

# APPENDIX

## Mason County

### Master Plan Update



## Appendices

1. Mason County Data Book
2. Mason County Public Meeting Report
3. Mason County Community Survey

# Mason County DATA BOOK 2013



## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### **PURPOSE**

This publication was prepared as part of the process to update the Mason County Comprehensive Plan in fall 2012. The fundamental purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to enable a community to establish a direction for physical development, capital investment, and growth.

The Mason County Comprehensive Data Book provides information citizens and county officials can use to help them review county-wide information and assist in the preparation of private and public plans for future projects that improve the quality of life for county citizens. Mason County's last Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2006 and reflected current conditions and trends at the time. The effort to update it in 2012 will enable the county and its jurisdictions to focus on particular challenges rather than restrict the effort to a more general overview.

The reader should note that only chapters 1, 2, 3 and 5 were updated in 2012. Chapters 4, 6 and 7 remain unchanged from 2006.

### **USES**

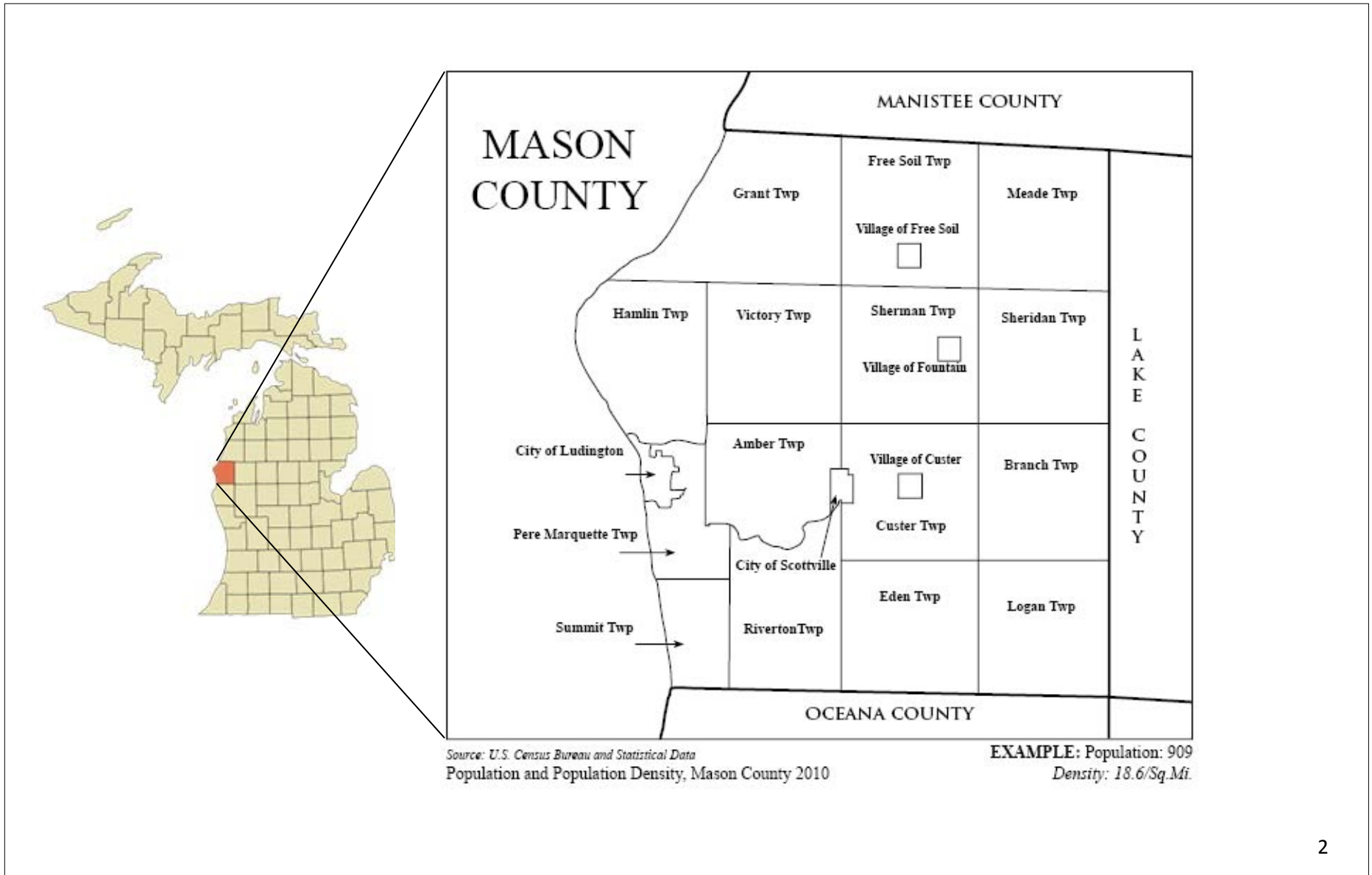
The data and trends presented in the Mason County Comprehensive Plan Data Book should be studied by elected and appointed officials, community leaders, service organizations, developers, realtors, and interested citizens. The results can help inform decisions involving Mason County land, natural and cultural resources, community facilities, and transportation systems.

### **OVERVIEW OF AREA**

Mason County is located along the western shore of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. The county includes 15 townships, 2 cities and 3 villages and is spread over 1,241 square miles. Map 1-1 shows the location of Mason County within Michigan and the location of townships, cities and villages within the County. The county seat is the City of Ludington. Please see map on following page.

Map 1-1

Mason County and County Jurisdiction



## DATA BOOK CHAPTERS

In addition to this introduction, this Mason County Data Book contains the following chapters:

**Chapter 2: Demographics.** This chapter provides a profile of the Mason County population and how it has changed over the past thirty years. Trends in population change are presented, as well as projections based on these trends. Population and housing characteristics are discussed at both the county and local levels. Among the demographic characteristics presented are population size, age minorities, housing, income, poverty, and educational attainment. Updated in 2012.

**Chapter 3: Economy and Economic Development.** This chapter provides an overview of important economic indicators, such as jobs and business growth in Mason County. It discusses the size of the labor force, employment, and unemployment, the sectors in which Mason County residents are employed, the major businesses in the county, and travel time to work. Updated in 2012.

**Chapter 4: Natural Resources and Environment.** Land, water, and other natural resources provide for the livelihood of Mason County residents and enrich their quality of life. This chapter describes important Mason County natural resources such as soils, agricultural land, and watershed components (wetlands, floodplains, and water quality). Updated in 2006.

**Chapter 5: Existing Land Use and Tax Base.** How the land is currently used is an important factor in understanding the issues communities face and in planning for the future use of that land. This chapter describes the pattern of different land uses in Mason County, which include agriculture, residential, commercial, and industrial uses, and how those uses may be changing. This chapter also describes a “buildout analysis” that illustrates the potential extent of development if all land is developed according to existing zoning. This can be an eye opening experience for communities that express a commitment to a popular community character, but find they are moving toward a different character because of provisions in local zoning. Updated in 2012.

**Chapter 6: Transportation.** The transportation system of roads, rail, and air provides access for Mason County residents and visitors to the places and activities that occupy their lives. In addition to access, the transportation network provides for a high level of mobility and a high degree of choice of where to go and when. As the pattern and density of uses of the land evolve or respond to plan for its future, the transportation system will either promote the desired future or limit it. This chapter describes the current state of transportation in Mason so that plans for improvement can be made to complement future demands. Updated in 2006.

**Chapter 7: Public Facilities and Physical Services.** This chapter identifies the various publicly owned parks, city and township halls, fire stations, schools, utilities, and other facilities, as well as programs and services provided by Mason County. This information is valuable when comparing existing facilities against unmet needs and determining what new facilities and services will be needed by new development. Updated in 2006.

### UPDATING AND COMPLETING THE DATA BOOK

The facts presented in this document represent information from the US Census Bureau and the most current Census data (2010) was used. Every attempt was made to acquire the most recent information possible, however, it is recommended that the information in this Data Book be updated and reanalyzed as Mason County changes over time.

## CHAPTER 2 DEMOGRAPHICS

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the size, age, sex, poverty status, educational attainment, and other characteristics of the Mason County population. It looks at changes to the population and housing over the past few decades, and projects some trends in the future.

### POPULATION PROFILE

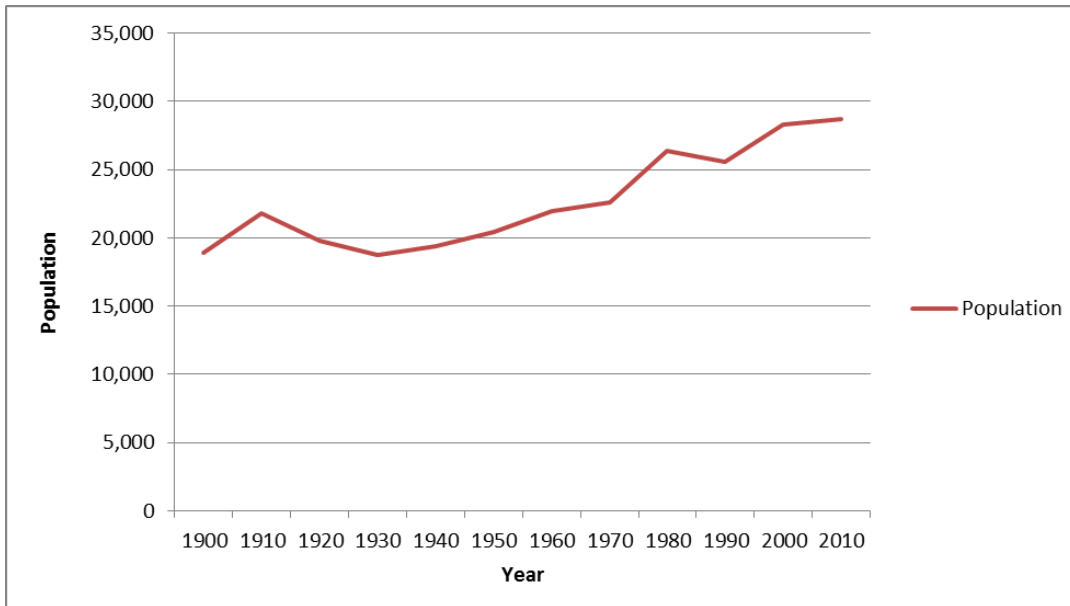
Over the past 100 years (1900-2000), Mason County’s population has grown steadily, but the rate of that growth has fluctuated over time. Since 1900, the population has grown by 52% or 9,820 persons, and most of this growth occurred in the last 40 years. **Table 2-1** lists Mason County’s population each decade from 1900 to 2010, and **Figure 2-1** illustrates this change. In Mason County, the largest increase in population occurred between 1970 and 1980 (3,753 persons) and 1990 to 2000 (2,737 persons).

Table 2-1  
**Population Change for Mason County, 1900-2010**

Year	Population	Change in Population	Percent Change in Population
1900	18,885		
1910	21,832	2,947	15%
1920	19,831	-2,001	-9%
1930	18,756	-1,075	-5%
1940	19,378	622	3%
1950	20,474	1,096	6%
1960	21,929	1,455	7%
1970	22,612	683	3%
1980	26,365	3,753	17%
1990	25,537	-828	-3%
2000	28,274	2,737	11%
2010	28,705	431	1.5%
<b>Change in Population 1900-2010</b>		<b>9,820</b>	<b>52%</b>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau*

Figure 2-1  
Population for Mason County, 1990-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

#### POPULATION PROFILE OF THE LAST DECADE

From 2000 to 2010, Mason County saw little change in its population. **Table 2-2** illustrates this change. The greatest growth occurred in the first half of the decade, between 2000 and 2004. Since 2004, Mason County's overall population has been declining, at a rate of roughly -0.2% every year. **Figure 2-2** illustrates this change. Michigan also experienced a decline in population in the first half of the decade, and has experienced slight growth since 2006, at a rate of roughly 0.5%. Overall, the population in Mason County from 2000-2010 increased by 431 persons, or 1.5%.

