

CHAPTER II COMMUNITY PROFILE

Overview

In the last 30 years, the character of Ada Township has changed dramatically in many ways. The community has evolved from a sparsely populated, predominantly rural and agricultural community to a highly-diverse community containing both urban and rural characteristics. This transformation is due in part to the Township's location at the perimeter of the Grand Rapids urbanized area. Figure 1 identifies the location of Ada Township in Kent County, in relation to surrounding municipalities. The international growth of the Alticor Corporation has provided the benefits of a generous industrial tax base to the Township, as well as a major source of local employment. A variety of smaller employers contribute to the Township's tax base. The southeast quadrant of the Township, which is served by public sewer and water and is near urban employment and service centers, has been the focus of a significant amount of suburban residential development over the last 20 years. This urbanization trend has placed new demands on public services in the Township, such as increased traffic on Township roads and the need for additional parks and recreation facilities. Unlike many other highway corridors in the metropolitan area, the Fulton St. (M-21) corridor has, by the Township's intention, remained largely free of linear-patterned commercial development and its resulting negative impacts on traffic congestion and safety and community aesthetics.

Much of the three-quarters of the Township north and east of the Grand River is still predominantly rural, even though this area has experienced significant development in the last 15 years. The opening of the Forest Hills Eastern Middle and High School campus within the last 5 years has contributed to northern Ada Township's attractiveness for residential development.

One characteristic of the Township has remained largely unchanged. The Township has an abundance of natural features which contribute to its scenic beauty and its attractiveness as a living place. These include wooded, rolling hills, spacious meadows, active and fallow farmland, the Grand and Thornapple Rivers, smaller streams and wetlands. The preservation of this attractive natural character in the face of continued development pressures will pose a challenge to the Township in the future.

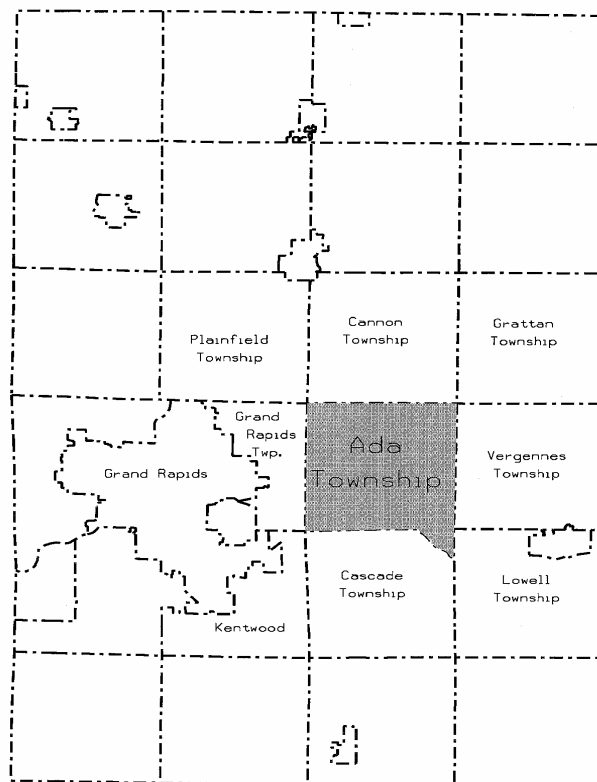


Figure 1 - Location of Ada Township in Kent County

Historical Population Growth:

The Township's population growth rate increased significantly in the 1990's, in comparison to the growth that occurred in the 1980's. Table 1 summarizes population growth over the last 25 years in Ada Township and surrounding communities, based on US Census data. The Township population increased by 2,304 persons between 1990 and 2000, a 30% increase, compared to a

much smaller 17% increase during the 1980's. This high rate of growth has continued since 2000, with the population having grown by an estimated 19% in the last 5 years.

