occupied year-round housing units is \$228,800 for West Traverse Township, more than double 1990's \$108,900. Emmet County's median value in 2000 is \$131,500 as compared to the value of \$64,700 in 1990, while Michigan's 2000 median value owner-occupied housing unit is \$115,600 (\$60,600 in 1990). This information, while collected by the Census Bureau is subjectively provided by the general population regarding what he or she thinks is the value of his or her house, therefore this information should be used with caution.

Table 2-7: Value of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units West Traverse Township – 1990 and 2000		
Housing Values	Percent of Units	
	1990	2000
Less than \$50,000	6.0	1.6
\$50,000 - 99,000	39.3	7.6
\$100,000 - 149,000	21.8	19.6
\$150,000 - 199,000	7.3	13.2
\$200,000 - 299,000	15.0	25.4
\$300,000 or more	6.4	32.6

Source: 2000 Census

Property Value

Property values can also be analyzed by reviewing State Equalized Value (SEV) figures. By law, SEV, which constitutes a community's tax base, is equal to approximately one-half of the true market value of real property and certain taxable personal properties. The total SEV for West Traverse Township increased by approximately 14.2 percent between 2005 and 2007, see Table 2-8. The largest valued nonresidential class of properties making up the Township's SEV is commercial land, which increased by 9.7 percent between 2005 and 2007, although percent of total SEV was almost unchanged.

The 2007 distribution of SEV values for West Traverse Township and Emmet County is illustrated in Table 2-9. As shown in the table, the majority of the West Traverse Township tax base continues to be derived from the Residential category.

Table 2-8:
State Equalized Valuation by Property Class
 West Traverse Township

Property Class	2005 SEV		2006 SEV		2007 SEV	
	Value	% of Total	Value	% of Total	Value	% of Total
Agriculture	1,326,600	0.3	1,341,600	0.3	1,423,800	0.3
Commercial	9,651,800	2.5	10,177,000	2.5	10,584,900	2.4
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	0
Residential	374,145,000	96.5	397,176,000	96.6	428,633,600	96.8
Timber Cutover	0	0	0	0	0	0
Developmental	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Real Property	385,123,400	99.3	408,694,600	99.4	440,642,300	99.5
Personal Property	2,759,350	0.7	2,576,250	0.6	2,386,950	0.5
Total SEV	387,882,750	100	411,270,850	100	443,029,250	100

Source: Emmet County Equalization Department

Table 2-9:
Distribution of the SEV
 West Traverse Township and Emmet County - 2007

Real Property:	West Traverse Township		Emmet County	
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
Agricultural	1,423,800	0.3	56,420,600	1.4
Commercial	10,584,900	2.4	412,635,200	10.6
Industrial	0	0	29,781,508	0.8
Residential	428,633,600	96.8	3,294,226,200	84.3
Timber Cutover	0	0	0	0
Developmental	0	0	5,074,900	0.1
Total Real Property	440,642,300	99.5	3,798,138,408	97.2
Personal Property	2,386,950	0.5	107,613,750	2.8
Total SEV	443,029,250	100	3,905,752,158	100

Source: Emmet County Equalization Department