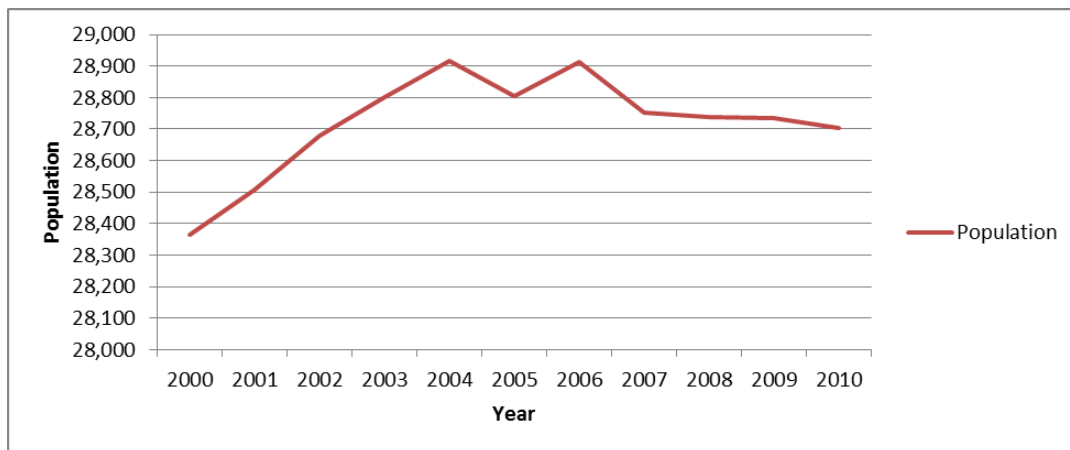


Table 2-2  
**Population Change for Mason County 2000-2010**

YEAR	MASON COUNTY			MICHIGAN
	Total Population	Population Change	% Change	Yearly Change
2000	28,274			-0.5%
2001	28,509	146	0.5%	-0.8%
2002	28,679	170	0.6%	-0.7%
2003	28,802	123	0.4%	-0.6%
2004	28,918	116	0.4%	-0.02%
2005	28,805	-110	-0.3%	-0.1%
2006	28,912	107	0.3%	0.4%
2007	28,753	-159	-0.5%	0.3%
2008	28,740	-13	-0.05%	0.3%
2009	28,736	-4	-0.01%	0.7%
2010	28,705	-31	-0.1%	0.9%
<b>2011 Population Estimate</b>				<b>28,678</b>
<b>Change in Population from 2000-2010</b>				<b>431</b>
<b>% Change in Population from 2000-2010</b>				<b>1.5%</b>

Source: Michigan Department of Community Health and U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2-2  
**Population for Mason County, 2000-2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## MASON COUNTY AND ADJACENT COUNTIES

Mason County is adjacent to four counties: Manistee, Lake, Oceana, and Newaygo. **Table 2-3** illustrates the population change from 1970-2010 for all five counties. Between 1970 and 2010, Mason County had a relatively low change in its population in terms of percent over the last 40 years (29%). However, Mason County had the third highest net change in persons added to the county over that same time (6,462). Together, the five-county area added 45,664 persons or 48% between 1970 and 2010. **Table 2-4** illustrates more recent population changes within the five counties from 1990-2010. From 1990 to 2000, Mason County grew at the slowest rate (12%) in relation to the other four counties, adding 3,168 persons. From 2000-2010, Mason (1.5%), Lake (2%), and Newaygo (1%) had positive population growth, while Manistee (-4%) and Oceana (-1%) experienced population loss. From 1990-2010, the population of the five county area increased by 19% (4,419 persons), and from 2000-2010 the amount of growth decreased to .8% (1,126 persons).

Table 2-3  
Mason and Adjoining Counties Population Change 1970-2010

County	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Population Change 1970-2010	Percent Change in Population 1970-2010
<b>Mason</b>	<b>22,612</b>	<b>26,365</b>	<b>25,537</b>	<b>28,274</b>	<b>28,705</b>	<b>6,462</b>	<b>29%</b>
Manistee	20,094	23,019	21,265	24,527	24,733	4,639	23%
Lake	5,661	7,711	8,583	11,333	11,539	5,878	104%
Newaygo	27,992	34,917	38,206	47,874	48,460	20,468	73%
Oceana	17,984	22,002	22,454	26,873	26,570	8,586	49%
<b>Five County Total</b>	<b>94,343</b>	<b>114,014</b>	<b>116,045</b>	<b>138,881</b>	<b>140,007</b>	<b>45,664</b>	<b>48%</b>

Source: Michigan Department of Community Health and U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2-4  
Mason and Adjoining Counties Population Change 1990-2010

County	1990	2000	2010	Change in Population 1990-2000	Percent Change in Population 1990-2000	Change in Population 2000-2010	Percent Change in Population 2000-2010
<b>Mason</b>	<b>25,537</b>	<b>28,274</b>	<b>28,705</b>	<b>3,168</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
Manistee	21,265	25,527	24,733	4,626	20%	-1,194	-4%
Lake	8,583	11,333	11,539	2,750	32%	206	2%
Newaygo	38,206	47,874	48,460	9,968	26%	586	1%
Oceana	22,454	26,873	26,570	4,419	19%	-303	-1%
<b>COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>116,045</b>	<b>138,881</b>	<b>140,007</b>	<b>22,836</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>1,126</b>	<b>.8%</b>

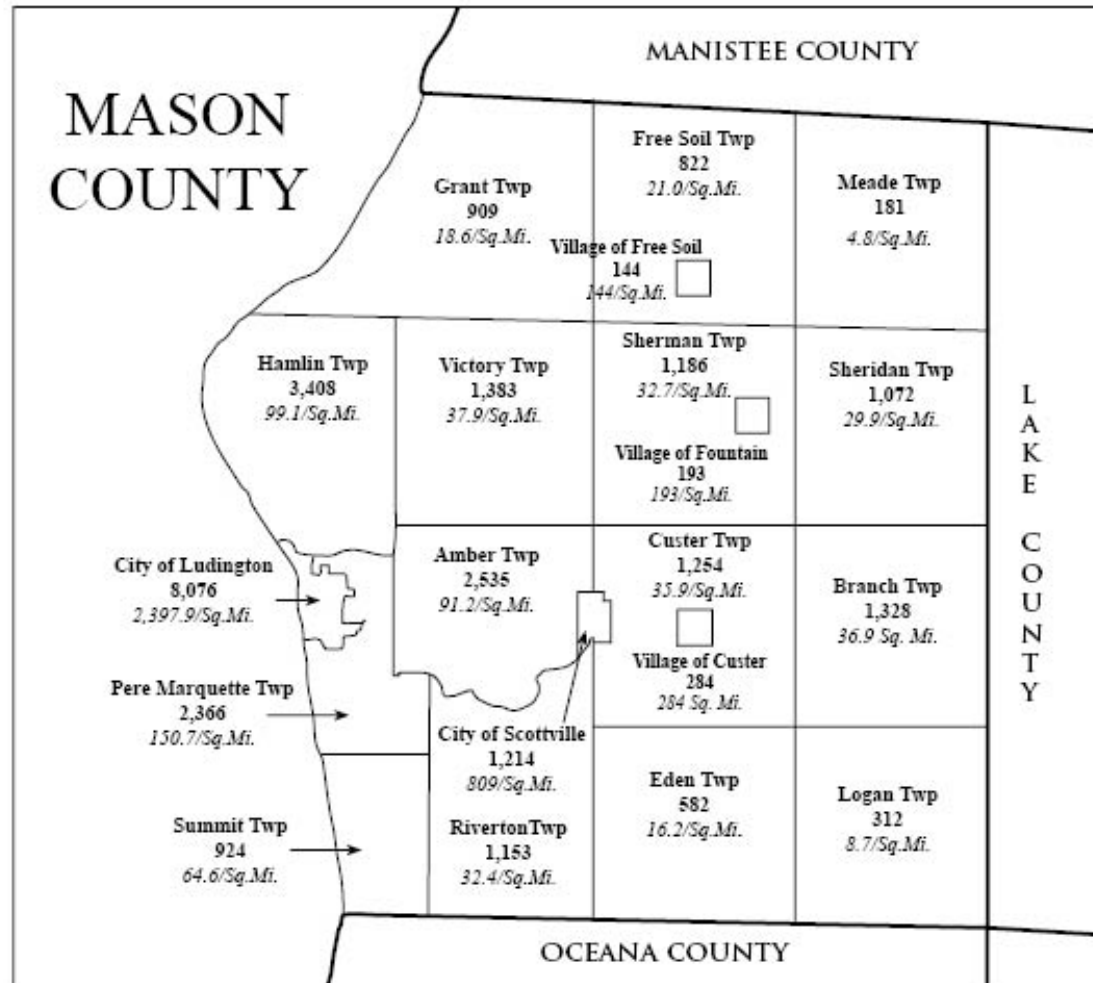
Source: Michigan Department of Community Health and U.S. Census Bureau

## **TOWNSHIP, CITY, AND VILLAGE POPULATION TRENDS**

Mason County consists of two cities, three villages, and fifteen townships. **Map 2-1** is a reference for location, population, and population density of each jurisdiction from 2010. **Table 2-5** lists the populations of each jurisdiction from 1990 to 2010, as well as percent change in population and population density. The jurisdictions that had the greatest percentage increase in population within Mason County between 2000 and 2010 were Amber Township (23% from 2,054 persons to 2,535 persons), whose 23% growth far exceeds the Mason County total of 1.5%. Sheridan Township (11% from 969 persons to 1,072 persons), Branch Township (12% from 1,181 persons to 1,328 persons) and the Village of Fountain (10% from 175 persons to 193 persons) all experienced growth exceeding 10%. Those with the greatest total increase in population were Amber Township (481), Hamlin Township (216), and Branch Township (147).

The population density of Mason County jurisdictions ranged from a low of 4.8 persons per square mile in Meade Township, to a high of 2,397.9 persons per square mile in the City of Ludington, based on the 2010 population. Both Meade Township and the City of Ludington, respectively, have had the lowest and highest population densities for the past decade. In 2010, Custer was the most densely populated village with 284 persons per square mile, and Pere Marquette was the most densely populated township with 150.7 persons per square mile. The population density for Mason County overall in 2010 was 23.1 persons per square mile.

Map 2-1  
**Population and Density of Mason County Jurisdictions, 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Statistical Data  
 Population and Population Density, Mason County 2010

**EXAMPLE:** Population: 909  
 Density: 18.6/Sq.Mi.

Table 2-5  
Population and Density of Mason County Jurisdictions, 2010

County Jurisdiction	Area (Sq.Mi)	Total Pop. 2000	Pop. Density (per Sq.Mi) 2000	Total Pop. 2010	Pop. Density 2010	Change in Pop. 2000-2010	% Change in Pop. 2000-2010
City of Ludington	3.37	8,357	2,479.8	8,076	2,397.9	-281	-3%
City of Scottville	1.5	1,266	844	1,214	809	-52	-4%
Village of Custer	1.0	318	318	284	284	-34	-11%
Village of Fountain	1.0	175	175	193	193	18	10%
Village of Free Soil	1.0	177	177	144	144	-33	-19%
Township of Amber	27.8	2,054	74.4	2,535	91.2	481	23%
Township of Branch	36.0	1,181	32.8	1,328	36.9	147	12%
Township of Custer	35.0	1,302	37.2	1,254	35.9	-48	-4%
Township of Eden	35.9	555	15.5	582	16.2	27	5%
Township of Free Soil	39.1	934	23.8	822	21.0	-112	-12%
Township of Grant	48.9	850	17.4	909	18.6	59	7%
Township of Hamlin	34.4	3,192	92.8	3,408	99.1	216	7%
Township of Logan	36.0	329	9.1	312	8.7	-17	-5%
Township of Meade	37.6	158	4.2	181	4.8	23	14.5%
Township of Pere Marquette	15.7	2,228	141.9	2,366	150.7	138	6%
Township of Riverton	35.6	1,335	37.5	1,153	32.4	-182	-14%
Township of Sheridan	35.9	969	27	1,072	29.9	103	11%
Township of Sherman	36.2	1,094	30.2	1,186	32.7	92	8%
Township of Summit	14.3	1,021	71.4	924	64.6	-97	-9.5%
Township of Victory	36.5	1,444	39.5	1,383	37.9	-61	-4%
<b>MASON COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>1,241.9</b>	<b>28,451</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>28,705</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>1.5%</b>

Note that the Mason County Total in this table for the year 2000 (28,451) is different than that reported in Tables 2-2 through 2-4 (28,274). The U.S. Census corrected the 2000 population for Free Soil and Meade Townships but did not officially change the County total population. This Table (2-5) reflects the additional people in the corrected population for those two townships in the County total, raising it from 28,274 reported by the U.S. Census to 28,451.

Source: Michigan Department of Community Health and U.S. Census Bureau

### POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of the County's population, shown in **Table 2-6** indicates that the greatest number of residents live in the City of Ludington (8,076 persons) comprising 28% of the county's total population. Hamlin Township holds the second greatest number of residents (3,408 persons or 12%), and Amber Township (2,535 persons or 9%) has the third largest population in the county. The least number of residents live in the Villages of Fountain (193 or 0.6%), Free Soil (144 or 0.5%), and Custer (284 or 0.9%). Between 2000 and 2010, Amber Township showed the most significant increase in population, from 2,054 residents to 2,535, and held 7% of the population in 2000 and 9% of the county population in 2010.

Table 2-6  
**Distribution of County Population by Jurisdiction, 2000 and 2010**

County Jurisdiction	Total Pop. 2000	Percent of county population	Total Pop. 2010	Percent of county population
City of Ludington	8,357	29%	8,076	28%
City of Scottville	1,266	4%	1,214	4%
Village of Custer	318	1%	284	0.9%
Village of Fountain	175	0.6%	193	0.6%
Village of Free Soil	177	0.6%	144	0.5%
Township of Amber	2,054	7%	2,535	9%
Township of Branch	1,181	4%	1,328	4.5%
Township of Custer	1,302	5%	1,254	4%
Township of Eden	555	2%	582	2%
Township of Free Soil	934	3%	822	3%
Township of Grant	850	3%	909	3%
Township of Hamlin	3,192	11%	3,408	12%
Township of Logan	329	1%	312	1%
Township of Meade	158	0.5%	181	0.6%
Township of Pere Marquette	2,228	7%	2,366	8%
Township of Riverton	1,335	4.5%	1,153	4%
Township of Sheridan	969	3%	1,072	3.5%
Township of Sherman	1,094	4%	1,186	4%
Township of Summit	1,021	4%	924	3%
Township of Victory	1,444	5%	1,383	5%
<b>MASON COUNTY TOTAL</b>	<b>28,451</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>28,705</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### HOUSING UNITS

Mason County had a total of 1,230 new housing units constructed between March 2000 and April 2010. **Table 2-7** illustrates the comparison of housing units in 2000 and 2010. Pere Marquette Township had the greatest percent increase during this period, as well as the most new units added (53.5%, 459 new units). Amber Township (47.5%) had the second highest percent increase with 390 new units added. The City of Ludington (205), Branch Township (112), and Hamlin Township (226) all experienced net increases in housing units, while Pere Marquette Township (-86), Meade Township (-20), the Village of Free Soil (-9), and the Village of Fountain (-6) all experienced net decrease in housing units from 2000-2010. Mason County experienced an 8% growth of housing units, from 16,063 to 17,293 from 2000-2010.