**Table 1
Historical Population
Ada Township and Surrounding Communities, 1980-2005**

Community	1980	1990	% Change 1980-90	2000	% Change 1990-00	Estimated 2005	% Change 2000-05
ADA TOWNSHIP	6,472	7,578	17.1%	9,882	30.4%	11,762	19.02%
Cannon Township	4,983	7,928	59.1%	12,075	52.3%	13,233	9.59%
Cascade Township	10,120	12,829	27.2%	15,107	17.8%	16,571	9.69%
Grand Rapids Township	9,294	10,760	15.8%	14,056	30.6%	14,787	5.20%
Lowell Township	3,972	4,774	20.2%	5,219	9.3%	6,203	18.85%
Vergennes Township	1,819	2,492	37.0%	3,611	44.9%	4,120	14.10%
Kent County	444,506	500,631	12.6%	574,335	14.7%	596,666	3.89%

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000: U.S. Census
2005: U.S. Census Bureau estimates

Building Permit Data:

Table 2 summarizes residential building permit data for Ada Township, back to the early 1980's. Building activity from 1998-2000 was greater than at any time in the last 25 years. The total number of housing units started during the last 3 years of the 1990's was 2 1/2 times the number of units started in the first three years of the decade. In the most recent 3 years, however, the level of new home construction in the Township has declined somewhat to about 100 new dwelling units per year.

The data also show that the median value of newly-constructed single-family residences (excluding land value) in the Township has increased steadily over the last 5 years.

Household and Family Size Trends:

After decreasing significantly between 1980 and 1990, average household size in Ada Township remained relatively unchanged through the 1990's. Historical data and 2000 Census comparison data for the County and State are shown in Table 3. The Township's average household size of 3.03 persons remains well above the State and County averages. The Township has a high percentage of its households that are family (2 or more related persons who reside together) households (85.9%), compared to Kent County overall (67.7%) This indicates that the Township has relatively few single person households and/or few households with only unrelated persons living together. The average family size in the Township, at 3.3 persons per family is only slightly larger than the overall Kent County average of 3.2 persons per family. In summary, families in the Township are not particularly larger than families in the County overall, but Ada Township has a higher than average proportion of its total households that consist of families.

Table 2
Residential Construction History and Trends
Ada Township, 1981-2006

Year	Single Family Permits	Total Valuation (\$ million)	Average Value per Single Family Unit	Median Value of New Single Family Homes	Multiple Family Permits
1981	25	Not Avail. (NA)	NA		-
1982	20	NA	NA		-
1983	38	NA	NA		-
1984	48	\$3.54	\$73,750		-
1985	61	\$5.21	\$85,410		-
1986	65	\$6.31	\$97,077		-
1987	91	\$10.51	\$115,495		-
1988	104	\$13.77	\$132,404		-
1989	88	\$11.45	\$130,114		13
1990	50	\$8.46	\$169,200		-
1991	53	\$9.43	\$177,925		-
1992	65	\$11.46	\$176,308		6
1993	72	\$13.92	\$193,319		7
1994	87	\$15.92	\$182,989		Not Avail.
1995	63	\$11.82	\$187,573		0
1996	113	\$24.61	\$217,816		42
1997	86	\$23.64	\$274,894		4
1998	123	\$27.65	\$224,823		0
1999	152	\$33.62	\$221,180		15
2000	175	\$38.48	\$219,878		19
2001	123	\$34.87	\$283,531		39
2002	150	\$34.57	\$230,453	\$168,500	8
2003	146	\$45.42	\$311,067	\$189,000	4
2004	106	\$34.04	\$321,169	\$288,000	0
2005	95	\$31.35	\$330,024	\$300,000	0
2006	101	\$35.46	\$351,124	\$310,000	0

Source: Ada Township Building Department

Table 3
Household Size Trends in Ada Township, 1970-2000

	Ada Township				Kent County 2000	Michigan 2000
	1970	1980	1990	2000		
Persons Per Household	3.55	3.32	3.10	3.03	2.64	2.56

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000

Race:

In 2000, 95.6 percent of Ada Township residents were white, 0.5 percent black, 2.3 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, and 1.1 percent of Hispanic origin, according to the 2000 Census. The Asian and Hispanic proportions of the Township's population grew slightly from 1990 to 2000. Countywide, the Hispanic proportion of the population grew significantly, from 2.9% to 7.0%, from 1990 to 2000, while the Asian/Pacific Islander proportion grew from 1.1% to 2.0%.

Age Distribution:

Data in Table 4 indicate the general aging of the Township's population that has occurred over the last 30 years. The median age of the population has increased significantly, from 23 years in 1970 to 37 years in 2000. The Township in 2000 had a significantly lower percentage of its population less than 18 years old, and a higher percentage age 65 or over, than was the case in 1970. Even so, the Township has a lower percentage of its population age 65 or over than is the case for Kent County or the State overall, and a higher percentage of children, compared to the County and State overall.

Tables 5 and 6 provide more detailed information regarding the age distribution of the Township's population in 2000 compared to 1990, and compared to the State and County distributions.

Table 4
Median Age Trends in Ada Township, 1970-2000

	Ada Township				Kent County 2000	State of Michigan 2000
	1970	1980	1990	2000		
Median Age	23	28.5	33.2	37.2	32.5	35.5
% under 18	41.3%	35.6%	32.3%	32.6%	28.3%	26.1%
65 and over	5.6%	5.1%	6.2%	7.1%	10.4%	12.3%

Source: U.S. Census

The age distribution data in Table 6 shows that Ada Township has a very strong representation of the 45-54 age group in its population, compared to the age distribution in the County and State overall. Data in Table 5 shows that the number of persons in this age group nearly doubled between 1990 and 2000, from 943 persons to 1,811 persons. This would seem to indicate that the Township has a high proportion of its residents who are: 1) in their peak earning years, and 2) may be seeking to "downsize" their housing and/or seek housing having less of a maintenance burden.

The data in Table 5 also show that the 20-24 age group is under weighted in the Township, compared to the State and County percentages. This may be a reflection of the relative lack of housing stock in Ada Township that would be affordable for young, first-time home buyers. Overall, the number of persons age 18-44 in the Township changed very little between 1990 and 2000, increasing by slightly less than 3%, compared to the overall 30% increase in total population.

**Table 5
Population Age Distribution
Ada Township, 1980-2000**

Age Groups	2000 Number of Persons	2000 % of Total	1990 Number of Persons	1990 % of Total	1980 % of Total
Under 5	760	7.7%	663	8.7%	9.1%
5-17	2,465	24.9%	1,785	23.6%	26.5%
18-24	530	5.4%	503	6.6%	9.0%
25-44	2,728	27.6%	2,664	35.2%	32.6%
45-54	1,811	18.3%	943	12.4%	10.1%
55-64	886	9.0%	550	7.3%	7.2%
65+	702	7.1%	470	6.2%	5.1%

Source: U.S. Census: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000

Disabled Population:

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, of a total of 6,250 persons aged 16-64 in Ada Township, 4.99%, or 312 persons, had an employment disability. This percentage is significantly lower than the 10.1% disabled adult population in Kent County overall. 2.3% of Ada Township residents age 16 or older had a disability affecting their ability to go outside the home, compared to 6.4% for the County overall.

Education Levels:

As shown in Table 7, in 2000, only East Grand Rapids ranked higher than Ada Township among nearby Kent County communities in the percentage of its population having high school diplomas. Ada Township also ranks high among communities in Kent County in the percentage of its residents having college degrees.

Income:

Ada Township has a relatively affluent population when its median household income is compared to that of other communities in Kent County. The Township had the third highest median household income in the county in 1999, trailing only Cascade Township and East Grand Rapids. Ada's median household income of \$83,357 was 81 percent greater than Kent County's median level of \$45,980.