Table 2-7  
**Housing Units Mason County 1990-2010**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>2000 Total Housing Units</b>	<b>2010 Total Housing Units</b>	<b>Change 2000-2010</b>	<b>% Change in Units 2000- 2010</b>
City of Ludington	4,227	4,432	205	7%
City of Scottville	574	578	4	0.7%
Village of Custer	132	137	5	4 %
Village of Fountain	89	83	-6	-7%
Village of Free Soil	93	84	-9	-10%
Township of Amber	820	1,210	390	47.5%
Township of Branch	921	1,033	112	12%
Township of Custer	550	599	49	9%
Township of Eden	344	391	47	14%
Township of Free Soil	552	566	14	2.5%
Township of Grant	449	524	75	17%
Township of Hamlin	2,123	2,349	226	11%
Township of Logan	388	403	15	4%
Township of Meade	228	208	-20	-9%
Township of Pere Marquette	1,403	1,317	-86	-6%
Township of Riverton	550	564	14	2.5%
Township of Sheridan	1,013	1,062	49	5%
Township of Sherman	509	548	39	8%
Township of Summit	790	866	76	10%
Township of Victory	572	643	71	12%
<b>Mason County Total</b>	<b>16,063</b>	<b>17,293</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>8%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### **HOUSING UNIT CHARACTERISTICS**

Of the 17,293 housing units in Mason County in 2010, approximately 53% (9,128) were owner-occupied housing units, 16% (2,812) were renter occupied housing units, 31% (5,353) were vacant housing units, and 75% (4,051) of those vacant housing units were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

**Table 2-8** shows a breakdown of housing unit characteristics by jurisdiction. It is important to note that as a result of Mason County's residential tourism industry, many housing units remain unoccupied unless used for recreational, seasonal, or occasional use. **Table 2-9** illustrates the type of occupied housing in Mason County in 2010. Of the 17,293 housing units in Mason County, 76% (13,128) are one-unit detached homes, followed by mobile homes which comprise 11% (1,947) of the total occupied housing units. All other housing types including 1 unit attached, 2 units, 3 or 4 units, 5 to 9 units, or 10 units comprise roughly 12% of total housing.

Table 2-8  
Housing Unit Characteristics for Mason County, 2010

Jurisdiction	Total Housing Units	Owner Occupied Housing Units	Owner Occupied Housing Units as % of Total Housing Units	Renter Occupied Housing Units	Renter Occupied Housing Units as % of Total Housing Units	Total Vacant Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units as % of Total Housing Units	Number of Vacant Housing Units for Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	Percent of Vacant Housing Units for Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use
City of Ludington	4,432	1,980	45%	1,569	35%	883	20%	446	50.5%
City of Scottville	578	483	83.5%	180	31%	95	16.5%	13	13.5%
Village of Custer	137	88	64%	22	16%	27	19.5%	2	7.5%
Village of Fountain	83	57	67%	14	17%	12	14.5%	7	58%
Village of Free Soil	84	54	64%	10	12%	20	24%	9	45%
Township of Amber	1,210	745	62%	288	24%	177	14.5%	68	38.5%
Township of Branch	1,033	487	47%	78	7.5%	468	45%	403	86%
Township of Custer	599	431	72%	61	10%	107	18%	37	35.9%
Township of Eden	391	201	51%	27	7%	163	42%	147	90%
Township of Free Soil	566	309	55%	36	6%	221	39%	177	80%
Township of Grant	524	338	60%	37	7%	149	28.5%	138	92.5%
Township of Hamlin	2,349	1,337	57%	103	4.5%	909	39%	774	85%
Township of Logan	403	126	31%	25	6%	252	63.5%	232	92%
Township of Meade	208	70	34%	10	5%	128	61.5%	116	91%
Township of Pere Marquette	1,317	796	60%	119	9%	402	30.5%	335	83%
Township of Riverton	564	398	70.5%	44	8%	122	21.5%	59	48%
Township of Sheridan	1,062	404	38%	58	5.5%	600	56.5%	552	92%
Township of Sherman	548	392	71.5%	65	12%	91	16.5%	62	63%
Township of Summit	866	360	41.5%	39	4.5%	467	54%	419	90%
Township of Victory	643	451	70%	73	11.5%	119	18.5%	73	61%
<b>Mason County Total</b>	<b>17,293</b>	<b>9,128</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>2,812</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>5,353</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>4,051</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>AVERAGE- FOR TOTAL OF 20 JURISDICTIONS</b>									
Owner Occupied Housing Units as Percent of Total Housing Units				<b>57%</b>	Vacant Housing Units as Percent of Total Housing Units				<b>32%</b>
Renter Occupied Housing Units as Percent of Total Housing Units				<b>12%</b>	Percent of Vacant Housing Units for Seasonal, recreational, or Occasional Use				<b>65%</b>

Note that the Mason County Total (17,293) does not include the total combined housing units for the villages, which total 304.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Table 2-9  
**Type of Occupied Housing in Mason County, 2010**

Type of Housing Unit	Mason County	As % of Total Housing Units	Michigan
1 unit- detached	13,128	76%	72%
1 unit attached	271	2%	5%
2 units	403	2%	3%
3 or 4 units	397	2%	3%
5 to 9 units	390	2%	4%
10 or more units	740	4%	9%
Mobile homes, RV, boat, van	1,947	11%	5.5%
<b>Total housing units</b>	<b>17,293</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**AGE OF HOUSING IN MASON COUNTY**

The age of housing stock has implications for affordable housing, community character, and the potential need for neighborhood revitalization. A majority of housing in Mason County consists of older housing structures, with half (51%) of all structures built before 1969 (**See Table 2-10**). A large percentage of the housing stock was built prior to 1939 (26%) and also from 1970- 1979 (15%).

Table 2-10  
**Age of Occupied Housing Units in Mason County, 2000**

Year Structure Built	Number of Units	% of Total
Built 2005 or later	374	2%
Built 2000 to 2004	1,315	8%
Built 1990 to 1999	2,355	14%
Built 1980 to 1989	1,513	9%
Built 1970 to 1979	2,539	15%
Built 1960 to 1969	1,718	10%
Built 1950 to 1959	1,892	10%
Built 1940 to 1949	939	5.5%
Built 1939 or earlier	4,535	26%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>17,180</b>	

Note that total housing units (17,180) does not include village housing units.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2-11  
 Building Permits Mason County, 2007-2011

Community	2011		2010		2009		2008		2007	
	Single Family	Mobile Homes	Single Family	Mobile Homes	Single Family	Mobile Homes	Single Family	Mobile Homes	Single Family	Mobile Homes
Ludington	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	4	1
Scottville	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
Amber	2	2	2	2	5	4	4	4	3	6
Branch	1	0	6	0	1	3	3	1	5	2
Custer	2	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	3	1
Eden	3	0	0	0	2	0	3	2	3	0
Free Soil	2	0	1	0	3	1	0	2	8	0
Grant	1	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	8	0
Hamlin	17	7	13	1	13	2	17	3	18	3
Logan	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	0
Meade	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	0
Pere Marquette	2	0	5	0	4	0	9	0	10	0
Riverton	1	1	1	1	3	0	3	1	3	0
Sheridan	0	1	1	1	5	2	4	2	8	3
Sherman	2	2	0	0	1	2	3	1	7	1
Summit	3	0	3	0	1	1	7	2	6	1
Victory	4	1	2	1	4	3	3	2	7	3
<b>County Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>21</b>

Source: Mason County

**POPULATION PER HOUSEHOLD**

According to the 2000 and 2010 Censuses, the average number of persons per household fell for Mason County by 0.06, from 2.43 persons per household in 2000 to 2.37 persons per household in 2010 (See Table 2-12). All jurisdictions experienced a decrease in the average number of persons per household with the exception of the City of Scottsville, the Village of Fountain, and Meade Township. The community with the highest population per household is the Village of Fountain (2.72), a change from 2000 when the highest population per household was in Riverton Township (3.01). The community with the lowest population per household was Logan Township (2.07).

Table 2-12  
**Population per Household in Mason County, 2000-2010**  
*\*Average Household Size*

<b>Community</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change in PPH 2000-2010</b>	<b>% Change in PPH 2000-2010</b>
City of Ludington	2.21	2.19	-0.02	-0.9%
City of Scottsville	2.40	2.51	0.11	4.6%
Village of Custer	2.66	2.58	-0.08	-3%
Village of Fountain	2.46	2.72	0.26	10.5%
Village of Free Soil	2.36	2.25	-0.11	-4.6%
Township of Amber	2.64	2.41	-0.23	-9.8%
Township of Branch	2.33	2.35	0.02	0.8%
Township of Custer	2.63	2.55	-0.08	-3.5%
Township of Eden	2.68	2.55	-0.13	-4.8%
Township of Free Soil	2.41	2.35	-0.06	-2.5%
Township of Grant	2.62	2.42	-0.20	-7.6%
Township of Hamlin	2.38	2.37	-0.01	-0.4%
Township of Logan	2.21	2.07	-0.14	-6.3%
Township of Meade	2.26	2.26	0	0
Township of Pere Marquette	2.60	2.50	-0.10	-3.9%
Township of Riverton	3.01	2.61	-0.40	-13.3%
Township of Sheridan	2.33	2.31	-0.02	-0.9%
Township of Sherman	2.63	2.60	-0.03	-1.1%
Township of Summit	2.56	2.32	-0.24	-9.3%
Township of Victory	2.72	2.64	-0.08	-2.9%
<b>Average (of 20 listed communities)</b>	2.50	2.43	-0.07	-2.9%
<b>Mason County</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>2.37</b>	<b>-0.06</b>	<b>-2.47%</b>
<b>State of Michigan</b>	<b>2.56</b>	<b>2.49</b>	<b>-0.07</b>	<b>-2.73%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### CHANGES IN AGE DISTRIBUTION

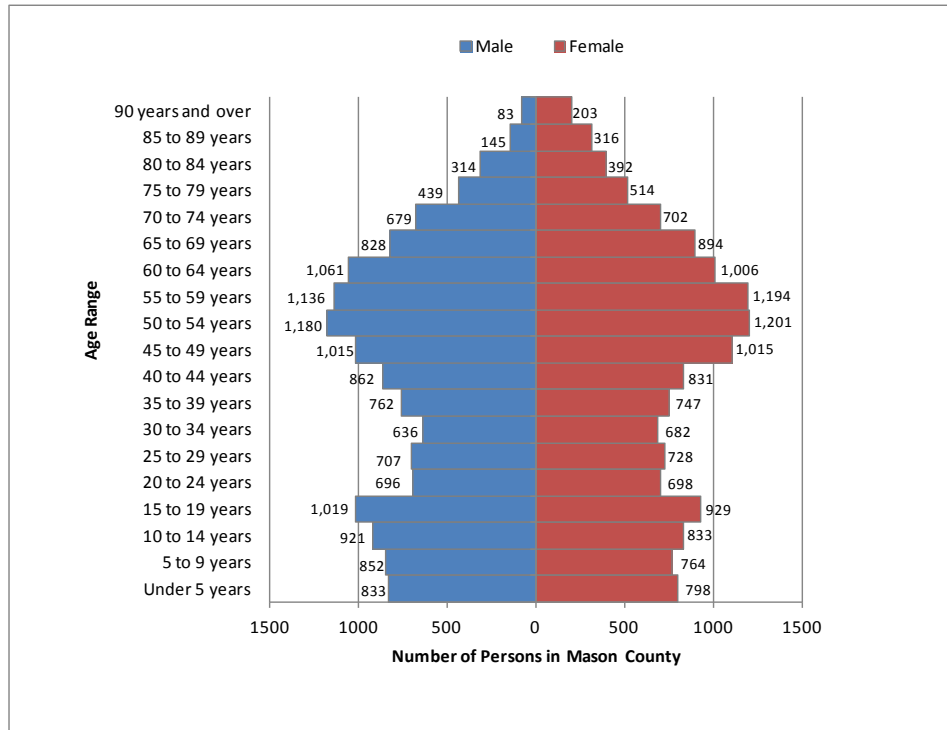
The population of Mason County is growing older, and a large number are entering retirement ages. The breakdown of age groups present in Mason County is displayed in **Table 2-13**. The largest growing age group in Mason County is people aged 55 to 64 years, whose age group increased from 11% of the total population in 2000 to comprise 15% of the total age group in 2010. The second largest growing age group is people ages 65 to 74 years, increasing by 750 persons between 2000 and 2010. The greatest decrease in an age group between 2000 and 2010 in Mason County was for those aged 35 to 44 years, whose numbers decreased a total of 1,149 from 2000. This age group was the largest in 2000, and now is the third largest age group behind 45 to 54 years (15.7% of total population), 55 to 64 years (15.4% of total population). Children under 5 years of age were the only age group of persons under the age of 20 to experience a population growth between 2000 and 2010. The other growing age group among people under 25 years of age was 20-24 years, whose population grew by 135. **Figure 2-3** depicts the distribution of population by age and sex, which is helpful for visualizing population trends in Mason County. **Figure 2-4** offers a comparison of Mason County's population distribution with the state of Michigan.