Table 6
2000 Age Distribution
Ada Township, Kent County and Michigan

Age Group	Percentage of 2000 Population		
	Ada Twp.	Kent County	Michigan
Under 5	7.7%	7.8%	6.8%
5-19	27.2%	23.6%	22.2%
20-24	3.1%	7.4%	6.5%
25-44	27.6%	31.1%	29.8%
45-54	18.3%	12.7%	13.8%
55-64	8.9%	7.0%	8.7%
65+	7.1%	10.4%	12.3%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Ada Township also had the third highest 1999 per capita income among all Kent County communities, at \$37,840, again exceeded only by that of East Grand Rapids and Cascade Township, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Employment:

Occupational characteristics of Ada Township residents in 2000 are given in Table 8. In 1990, white collar occupations (managerial and professional specialty; and technical, sales and administration) accounted for 71.3% of the Township's employed persons. This percentage increased to 79% by 2000. The percentage of employed persons in blue collar occupations (production, transportation, material moving, construction, extraction and maintenance) decreased from 18.4% in 1990 to 13.4% in 2000.

The numerical increase in the numbers of higher-paying white collar professions is concomitant with the Township's strong ranking among Kent County communities in housing values, education, and income levels.

The industries employing Ada Township residents in 2000 are shown in Table 9. The industry groups employing the largest numbers of Ada Township residents include education, health and social services, responsible for nearly 22% of employed residents, and manufacturing, at 18.4%. Industry groups that are more heavily represented in Ada Township residents' employment compared to Kent County overall include the professional, scientific, management and administrative category, and finance, insurance and real estate.

Table 7
Education Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older
Ada Township and Surrounding Communities, 2000

Community	Percentage of Persons 25 Years & Older	
	High School Graduate or Higher (%)	Bachelor's Degree or Higher (%)
Ada Township	96.5%	50.6%
Cannon Township	95.8%	37.9%
Cascade Township	96.0%	54.6%
East Grand Rapids	99.0%	71.1%
G.R. Township	91.6%	46.0%
Vergennes Township	94.1%	27.4%
Kent County	84.6%	26.7%
Michigan	83.4%	22.6%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 8
Occupation of Employed Persons 16 Years and Over, 2000
Ada Township

Occupation	Number Employed, 2000	% of Total Employed
Management, professional, and related occupations:	2,509	51.7%
Service occupations:	354	7.3%
Sales and office occupations:	1,321	27.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	16	0.4%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations:	221	4.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:	429	8.8%
Total:	4,850	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 9
Industry of Employed Persons
Ada Township, 2000

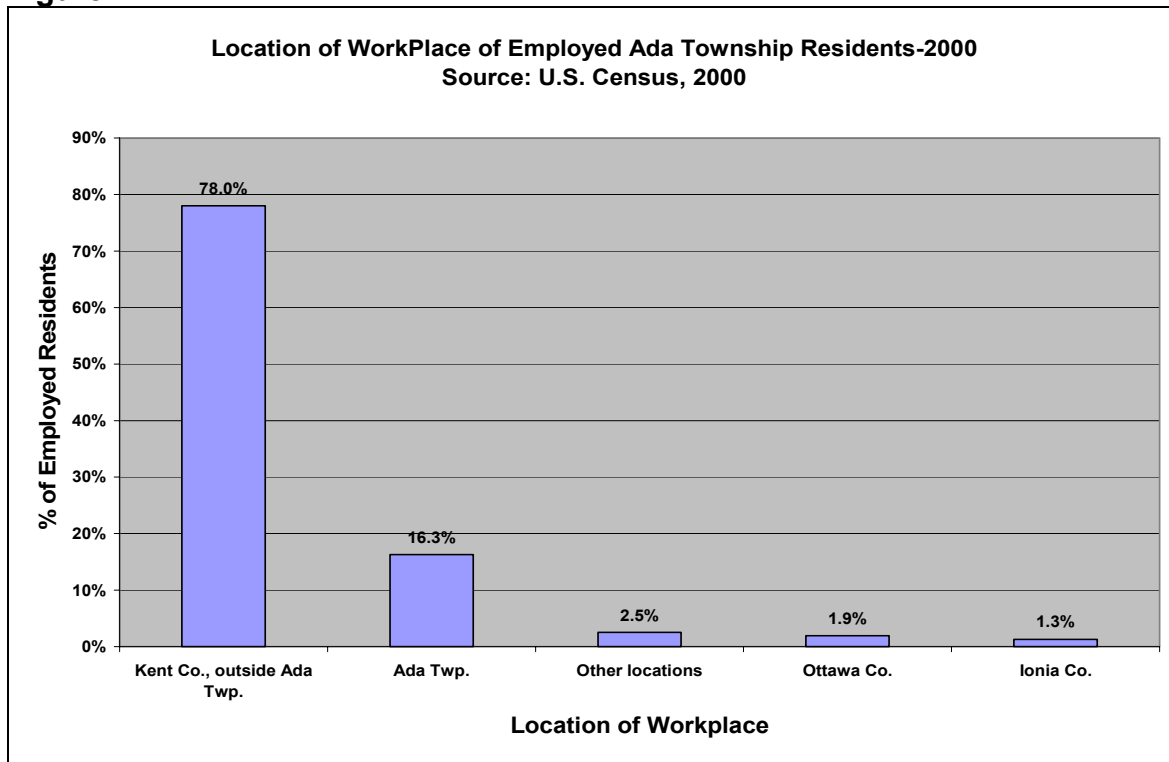
Industry Category	Number of Employees	Percent of Total Employment		
	Ada Township	Ada Township	Kent County	Michigan
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining:	38	0.8%	0.6%	1.1%
Construction	172	3.5%	5.6%	6.0%
Manufacturing	894	18.4%	23.7%	22.5%
Wholesale trade	263	5.4%	5.5%	3.3%
Retail trade	628	12.9%	13.2%	11.9%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	166	3.4%	3.4%	4.1%
Information	73	1.5%	2.0%	2.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing:	457	9.4%	6.0%	5.3%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services:	550	11.3%	7.8%	8.0%
Educational, health and social services:	1060	21.9%	18.8%	19.9%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services:	237	4.9%	7.1%	7.6%
Other services (except public administration)	156	3.2%	4.4%	4.6%
Public administration	156	3.2%	2.0%	3.6%
Total:	4850	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Commuting Patterns:

Although Ada Township can be characterized as a bedroom community, there is a significant base of local employment that provides jobs for a significant number of Township residents. The following chart shows the distribution of workplace locations for the Township's 4,802 employed persons in 2000, based on US Census data. A relatively high percentage (16.3% of the Township's employed persons were employed at a workplace in Ada Township. Other locations in Kent County are the workplace location for 78% of the Township's employed persons. Ottawa County and Ionia County are the workplace location for 1.9% and 1.3% of employed Township residents, respectively.

Figure 2



Housing Stock

The housing stock in Ada Township is composed almost entirely of single-family detached units. Table 10 compares the distribution of housing units by number of units in the structure for the Township, Kent County and the State in 2000. Of note is the fact that only 3.8% of the housing units in the Township are of a type other than detached single-family units. However, this percentage has increased somewhat from 1990, when the Census data indicated that 98.19% of the Township's housing units were detached single family. The construction of 96 attached condominiums in the Clements Mill development in the last 10 years is largely responsible for this modest change in the makeup of the Township's housing stock. It should be noted that the data in Table 10 is from a sample survey of households conducted as part of the 2000 census, rather than 100% count data, and may be subject to some error. For example, the Census data indicates that there were 6 housing units in structures containing 20-49 units. In fact there are no multiple family structures in Ada Township containing 20 or more units. If there were such a building, one would expect that the data would indicate a count of at least 20 such units.