Table 2-13  
Age Groups of Mason County, 2000-2010

Age	Total Population in 2000	% of Total Population in 2000	Total Population in 2010	% of Total Population in 2010	Change in Age Group 2000-2010
Under 5 years	1,537	5.4%	1,631	5.7%	94
5 to 9 years	1,885	6.7%	1,616	5.6%	-269
10 to 14 years	2,137	7.6%	1,754	6.1%	-383
15 to 19 years	2,031	7.2%	1,948	6.8%	-83
20 to 24 years	1,259	4.5%	1,394	4.9%	135
25 to 34 years	3,045	10.8%	2,753	9.6%	-292
35 to 44 years	4,351	15.4%	3,202	11.2%	-1149
45 to 54 years	4,156	14.7%	4,501	15.7%	345
55 to 64 years	3,125	11.0%	4,397	15.4%	1272
65 to 74 years	2,353	8.3%	3,103	10.8%	750
75 years and over	2,395	8.5%	2,406	8.4%	11
<b>Mason County Total</b>	<b>28,274</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>28,705</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>431</b>

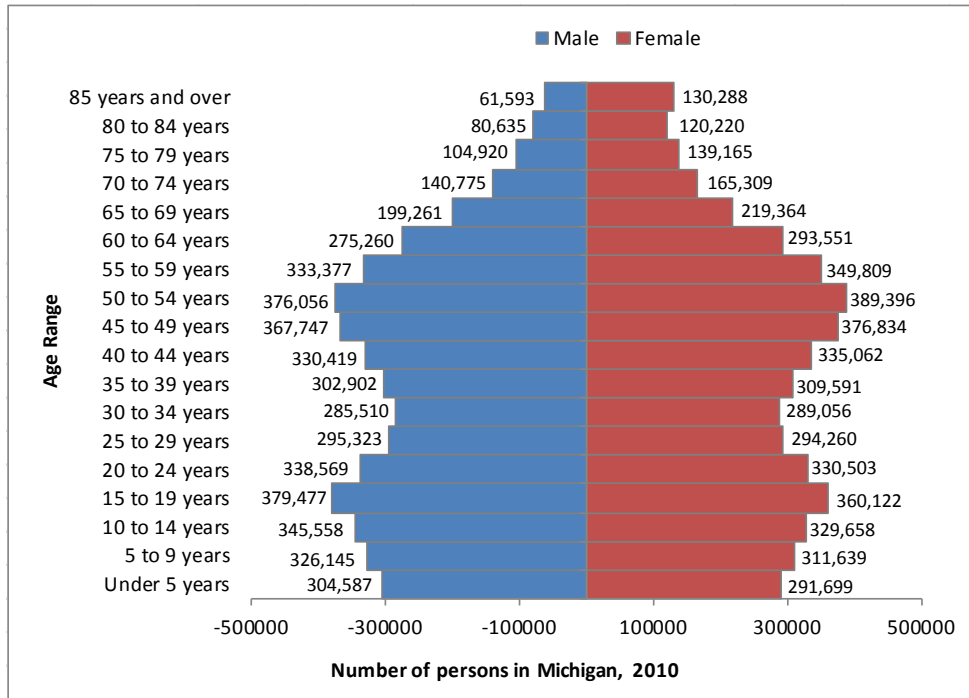
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2-3  
**Mason County Population by Age and Gender, 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

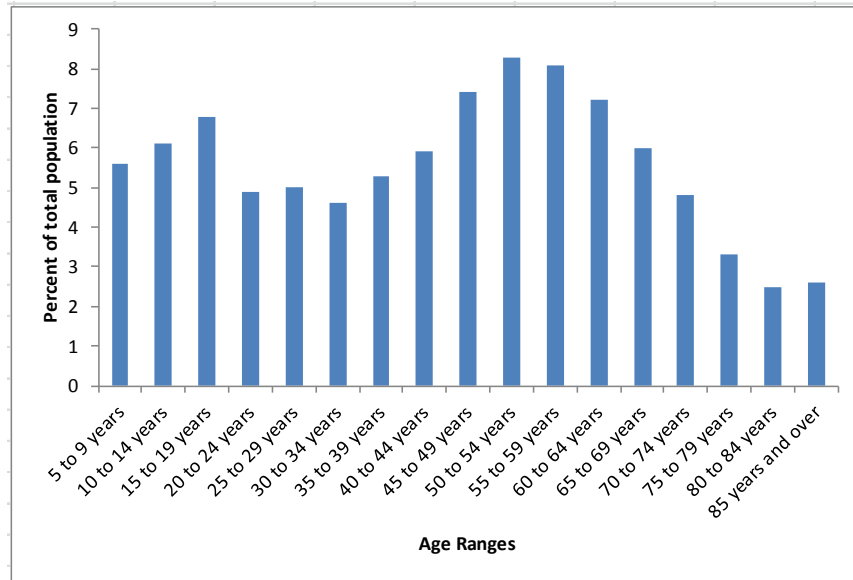
Figure 2-4  
**State of Michigan Population by Age and Gender, 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2-5

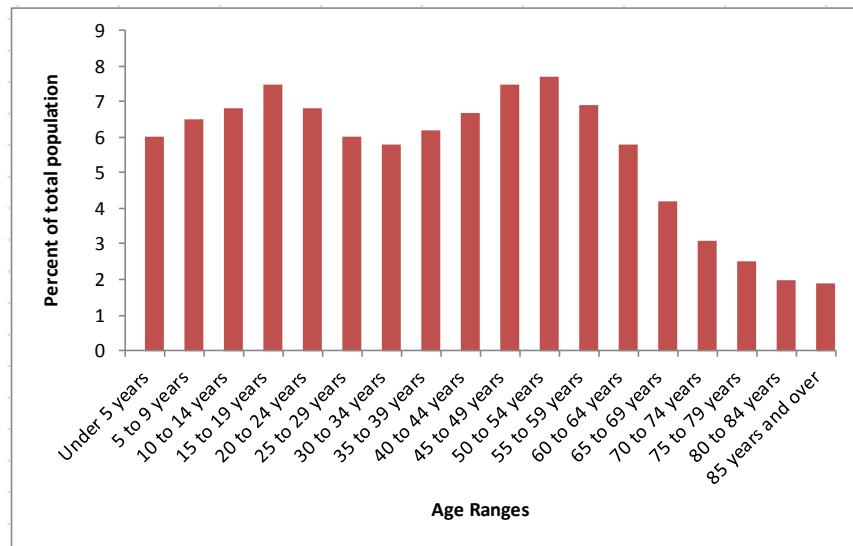
**Age Ranges as Percent of Total Population, Mason County 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

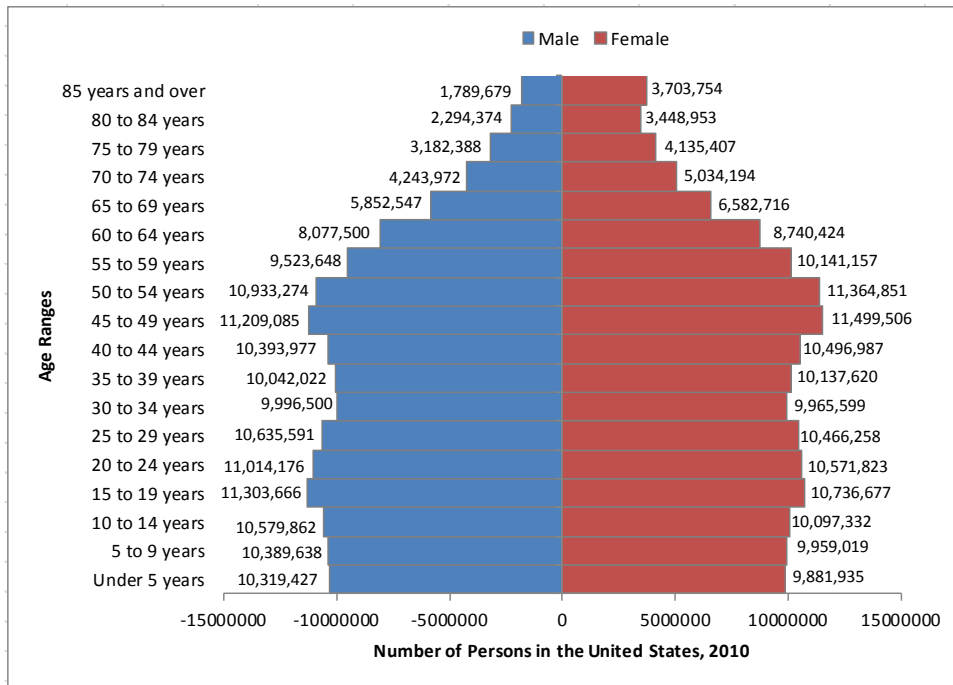
Figure 2-6

**Age Ranges as Percent of Total Population, Michigan 2010**



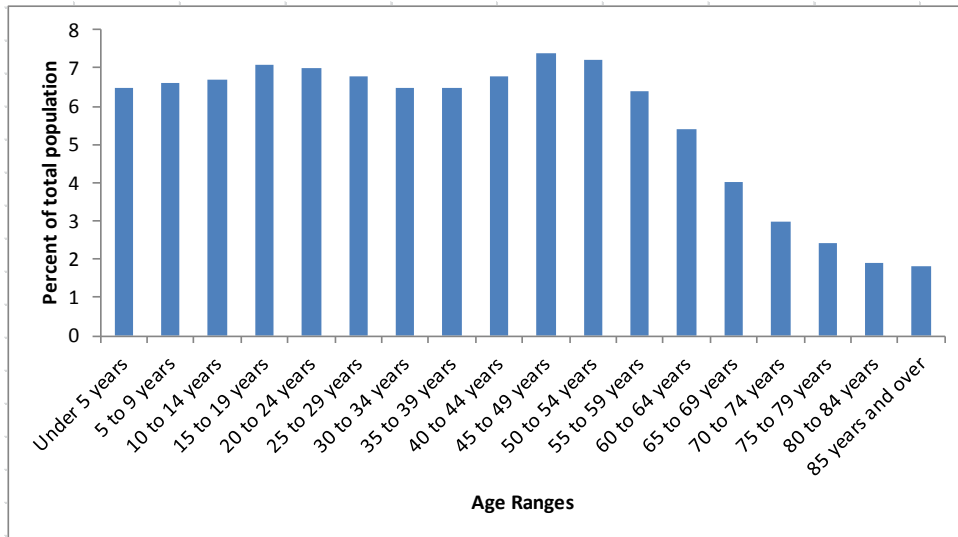
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2-7  
**U.S. Population by Age and Gender, 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2-8  
**Age Ranges as Percent of Total Population, U.S. 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## MINORITY POPULATION

The total minority population in Mason County in 2010 was 3,229 persons and includes Hispanic and Latino populations. The minority population comprises 11% of the total population of Mason County, which is well below the statewide average of 19.8%.

The largest minority population in Mason County in 2010 is persons of two or more races (547 or 17% of total minority population), followed by persons of American Indian and Alaskan Native decent (530 or 16%), some other race (451 or 14%), Black or African American (353 or 11%), Asian (193 or 6%), and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (5 or .15%). See **Table 2-14** for details.

Table 2-14  
**Minority Population in Mason County, 2010**

Group	Number of Persons	Percentage of Minority Population	Percentage of Total Population in Mason County
Hispanic/ Latino	1,150	35%	4%
Black or African American	353	11%	1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	530	16%	1.8%
Asian	193	6%	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	5	.15%	0.01%
Some Other Race	451	14%	1.6%
Two or More Races	547	17%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,229</b>		<b>11%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## INCOME CHANGES IN MASON COUNTY 1999-2010

The median household income in 2010 in Mason County was \$38,776 according to the 2010 Census. This is an increase in \$4,072 from \$34,704 in 1999. Mason County experienced the greatest percent increase (12%) in median household income between 1999 and 2010 compared to adjoining counties. **Table 2-15** details this growth. The highest median income in adjoining counties in 2010 was Newaygo (\$38,846) followed by Mason County (\$38,776). Lake County has the lowest median household income at \$28,526. All 2010 median household incomes for the five adjoining counties fell below the statewide median household income of \$45,354 in 2010, yet saw greater increases than the statewide change of 2% from 2000 to 2010.



Table 2-15  
**Median Household Income in Mason County, 1999-2010**

<b>County</b>	<b>1999 Median Household Income</b>	<b>2010 Median Household Income</b>	<b>Change in Median Household Income 1999-2010</b>	<b>% Change in Median Household Income 1999-2010</b>
Mason	\$34,704	\$38,776	\$4,072	12%
Manistee	\$34,208	\$37,479	\$3,271	10%
Lake	\$26,622	\$28,526	\$1,904	7%
Newaygo	\$37,130	\$38,846	\$1,716	5%
Oceana	\$35,307	\$37,629	\$2,322	7%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$45,354	\$687	2%
<b>Five County Total - Average</b>	<b>\$33,594</b>	<b>\$36,251</b>	<b>\$2657</b>	<b>8%</b>

*Source: County Health, Population Health Institute*

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Source: U.S. Census Bureau

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*Source: County Health, Population Health Institute*

## Chapter 3 ECONOMY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses unemployment, the labor force, and other economic characteristics of Mason County. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG), and other sources were used in this study. This information also includes brief discussions of planning implications supporting their inclusion.

### EMPLOYMENT

The available labor force in a community can be a crucial determinant in the decision-making process for business attraction and retention. The labor force is defined as “all persons employed or unemployed who are able to work”. Mason County experienced a 1.5% decrease in labor force between 2000 and 2010, in contrast to a 23% increase between 1990 and 2000 (see **Table 3-1**). The number of those employed fell by 9% (1,238 persons) from 2000 to 2010, while the number of unemployed people rose from 711 in 2000 to 1,796 in 2010, a 153% increase. The jobless rate for Mason County in 2010 was 12.3%. This rate was less than the statewide unemployment rate of 14% as of August 2010, according to the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth.

Table 3-1  
**Annual Average Employment Trends in Mason County 1990-2010**

Status	1990	2000	2010	% Change	
				1990-2000	2000-2010
Labor Force	12,199	14,792	14,576	21%	-1.5%
Employed	11,185	14,018	12,780	25%	-9%
Unemployed	1,014	711	1,796	-30%	153%
Jobless Rate	8.3%	4.8%	12.3%	-42%	156%

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

\*The data source used for this table was the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), which produces monthly estimates of labor force, total employment, and unemployment for Michigan, metropolitan areas, counties, and major cities.

Source: <http://milmi.org/cgi/dataanalysis>

### MASON AND ADJOINING COUNTIES EMPLOYMENT

**Table 3-2** illustrates the total employed persons between 2000 and 2010 for Mason and its four surrounding counties. According to the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget, Mason County had the second greatest (14,018) number of persons employed in 2000 and in 2010 (12,780) within the five county area. Newaygo County had the greatest number of persons employed in 2000 and 2010 (21,988 and 18,692 respectively).

The number of employed persons decreased in the ten year period from 2000 to 2010. Lake County experienced the greatest decrease in employment at -21% (869 persons). Newaygo County had the greatest net loss in employment with 3,296 persons. Overall, the five-county region experienced an 11% decrease in employment between 2000 and 2010, equivalent to a total of 7,500 employed individuals.

Table 3-2  
**Mason and Adjoining Counties, Annual Average Employment 2000-2010**

Region	2000 Employed*	2010 Employed*	Change 2000-2010	
			Total	%
<b>State</b>				
Michigan	4,953,000	4,147,000	-806,000	-16%
<b>County</b>				
Mason	14,018	12,780	-1,238	-9%
Lake	4,205	3,336	-869	-21%
Manistee	11,200	9,756	-1,444	-13%
Newaygo	21,988	18,692	-3,296	-15%
Oceana	12,443	11,781	-662	-5%
<b>Five County Total</b>	<b>63,845</b>	<b>56,345</b>	<b>-7,500</b>	<b>-11%</b>

\* Not seasonally adjusted

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

\*The data source used for this table was the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), which produces monthly estimates of labor force, total employment, and unemployment for Michigan, metropolitan areas, counties, and major cities.

Source: <http://milmi.org/cgi/dataanalysis>

### **MASON COUNTY ECONOMIC BASE**

Mason County's economic base is very diversified, with a major contributing sector being the manufacturing industry, which employs 1,813 persons and 14% of the labor force as of 2010 (**See Table 3-3**). The county's retail trade industry follows with 1,400 persons making up 11% of the total. The third largest contributor to the economic base in Mason County is the health care and social assistance field which employs 1,250 persons and makes up 9.8% of the total in 2010.

The major changes in employment distribution between 2000 and 2010 for Mason County are highlighted by the dramatic increases in the administrative and waste services sector with a 77% increase and the real estate and rental leasing sector with a 49% increase. Other sectors that saw increases between 2000 and 2010 were professional and technical services (40%), health care and social assistance (29%), finance and insurance (18%), and wholesale trade (14.5%). Sectors that experienced decreases during the 10 year period were arts, entertainment, and recreation (-44%), construction (-36%), manufacturing (-36%), accommodation and food service (-31%), retail trade (-30%), and agriculture and forestry (-13%). Sectors that remained fairly consistent over a 10 year period were information (3.3%), utilities (3%), transportation and warehousing (1.8%), and the category of other services (-0.9%). Overall there was a -17.8% change between 2000 and 2010 in total private sector employment. It should be noted that there was a net amount increase of 15 in the sector of educational services, though this increase is not quantifiable by a percent. The distribution of private employment sectors can be viewed in **Figure 3-1**.

Table 3-3  
**Private Sector Employment Distribution in Mason County, 2000-2010**

<b>Industry (Private Sector)</b>	<b>Total Employed 2000</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Total Employed 2010</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent change</b>
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	163	1.7%	141	1.8%	-13%
Utilities	89	.9%	92	1.2%	3%
Construction	490	5%	312	4.1%	-36%
Manufacturing	2,863	31%	1,823	24%	-36%
Wholesale Trade	131	1.4%	150	1.9%	14.5%
Retail Trade	1,859	20%	1,297	17%	-30%
Transportation and Warehousing	265	2.8%	270	3.5%	1.8%
Information	120	1.3%	124	.16%	3.3%
Finance and Insurance	268	2.9%	219	2.8%	-18%
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	75	.8%	112	1.4%	49%
Professional and Technical Services	243	2.6%	145	1.9%	-40%
Administrative Support/Waste Management	182	1.9%	323	4.2%	77%
Private Education Services	0	0	20	.26%	
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,008	10.9%	1,302	17%	29%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	128	1.3%	71	.9%	-44.5%
Accommodation and Food Service	1,017	11%	701	9.2%	-31%
Other services	315	3.4%	312	4.1%	-0.9%
<b>Total private sector employment</b>	<b>9,224</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7,582</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-17.8%</b>

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

\*The data source used for this table was the Industry Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW-ES202).

Source: <http://milmi.org/cgi/dataanalysis>

Changes in agricultural industries include a significant decline in persons employed in crop production between 2000 and 2012, from 128 persons in 2000 to 60 in 2012. According to Table 3-4, the animal production employment sector grew from 0 in 2000 to 61 in 2012. Average weekly wages for both crop production and animal production had slight increases between 2000 and 2012, totaling \$372.00 per week for crop production and \$303.00 per week for animal production in 2012. The number of crop production facilities has remained steady between 2000 and 2012, and the number of animal production facilities has grown from 0 in 2000 to 8 in 2012.

Table 3-4  
**Farming and Agriculture Employment in Mason County, 2012**

Type of Agricultural Industry	Total Employed			Average Weekly Wages			Number of Establishments		
	2000	2005	2012	2000	2005	2012	2000	2005	2012
Crop Production	128	124	60	\$284.00	\$318.00	\$372.00	16	16	15
Animal Production	0	26	61	\$0.00	\$175.00	\$303.00	0	3	8

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

\*The data source used for this table was the Industry Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW-ES202).

Source: <http://milmi.org/cgi/dataanalysis>

Of public sector employment (**Table 3-5**), the local branch accounted for more than 92% of total public sector employment. The federal branch (4.4%) and state branch (2.7%) followed. As of 2010, there were 1,827 persons employed in the public sector in Mason County. The data source (Industry Census of Employment Wages) prepared by the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget did not specify which employment branches were included in the public employment sector.

Table 3-5  
**Public Sector Employment, Mason County, 2010**

Public Sector	Total Employed 2010	Percent
Federal	82	4.4%
State	50	2.7%
Local	1,695	92.7%
<b>Total public sector employment</b>	<b>1,827</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

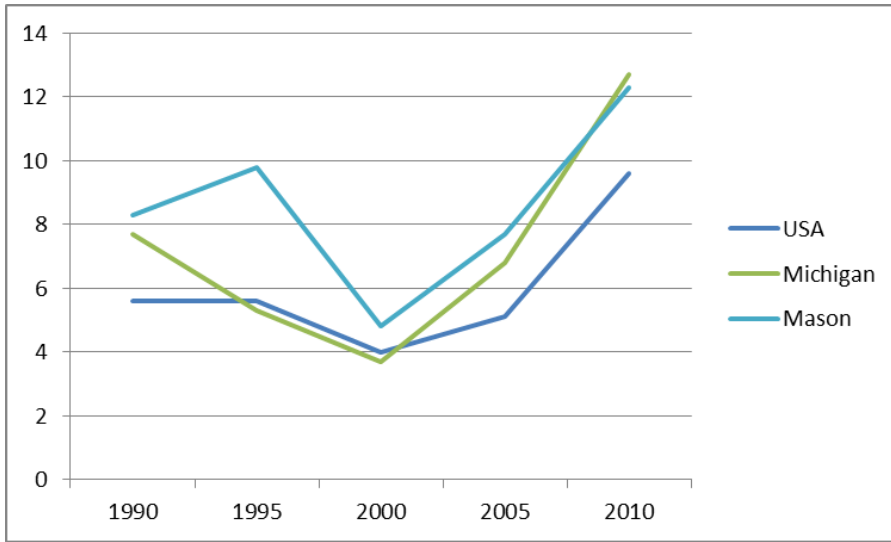
\*The data source used for this table was the Industry Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW-ES202).

Source: <http://milmi.org/cgi/dataanalysis>

## UNEMPLOYMENT

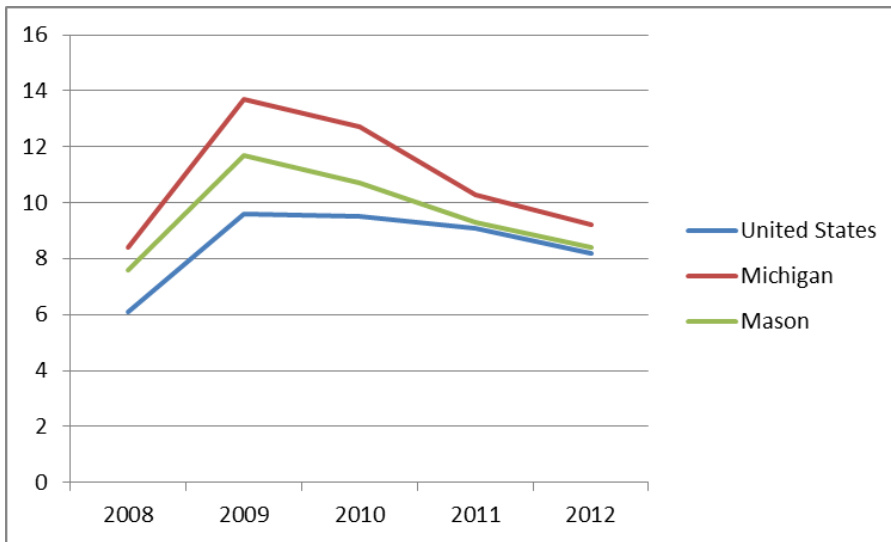
Unemployment fluctuated considerably between 1990 and 2010 in Mason County (**see Figure 3-2**) at a rate comparable to national and statewide averages, though Mason County did have slightly higher unemployment rates than statewide and national averages. More recent regional unemployment numbers from August 2008 to August 2012 (**See Figure 3-3**) reflect the nationwide recession and economic crisis which peaked in 2009. The unemployment rate in Mason County jumped from 4.8% in 2000 to 12.3% in 2010, and has since dropped to 8.4% as of August 2012.

Figure 3-2  
**Regional, State, and National Unemployment Rates 1990-2010**



Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

Figure 3-3  
**Regional, State, and National Unemployment Rates 2008-2012**



Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

**REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT**

It is important to note that regions with seasonal economic activities such as Mason and adjoining counties are uniquely challenged to maintain a healthy local market throughout the year. Mason’s economy is largely tied to its natural features and attractions, and tourism plays a major role in its economy with features such as lodging and restaurants playing a role in both the local and regional economy. Economies based on tourism are highly susceptible to fluctuations in the broader national market.



The unemployment rates for Mason County and four adjoining counties from 1990 to 2010 can be viewed in **Table 3-6** and more recently from 2008 to 2012 in **Table 3-7**. Unemployment rates dropped significantly from 1990 to 2000 within the five county area including Mason County, with an average decrease of 47%. Rates peaked in August of 2009 with an average unemployment rate 12.5%. Since then, unemployment rates have somewhat stabilized at an average of 9% as of August 2012 for Mason and adjoining counties. As of 2012, Mason has the second lowest unemployment rate at (8.4%) compared to adjoining counties. Newaygo County has the lowest unemployment rate at 7.7%, and it was the only county where the unemployment rate decreased (-13.5%) from August 2008 to August 2012. Lake County has had the highest unemployment rate since 2008, yet the least change (5%) in the four year period from August 2008 to August 2012, indicating that recovery has been slow. The average unemployment rate for Mason and adjoining counties is 9%, with an 8.4% increase since 2008. The average falls just short of the statewide 9.2% unemployment rate and just above the national 8.2% rate as of August 2012.

The drop in the unemployment in Mason and adjoining counties illustrates a positive overall growth in the economy of the region as a whole since recession figures. Job retention and creation will be crucial issues over the next several years.