Table 11 compares the median value of owner-occupied housing in Ada Township with that of neighboring townships, the City of East Grand Rapids, Kent County and the State. Cascade Township, East Grand Rapids and Ada Township have the highest median housing values in Kent County.

Table 12 provides data concerning the percentage of homes within the Township within specified value ranges, compared to the State and County overall. Only 6.4% of owners reported their homes as being valued less than \$100,000, compared to 39% in Kent County overall. The percentage of homes in the \$100,000 to \$149,999 value range in the Township, at 26.8%, was comparable to the percentage for the County overall, at 32.5%. The predominance of detached single-family homes in the Township, and the relatively high value of the housing stock indicates that there is limited availability of housing in the Township for first-time home buyers, renters or those of moderate incomes.

Table 10
Distribution of Housing Units by Number of Units in Structure, 2000
Ada Township, Kent County and Michigan

Units in Structure	Ada Township		Kent County		Michigan	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1, detached	3,254	96.2%	142,341	63.5%	2,988,818	70.6%
1, attached	90	2.7%	10,303	4.6%	164,910	3.9%
2	11	0.3%	13,580	6.1%	146,414	3.5%
3 or 4	6	0.2%	8,518	3.8%	118,067	2.8%
5 to 9	17	0.5%	9,792	4.4%	169,946	4.0%
10 to 19	0	0.0%	13,900	6.2%	144,848	3.4%
20 to 49	6	0.2%	7,516	3.4%	91,625	2.2%
50 or more	0	0.0%	6,956	3.1%	124,948	3.0%
Mobile home	0	0.0%	11,069	4.9%	277,158	6.5%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0%	25	0.0%	7,545	0.2%
Total:	3,384	100.0%	224,000	100.0%	4,234,279	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 11
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing, 2000
Ada Township and Surrounding Communities

Community	Median Value
ADA TOWNSHIP	\$189,200
Cannon Township	\$185,000
Cascade Township	\$220,100
Grand Rapids Township	\$166,300
Vergennes Township	\$158,700
East Grand Rapids	\$205,600
Kent County	\$115,100
Michigan	\$115,600

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 12
Value Distribution of Owner Occupied 1-Unit Detached Housing, 2000
Ada Township, Kent County and Michigan

Value Range	Ada Township		Kent County		Michigan	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$100,000	183	6.4%	48,753	39.0%	936,251	41.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	761	26.8%	40,635	32.5%	603,454	26.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	548	19.3%	18,387	14.7%	339,716	15.0%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	637	22.4%	12,031	9.6%	252,044	11.1%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	509	17.9%	4,105	3.3%	104,079	4.6%
\$500,000 or more	200	7.0%	1,203	1.0%	33,631	1.5%
Total	2,838	100.0%	125,114	100.0%	2,269,175	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Average value per new single-family residence has steadily increased through most of this period, at a rate in excess of general inflation rates, indicating a trend toward larger, more expensive new homes.

Table 13
Analysis of Housing Stock Age in Ada Township

Decade Built	# Homes Built in Decade	Cumulative Total	Cumulative %
1820's or prior	4	4	0.1%
1830's	3	7	0.2%
1840's	7	14	0.3%
1850's	13	27	0.7%
1860's	23	50	1.2%
1870's	26	76	1.8%
1880's	27	103	2.5%
1890's	33	136	3.3%
1900's	12	148	3.6%
1910's	30	178	4.3%
1920's	51	229	5.5%
1930's	59	288	6.9%
1940's	110	398	9.6%
1950's	211	609	14.7%
1960's	453	1062	25.6%
1970's	801	1863	44.9%
1980's	581	2444	58.9%
1990's	1017	3461	83.4%
2000's	691	4152	100.0%

Source: Ada Township Property Assessment Data, 2006