Table 3-6  
**Unemployment for Mason and Adjoining Counties, 1990-2010**

Region	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2010
<b>Nation</b>							
USA	5.6	5.6	4.0	5.1	9.6	-29%	140%
<b>State</b>							
Michigan	7.7	5.3	3.7	6.8	12.7	-52%	243%
<b>County</b>							
<b>Mason</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>-42%</b>	<b>156%</b>
Lake	12.0	13.0	5.7	10.2	16.0	-53%	181%
Manistee	10.7	11.6	5.3	7.8	12.8	-51%	142%
Newaygo	9.6	9.9	4.6	7.4	12.7	-52%	176%
Oceana	10.9	11.3	5.9	8.0	15.0	-46%	154%
<b>Average</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>-47%</b>	<b>165%</b>

*Unemployment rate not seasonally adjusted*

*Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget*

The data source used for this table was the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), which produces monthly estimates of labor force, total employment, and unemployment for Michigan, metropolitan areas, counties, and major cities.

**Source:** <http://milmi.org/cgi/dataanalysis>

Table 3-7  
**Unemployment Rate for Mason and Surrounding Counties, August 2008- August 2012**

Region	August 2008	August 2009	August 2010	August 2011	August 2012	% Change 2008-2012
Nation						
USA	6.1	9.6	9.5	9.1	8.2	34%
State						
Michigan	8.4	13.7	12.7	10.3	9.2	9.5%
County						
Mason	7.6	11.7	10.7	9.3	8.4	10.5%
Lake	10.8	15.1	14.9	11.9	11.3	5%
Manistee	8.0	11.3	11.3	10.0	9.1	14%
Newaygo	8.9	13.3	12.1	9.2	7.7	-13.5%
Oceana	8.6	13.1	12.5	10.3	9.4	12%
<b>Average</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>8.4%</b>

*Unemployment rate not seasonally adjusted*

*Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget*

The data source used for this table was the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), which produces monthly estimates of labor force, total employment, and unemployment for Michigan, metropolitan areas, counties, and major cities.

**Source:** <http://milmi.org/cgi/dataanalysis>

## MAJOR EMPLOYERS AND TOP EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

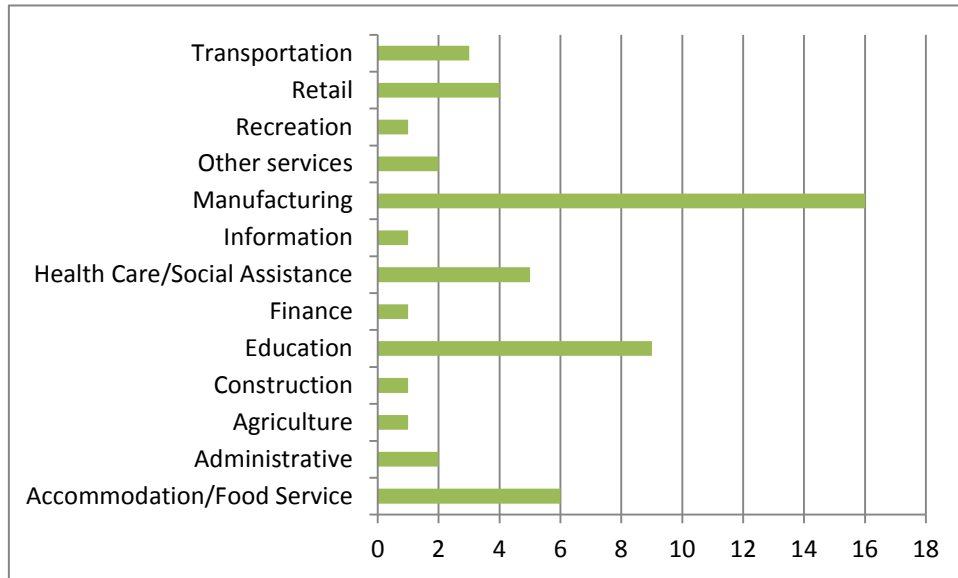
Major employers within Mason County are detailed in **Table 3-8**. The majority of major companies with over 50 employees are within the City of Ludington. Memorial Medical Center of Ludington is the largest employer with a range of 500-999 employees. West Shore Community College (100-249 employees) is the largest employer outside of the City of Ludington. Based on **Figure 3-4**, the largest employment sector for Mason County is manufacturing, comprising roughly 16% of total employment, with education (9%) and accommodation/food service (6%) following.

Table 3-8  
**Major Employers in Mason County, 2012**

<b>TOP EMPLOYERS IN MASON COUNTY</b>		
<b>50-99 Employees</b>	<b>100-249 Employees</b>	<b>250-499 Employees</b>
Hardman Construction, Ludington	Floracraft Corp, Ludington	Dow Chemical Co., Ludington
Kaines West Michigan, Ludington	Great Lakes Casting Co., Ludington	Metalworks Inc., Ludington
Brill Manufacturing Co., Ludington	Indian Summer Co-Op, Ludington	Harsco Rail, Ludington
Shop N' Save, Ludington	Home Depot, Ludington	Meijer, Ludington
Manistee National Golf and Resort, Manistee	Lowe's Home Improvement, Ludington	Ludington Area School District, Ludington
S.S. Badger, Lake Michigan Car Ferry, Ludington	Walmart, Ludington	<b>500-999 Employees</b>
Applebee's Neighborhood Grill, Ludington	Needlefast Evergreens, Ludington	Spectrum Health Ludington Hospital
Big Boy, Ludington	Mason/ Lake Intermediate School District, Ludington	
P M Steamers Restaurant, Ludington	West Shore Community College, Scottville	
Scotty's Restaurant, Ludington	West Michigan Community Mental Health, Ludington	
McDonald's, Ludington	Oakview Medical Care Facility, Ludington,	
Ludington City Hall, Ludington	Tendercare, Ludington	
Mason County Jail/Sheriff, Ludington		
Mason County, Ludington		

Source: Michigan Department of Management, Technology, and Budget  
 Source: <http://milmi.org/aspdotnet/databrowsing>

Figure 3-4  
**Major Employment Sectors in Mason County, 2008**



Source: Michigan Economic Development Corporation  
 Source: <http://ref.michigan.org/medc/miinfo/places/MasonCounty/?section=economy>

**INDUSTRY AND COMMERCIAL BUSINESS**

Of the 826 industrial and commercial businesses within Mason County, the retail trade sector had the greatest number of establishments in 2004 (151). **Table 3-9** lists other sectors with the greatest number of establishments including health care and health assistance (101), construction trades (97), accommodation and food service (88), and other services (except public administration) (88).

Table 3-9  
**Types of Businesses within Mason County, 2004**

Industry	2004 Total
<i>Total</i>	826
Retail trade	151
Health Care and Social Assistance	101
Construction	97
Accommodation and Food Services	88
Other services (except public administration)	88
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	51
Finance & Insurance	44
Manufacturing	42
Waste Management and Remediation Services	32
Real estate and Rental Leasing	30
Transportation and Warehousing	23
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	18
Information	17
Wholesale trade	16

*Source: Michigan Economic Development Corporation*

**Source: <http://ref.michigan.org/medc/miinfo/places/MasonCounty>**

### **TRAVEL TIME AND COMMUTING PATTERNS**

The length of time it takes for one to travel to work can be used as an indicator of traffic congestion and can be used to gauge the degree to which a community is a “bedroom” community where most citizens commute a significant distance to work, or an employment center.

### **TOURISM**

In addition to manufacturing, education, and government service, tourism is an important economic sector in Mason County. Tourism is loosely related to the employment sectors of entertainment, recreation, and food services. Mason County’s location along Lake Michigan, in addition to inland lakes, rivers, streams, campgrounds, forests, and other attractions provide ideal natural tourism attractions.

Chapter 5  
**TAX BASE, LAND TYPES, LAND DIVISION AND BUILDOUT ANALYSIS**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses what has been built on the land and how much it is worth. The discussion includes land use and land cover in the County, the value of different land uses, and how these have changed in recent years.

**STATE EQUALIZED VALUES (SEV) OF PROPERTY**

There are two main measures of property value, state equalized value (SEV) and taxable value. State Equalized Value (SEV) is determined by assessing 50% of the property’s market value. The basis for SEV is supported in Article IX, Section 3 of the Michigan Constitution, which states that the proportion of true cash value at which property shall be assessed shall not exceed 50%. Property tax values are important indicators of the relative strength of different sectors of the local tax base. The most significant change in Mason County between 2000 and 2010 is an increase in value of residential land. This is evident by comparing the value of property by tax class over time, as illustrated in **Table 5-1** which compares SEV of different tax classes from 2000 to 2010 in Mason County. **Figure 5-1** illustrates the shift in tax class from 2000 to 2010.

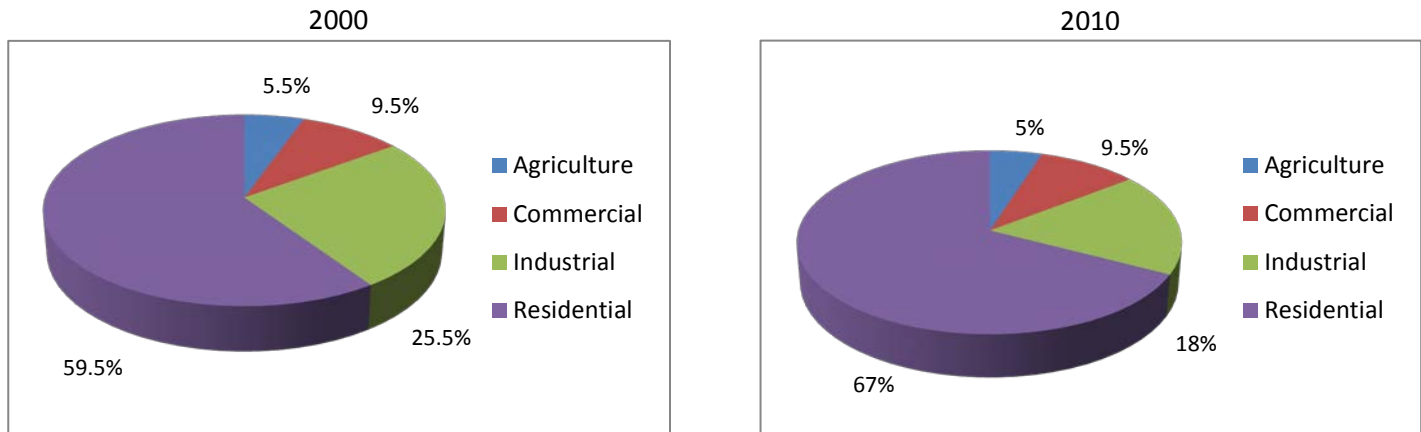
The greatest percentage change in the distribution of total SEV for Mason County between 2000 and 2010 was seen in the increase in residential land from 59.5% in 2000 to 67% in 2010. Agriculture (5.5% to 5%) and commercial (9.5% and 9.5%) classes remained largely unchanged during this period. Though industrial property gained value between 2000 and 2010, the industrial tax class makes up less of the total (from 25.5% to 18%) in 2010, likely due to the increase in residential property.

Table 5-1  
**Tax Classes as Percentages of Total SEV, Mason County**

<b>Class</b>	<b>2000 (\$)</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>2010 (\$)</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>Total Change</b>	<b>% change</b>
Agriculture	56,454,600	5.5%	92,487,600	5%	36,033,000	64%
Commercial	97,404,100	9.5%	178,939,900	9.5%	81,535,800	84%
Industrial	263,737,240	25.5%	338,111,800	18%	74,374,560	28%
Residential	614,366,300	59.5%	1,259,828,885	67%	645,462,585	105%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,031,962,240</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,869,368,185</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>837,405,945</b>	<b>81%</b>

Source: Michigan Department of Treasury, 2010  
[http://michigan.gov/documents/treasury/2010\\_SEV\\_and\\_TV\\_Report\\_338174\\_7.pdf](http://michigan.gov/documents/treasury/2010_SEV_and_TV_Report_338174_7.pdf)

Figure 5-1  
Percentage of Tax Class



Source: Michigan Department of Treasury, 2000 and 2010

### INDIVIDUAL JURISDICTIONS

Among individual jurisdictions in Mason County, the greatest increase in tax class values between 2000 and 2010 was seen in Amber Township for agriculture (61%), Grant Township for residential (48%), Summit Township for commercial (120%) and the village of Scottville for industrial (306%). **Table 5-2** lists these changes.

Among individual jurisdictions in Mason County the greatest amount of agricultural land value in 2011 was in Riverton Township. Valued at over \$23 million, Riverton's agricultural land value makes up 16% of the total agricultural land value in Mason County. Three jurisdictions saw a decrease in their agricultural land values, Branch Township (-39%), Hamlin Township (-98%), and Pere Marquette (-59%). County-wide, agricultural land values decreased -27% between 2004 and 2010.

The City of Ludington has the greatest residential tax class land value at \$187 million, making up 15% of the total. All jurisdictions saw an increase in residential land value from 2000 to 2011, the greatest being Grant Township, whose residential land value grew 48% from \$46.7 million to \$69.2 million. The county total of residential land values increased 23% from 2004 to 2010.

Summit Township saw the greatest commercial land value growth from 2000 to 2010, a 120% increase from \$1.2 million to \$2.7 million. Most jurisdictions saw minimal growth in commercial land values during this period. Custer (-21%), Free Soil (-1%), Hamlin (-8%), and Logan (-4%) townships all experienced a decrease in commercial land values from 2004 to 2010. Overall the county experienced a 14% increase in commercial land values during this period.

There were several missing figures for individual jurisdiction's industrial property values; however the City of Scottville was recorded as having the greatest increase in industrial land values from \$900,000 to \$3.7 million, a 306% increase from 2004 to 2010. The township of Amber (-14%) had a drop in value during this time. For all of Mason County, industrial property values rose 25% from 2004 to 2010.

Village totals are included in township totals.

Table 5-2  
SEV by Tax Class by Jurisdiction in Mason County, 2004 and 2011

Area	Agriculture			Residential			Commercial			Industrial		
	2004 (\$)	2011 (\$)	% Change	2004 (\$)	2011 (\$)	% Change	2004 (\$)	2011 (\$)	% Change	2004 (\$)	2011 (\$)	% Change
<b>City</b>												
Ludington	2,359,500		-100%	167,561,000	187,187,300	12%	48,321,900	54,745,500	13%	12,555,700	13,107,200	4%
Scottville			0%	16,096,500	14,467,100	-10%	3,599,000	3,648,000	1%	930,000	3,778,500	306%
<b>Township</b>												
Amber	2,537,500	4,082,400	61%	56,875,300	61,454,900	8%	34,137,500	40,321,900	18%	1,999,600	1,717,600	-14%
Branch	3,378,700	2,056,400	-39%	48,632,700	55,717,600	15%	2,288,222	2,294,600	0%			0%
Custer	8,475,900	10,442,200	23%	29,468,100	31,794,700	8%	1,607,300	1,268,700	-21%			0%
Eden	7,540,700	9,117,500	21%	20,552,100	29,129,000	42%			0%			0%
Free Soil	3,871,300	4,459,500	15%	35,018,900	35,097,550	0%	534,400	528,700	-1%			0%
Grant	2,104,900	2,388,500	13%	46,751,000	69,213,800	48%	733,700	873,500	19%	834,000	1,279,300	53%
Hamlin	37,759,300	901,300	-98%	186,921,400	214,297,600	15%	14,488,900	13,365,100	-8%	447,500	495,500	11%
Logan	2,057,100	2,663,100	29%	24,227,100	32,584,500	34%	539,900	517,000	-4%			0%
Meade	870,600		-100%	18,025,000	20,798,500	15%			0%			0%
Pere Marquette	8,946,800	3,625,000	-59%	98,908,700	142,305,200	44%	46,229,900	42,229,900	-21%	190,791,900	244,773,600	28%
Riverton	20,046,400	23,303,200	16%	20,792,000	30,491,200	47%			0%	1,372,100	1,599,300	17%
Sheridan	3,123,800	3,486,100	12%	47,645,500	63,188,700	33%			0%			0%
Sherman	4,945,100	5,912,100	20%	33,697,300	36,271,600	8%	1,585,400	1,585,400	9%	310,600	323,900	4%
Summit	5,359,800	6,861,000	28%	83,808,200	121,442,400	45%	2,707,600	2,707,600	0%	56,953,700	65,480,800	15%
Victory	9,644,100	10,374,100	8%	35,892,600	47,963,600	34%	1,525,100	1,525,700	0%			0%
<b>County Total</b>	<b>123,021,500</b>	<b>89,672,400</b>	<b>-27%</b>	<b>970,873,600</b>	<b>1,193,405,250</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>148,143,222</b>	<b>169,611,000</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>266,195,100</b>	<b>332,555,700</b>	<b>25%</b>

Source: Michigan Department of Treasury

[http://www.michigan.gov/treasury/0,4679,7-121-1751\\_2228\\_21957\\_45818-257634--,00.htm](http://www.michigan.gov/treasury/0,4679,7-121-1751_2228_21957_45818-257634--,00.htm)





## Introduction and Overview

The Mason County is in the process of preparing an update to the County Master Plan to guide growth and development within the community. The County is committed to meaningful citizen input and, as a result, sponsored a community visioning workshop on October 11, 2012. This was a general community meeting intended to give those in attendance an opportunity to learn more about the demographic, land use, infrastructure and traffic impacts and trends facing the County. In addition, the meeting included a nominal group process intended to aid participants in identifying and prioritizing the factors that may impact the quality of life in the County in the next twenty to twenty-five years.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the process of that meeting and its results. In addition, this report places the output from the futuring meeting in the broader context of the Master Plan process.

## The Futuring Activity

The futuring activity was conducted in a 2½-hour session. The objective of the activity was to develop a general consensus among the participants as to the likely result of a continuation of the current trends in growth and development in Mason County. In addition, the process will assist the Planning Commission and County Commission in articulating the values of the residents of the community. Both of these activities will be critically important to the later phases of the plan preparation process.

The session was structured to give each participant an opportunity to assist in the effort to build a community consensus regarding growth and development. To encourage residents to take part, the session was scheduled for a weeknight (Thursday) evening, and it was held at the Ramada Inn. The meeting was conducted in an informal manner to foster participation.

**The Futuring Process.** Invitations to participate in the sessions were provided to numerous members of the community. In addition, news stories were provided to the media and flyers were distributed throughout the community inviting participation.

The meeting was directed by Williams & Works and community representatives. The atmosphere of the meeting was open and informal although the meeting followed an established format to assure a useful outcome. Planning professionals from Williams & Works helped to guide the discussion. Participants received their hand-out materials as they entered the room indicating the following agenda and activities.

### 1. Welcome and overview

The Zoning Director welcomed the more than seventy participants and introduced the consulting team. The consultants from Williams & Works provided a brief introduction to the process and an overview explanation of how the results of the activity will be incorporated into the Master Plan process.

### 2. Land Use Images

In this activity, a series of slides were shown depicting land use conditions common in communities like Mason County. Each participant used a sheet of paper to note their impressions

of the scenes. When all of the slides were shown, Williams & Works led a general discussion of the images and the land use issues they illustrate.

### 3. **Futuring Exercise**

In this activity, the group was divided into seven smaller groups of 10 persons to identify the County's assets and the big ideas for the County to pursue.

Members of each group first individually listed the assets that may impact their "vision" of the future of the community and then the big ideas they hoped could be realized. Each person then shared his/her list with other group members and a group list that included everybody's ideas was developed. The group members then ranked the list in order to identify the most important assets and the most important big ideas. Each participant was given two colored stickers and told to use them to rank the listing of opportunities and results:

**Blue = Top Priority**

**Red = Second Priority**

**Green = Third Priority**

Using this system, it was possible to identify through a simple sum of the responses those assets and big ideas of highest priority.

### 4. **Vision Statement**

Each group was asked to prepare a vision statement for the County using the top ranking priorities.

### 5. **Report to Larger Group**

Once the top rankings were established, each group selected one member to present the results of the group's activities to the larger group.

## Futuring Output

The futuring workshop on October 11, 2012 included over 70 participants. The quality of the discussion and the energy contributed by all participants was exceptional.

The tables on the following pages include the “Assets and Big Ideas” input from the futuring session. Each item has been categorized into broad planning issues. These categories are:

- Trails/Recreation
- Economy/Economic Development/Technology/Agriculture
- Transportation
- Education
- Quality of Life

It is appropriate to group the opportunities and results statements into similar categories since the three identified over 100 such statements in the exercise. The above grouping is intentionally general in scope. In addition, in some instances, the placement of statements in one category as opposed another is a matter of judgment and other groupings are possible. However, by combining the statements into similar groupings, it is possible to begin to make some generalizations about the opinions of the participants.

The list and tables on the following pages indicate the output of the entire process by these categories. In each case, the “assets” or “big ideas” are listed essentially as the group developed it. The statements are presented in rank order by group. The raw scores given to each statement are provided only to give a sense of the priority assigned by that group. Raw scores were generated by assigning a numerical score of 5 for each blue sticker, 3 for each red sticker and 1 for each green sticker. Of course, this is entirely arbitrary and is useful only to generate an overall group ranking, it does has no meaning in terms of the how individuals might perceive the relative importance of one statement over another.

## KEY THEMES

### **Trails/Recreation**

#### Assets

North Country Trail  
State Parks  
Non-motorized Trails  
Lighthouses  
ORV  
Lake Michigan  
Dog park  
PM river

#### Big Ideas

Expand recreation opportunities, cross market community recreation assets  
County-wide recreation department  
Canoe race

### **Economy/Economic Development/Technology/Agriculture**

#### Assets

Vineyards  
Cider mill  
Local foods  
U-pick  
Deep sea port  
Badger

#### Big Ideas

Enhanced promotion including at community gateways  
Provide business incubator  
Expansion of food processing, work with regional economic development corporation  
Wi-fi, broadband  
Enhanced tourism/agri-tourism, including tourism surrounding green energy  
Research, develop, and prioritize green energy plan for the future  
Limit turbines, modify standards for height/setback/number

## Transportation

### Assets

Regional transportation

Local transportation

Badger

Rail

Confluence of US-10/US-31

### Ideas

Create port authority

Provide regional/local transportation

Bike lanes

Increase connectivity of recreation areas, housing, retail/commercial anchors and schools

## Education

### Assets

WSCC

Schools

Youth

WSCC collaboration, regional development center

Expand vocational training

## Quality of Life

### Assets

Hospital

Cooperative and considerate community

### Big Ideas

Affordable housing

Retirement housing

Land Bank authority

Housing at WSCC

## VISION STATEMENTS

Mason County will have developed an energy plan that will enhance and compliment the county and its citizens.

Mason County will be known as the area where involved citizenry has thorough, conscientious research, and allowed the best in energy development to the betterment of its citizens with full consciousness of its neighbors.

Mason County will be defined by the county's commitment to agriculture, building upon existing and future commercial and value added retail products.

Mason County will be known for its extensive non-motorized trails, access to public transportation and their protection of water resources, leading to increased population growth and visitors to the area.

Mason County will be a pro-business community centered around technology, agriculture, health care and education that will promote a strong and vibrant family oriented community.

Mason County will be known for its extensive non-motorized trails and access to public transportation. These amenities have attracted growth and visitors.

Mason County will not loose sight of protecting its water resources for future generations.

Mason County will be a destination for connected scenic recreational opportunities promoting health, safety, and economic benefits.

Mason County will be known as a place that has a broad economic base and high quality of life while preserving its natural resources.





**Compiled Input from Visioning Meeting (Raw Data)**

Group	Subject	# of Points	Comment
#1	Assets		Lk. Michigan Lakeshore/Beaches Inland Lakes Rivers Federal & State Land Ludington State Park Trails Ludington School Forest Schools (LAS/MCC/MCE) WSCC Small Towns Art Center Fairgrounds Restaurants Hospital US-31/US-10 Railroad Water & Sewer Chamber of Commerce County Government Twp. ORV Ordinances Industry/Manufacturing Youth Sports & Programs Safe Communities Deep Water Harbor/Marinas Small Home-Based Businesses Young Business Owners Appealing Downtowns Agriculture Tourism S.S. Badger
	Big Ideas		
		27	Countywide Public Transportation
		24	Increased Trail (Recreational) - Non-Motorized
		23	Protection of Water Resources
		18	Agri - Tourism, i.e., Cider Mills
		16	Collaboration on Land Use to be More Business Friendly
		13	Participate in/adopt Complete Streets
		12	Indoor Soccer & Horse Show Arena
		12	Moratorium on Windmills to ID Safe Setbacks
		10	Gov't Service Consolidation
		9	Broadband - Countywide
		8	Save the Badger
		2	ORV Trails (Motorized) Snowmobile
			School Consolidation
			Housing @ WSCC

#2	Assets	28	Agriculture
		18	Deep Water Harbor
		14	Lakeshore
		12	Mixed Industry
		9	Rivers
		8	Car Ferry
		8	Arts Community
		6	Year Round Entertainment
		5	Disc Golf (6)
		4	Autumn Olive
		3	Diverse Agricultural
		3	Inland Lakes
		3	Freeway Terminates - LUD
		2	Medic a Campus
		2	State Parks
		2	Power Plant
		1	Fair Grounds
		1	Temperate Climate
			Utility Row
			Snow Most Winters
			Cold Lake Michigan H2O
			Airport
	Big Ideas	10	Regional Health Provider
		6	Tourist, Commercial Shipping
		1	Vineyards
		1	Destination Shopping
			Snow Mobiling
			x-country Skiing Agricultural Areas
			Community Involvement in Tournaments
			Agri-tourism
			Aqua-farming
			Commodity
			Diverse Manufacturing
			Access
			Green House, District Heating
			Fruit Crop, Wood Pellet
	Agriculture		Agritourism
			Commodities
			Vineyards
			Local Food Fairs
			Aquaculture
			Processing - Fruit, Dairy

#3	Assets	6	Trails - Quiet Sports, North Country National Scenic Trail
		5	Natural Beauty
		5	State Parks
		4	Lighthouses
		4	Arts - Growing (LACA)
		1	Inland Lakes
		1	Stearns Beach - Access
		1	Senior Center
			Lake Michigan - Fishing, Rec Opps
			Car Ferry
			Agriculture
			Wind & Water Power (Hydro)
			9(?) Miles Protected Beach
			Waterfront Park
			WSCC
			Industry
			Small Business
			Hospital - Medical Services
			White Pine Village
			Downtown Activities
Big Ideas	31	Connect Trails - Bikes, Walkers, Motorized	
	14	Better Co-Wide Communication	
	10	"Starting Block" - Shared Assets for Small Businesses	
	9	Agri - Tourism	
	9	Better Publicity for our Assets	
	9	More Attractive Entrances to Town	
	8	Senior Housing - Affordable, Access to Services	
	8	Business Center - Remote Business Facility	
	6	Adult Day Care	
	6	Brochures: Walking Tours (History, Nat Features), Nearby Trails	
	3	More Transportation Services - Air, Public, Pedestrian	
	3	Museums/Historical Resources (Maritime Museum)	
	1	More Legal Dog Access to Beach	
	Barn Tour		
	Corn Mazes		
	You - Pick		

#4

Assets

Ag Base  
LPS  
LWEP  
Hospital/Health Care  
Education - INSCC  
Stable Manf. Base  
Highways  
Volunteerism  
Philanthropic Attitude  
Steams Park / State Park  
Natural Resources  
Recreation Ops  
Advanced Tech Infra  
Youth Focus Environment  
Decreased Poverty

Big Ideas

27 Pro Business  
20 Expand Food Processing  
17 Health Care Mergers (Hospitals)  
10 Tech Savvy Focus  
10 WSCC->  
6 Programs to Erode Poverty  
4 Better Roads  
3 State's "Greenest" County  
2 WS University->More Services  
2 Transit System  
1 Educational Enhancement / Centralization  
Reform Tax Structure  
Airport - Business Park / Community  
Keep/Enhance Badger

#5	Assets	17	Seaport / Badger, Rail Service, US-31/US-10
		10	Recreation -
		9	Activates for Kids
		8	Good Farmland / Good Farmers
		5	Beach!
		4	WSCC
		1	Schools
			Lakes, Woods
			State Parks
			PM River
			Bike Lane to State Park
			<u>Youth</u>
			Scottville Riverside Park
			Farmers Markets (Scot & Lud)
			Co-op in Scottville
			West Shore Bank
			Collaboration w/ Local Farmers
			Youth, Like to See? <a href="#">Here!</a>
			Expressway - Badger
			Nice Libraries
			Center for the Arts
			Unique Restaurants
			Township / Active Govt.
			Hospital
			Sports Complex
			Michigan Great Outdoors
	Big Ideas	16	Broaden Economic Base ->
		13	Value added Agricultural Produces
		10	Port Authority
		7	Expand Recreation Opportunities (Hiking, Biking, Trails, Boating, etc.)
		6	Leave Green Space/Pocket Parks
		5	Solving Homelessness
		4	Walkway/Bikeway Between
		4	Providing Training/Skill Education for Jobs Here (WSCC)
		3	More Inclusion of Youth
		3	County-Wide Recreation Dept.
		1	Accessible Public Transportation - County-Wide/Aging Population
			Airport
			Expressway
			Rail
			Deep-Sea Port
			Pro-Active Economic dev. ->
			Focus on Small Business Support
			-Scottville & Ludington
			-Signage/Safe Routes

#6	Assets	15	Schools/College
		13	Agriculture
		11	Lake Shore
		11	Mem. Med. Center
		10	(Rivers/Lakes/Forests)
		8	Communities Collaboration
		5	Natural Assets
		5	Badger
		3	Hwy's - 10/31
		3	Vacant Land
		2	Tourism
			Diverse Population
			Water/Sewer Infra.
	Big Ideas	19	Protect /Promote
		16	Grow Mem. Med. Center
		12	At End of Xway - Make us a Destination
		12	WSCC - Regional Development Center
		9	Promote Agri/Tourism
			Make Available

#7	Assets	23	Active & Involved Citizens	
		11	Camp Ground Study - Do We Have Enough?	
		10	Lake Michigan/Beaches	
		10	Farming	
		7	PM River	
		5	Views	
		3	Fishing	
		2	Beaches	
		2	Community Co Operating	
		1	Golf Courses	
		1	Night Sky	
		1	Wildlife	
			V. Good Schools	
		Hospitals/Medical Care		
		Big Ideas	58	Limit Wind Turbines / Limit Height / Set Back
			29	Research & Prioritize Energy Plan for Future:
			10	Agri - Tourism
			3	Big Canoe Race
			1	Retirement Housing
			1	Co-operating & Considerate Community
			Fremont Digester	
			What Does it Look Like	
			Planned Enforcement	
			Equitable Solutions	

# MASON COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Combined on-line and mail-in results

## BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

The following questions will help the Planning Commission better understand how the opinions of County residents vary across the community.

### 1. In which community do you live?

1.9% Grant Township	8.2% Amber Township
0.4% Freesoil Township	2.6% Scottville, City
0.2% Freesoil, Village	2.2% Custer Township
0.7% Meade Township	0.2% Custer, Village
16.5% Hamlin Township	5.5% Branch Township
4.2% Victory Township	4.7% Summit Township
0.0% Fountain, Village	6.4% Riverton Township
5.0% Sheridan Township	0.9% Eden Township
20.5% Ludington, City	0.4% Logan Township
9.6% Pere Marq. Township	2.5% Sherman Township
2.1% Unsure or Don't know	4.0% Outside of Mason Cnty

### 2. How many persons are in your household?

a avg 2.07 Adults (18+ yrs)      b avg 1.2 Children (0-17 yrs)

### 3. What is your approximate age and that of the other principal adult (if any) in the household?

	a Your age	b Other adult
18-25 years	1.1%	2.6%
26-35 years	6.9%	6.6%
36-45 years	12.9%	12.0%
46-55 years	22.1%	17.0%
56-65 years	32.2%	24.7%
66 years and over	23.1%	16.7%

### 4. Do you own or rent your home?

1 92% Own      2 4.8% Rent

### 5. About how long have you lived in your current home?

Avg 19 Years

### 6. In the next five years, do you expect to move out of Mason County?

1 5.4% Yes      2 74.5% No      3 16.5% Don't know

### 7. How do you get news pertaining to Mason County planning and zoning issues?

5 72.6% Newspaper      4 10.4% TV      3 26.8% Internet      2 13.2% Radio      1 7.2% County newsletter      0 34.2% Neighbors/friends

### 8. Which of the following best describes where you currently live?

1 28.5% Rural Homesite of 5 acres, or more	2 20.0% Rural homesite of less than 5 acres
3 14.5% Lakefront lot	4 32.1% Subdivision or development in a township, city or village

### 9. What is your employment status and that of any other adult in the household?

	a You	b Other Adult
Employed	62.4%	51.7%
Not currently employed	3.9%	4.7%
Retired	31.3%	24.5%
Stay-at home parent	1.4%	2.9%

### 10. Where do you work?

	a You	b Other Adult
At Home	8.5%	5.7%
Ludington area	39.0%	30.6%
Scottville area	9.5%	7.4%
Manistee area	2.2%	3.4%
Pentwater area	1.5%	1.1%
Amber Township	1.7%	1.2%
Not employed	19.2%	16.6%
Other (specify)	_____	_____

### 11. About how far do you and any other adult in the household travel one-way to work?

a. You 8.9 Miles      b. Other adult 10.7 Miles

### 12. Where are you most likely to go for the following goods and services?

	a Groceries	b Entertainment	c Medical
Ludington area	90.4%	72.5%	75.7%
Scottville area	3.1%	4.4%	3.4%
Manistee area	4.1%	12.1%	5.7%
Pentwater area	0.7%	5.0%	3.2%
Amber Township	7.1%	4.7%	0.5%
Other (specify)	_____	_____	_____

### 13. Do you think Mason County is growing...

1 7.0% too quickly      2 36.1% about right      3 35.1% too slowly      4 18.2% no opinion



# PLANNING AND LAND USE QUESTIONS

The next group of questions ask for your opinions about population growth, land use and planning in Mason County.

## 14. In the area where you live, how serious do you think the following problems or concerns are:

	Very Serious 3	Somewhat Serious 2	Not Serious 1	No Opinion 0
a Pollution of lakes and streams	25.0%	36.8%	28.2%	2.7%
b Development in open lands and natural areas	18.2%	32.2%	36.1%	5.7%
c Lack of public water/sewer	6.5%	15.1%	60.5%	8.9%
d Loss of scenic views	24.3%	23.6%	41.1%	3.5%
e Over-development of lakefront areas	21.7%	31.7%	32.6%	6.1%
f Conversion of farms into house lots	14.0%	23.3%	45.6%	9.4%
g Lack of public transit	14.6%	26.6%	45.1%	5.9%
h Loss of private property rights	28.1%	23.2%	30.8%	9.7%
i Traffic congestion	7.2%	26.5%	55.2%	3.2%
j Lack of good jobs nearby	45.2%	30.3%	13.0%	3.7%
k Availability of affordable housing	12.0%	32.3%	41.3%	6.6%
l Lack of nearby* shopping	10.4%	22.3%	56.3%	3.4%
m Lack of entertainment and social activities	9.4%	28.2%	50.4%	3.9%
n Poor upkeep of private homes and yards	15.6%	32.6%	40.1%	4.2%
o Lack of trails/bike lanes	16.4%	29.8%	40.4%	5.6%
p Lack of broadband/wi-fi	21.6%	30.1%	34.6%	6.0%
q Wind turbines too close to homes	25.0%	11.1%	44.3%	11.9%
r Other concerns _____				

\* "Nearby" is defined as within a 5-mile radius of your home

## 15. How would you rate efforts to guide and direct growth in your community?

1.2%	25.3%	38.3%	20.8%	7.9%
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion

## 16. What comes to mind when you hear the word "open space"? (select only one)

20.2%	3.4%	8.1%	0.6%	1.2%
Farmland	Prairies	Woodlands	Wetlands	Open Water
5.5%	54.1%			
Parks	Any undeveloped land			

## 17. In terms of community priorities, in your opinion, how important are the following?

	Very Important 4	Somewhat Important 3	Not Important 2	1	0
a Preserving farmlands	35.5%	22.7%	21.3%	5.5%	2.2%
b Supporting working farms	39.3%	24.7%	19.2%	3.5%	2.1%
c Purchasing open space/views	16.9%	15.2%	31.8%	14.0%	9.5%
d Protecting surface water and groundwater	60.9%	16.7%	10.1%	1.0%	0.7%
e Protecting natural areas	53.4%	20.1%	13.1%	1.5%	1.2%
f Establishing and/or expanding pedestrian and bike trails	22.3%	23.0%	22.7%	10.9%	10.7%
g Increasing public access to lakes, rivers and streams	16.7%	24.8%	27.7%	12.6%	8.0%
h Increasing housing opportunity for young families	16.1%	25.1%	34.6%	8.2%	4.9%
i Increasing housing opportunity for seniors	17.0%	26.6%	32.3%	7.9%	5.4%
j Expanding public transit	18.2%	19.7%	26.1%	14.6%	9.2%
k Encouraging development in Ludington, Scottville and the Villages	29.8%	24.0%	22.7%	6.7%	5.2%
l Creating local job opportunities	57.7%	19.6%	8.9%	1.5%	1.9%
m Reducing sprawling patterns of growth	17.1%	17.9%	31.0%	14.4%	7.2%
n Expanding nearby shopping opportunities	15.1%	22.3%	30.1%	14.4%	7.2%
o Fostering the arts and cultural opportunities	19.7%	26.7%	23.0%	11.4%	7.7%
p Encouraging a recycling program	41.8%	20.2%	17.2%	6.6%	3.0%
q Protecting private property rights	50.8%	19.1%	13.1%	3.2%	2.2%
r Other priorities (write in) _____					

## 18. Of the items listed in question 17 above, please indicate the top three priorities you are willing to pay for through taxes or fees:

8.7% a	26.0% e	8.5% i	4.2% m	25.1% q
5.6% b	15.7% f	18.1% j	6.0% n	
6.0% c	7.4% g	14.0% k	8.6% o	
35.6% d	5.0% h	35.1% l	23.3% p	

## 19. Please indicate your opinions regarding wind energy:

- 49.1% I support wind energy in Mason County
- 20.7% I do not support wind energy in Mason County
- 16.5% I am concerned that in Mason County...
  - 0.6% the turbines are too close together
  - 1.5% the turbines are too close to homes
  - 8.9% I don't want them in my backyard
  - 10.7% the turbines are too tall

**20. What types of commercial/service development should be encouraged in Mason County? (check no more than 2)**

<b>26.2%</b> Regional Shopping center	<b>23.6%</b> Restaurants	<b>28.6%</b> Agri-tourism/ tourism
<b>19.1%</b> Specialty Shops	<b>11.0%</b> Neighborhood Convenience stores	<b>14.6%</b> Home-based businesses
<b>30.8%</b> Health Care	<b>7.7%</b> Other _____	<b>5.2%</b> None

**21. In the community where you live, what types of commercial development should be encouraged? (check no more than 2)**

<b>14.0%</b> Regional Shopping center	<b>19.6%</b> Restaurants	<b>23.3%</b> Agri-tourism/ tourism
<b>16.4%</b> Specialty Shops	<b>17.0%</b> Neighborhood Convenience stores	<b>17.9%</b> Home-based businesses
<b>16.2%</b> Health Care	<b>3.6%</b> Other _____	<b>16.6%</b> None

**22. What types of emerging economic development should be encouraged in Mason County? (check no more than 2)**

<b>4.9%</b> Warehousing	<b>28.1%</b> Clean energy	<b>44.7%</b> Manufacturing	<b>35.2%</b> High-tech
<b>6.0%</b> Shipping / Logistics	<b>22.5%</b> Agribusiness	<b>27.6%</b> Medical / health care	<b>3.7%</b> Other _____
			<b>2.2%</b> None

**23. What types of new housing should be encouraged in Mason County? (check no more than 2)**

<b>16.6%</b> Single Family (3+ acre lot)	<b>25.1%</b> Single Family (1-3 acre lot)	<b>32.5%</b> Single Family (1/4 – 1 acre lot)
<b>15.0%</b> Single Family (< 1/4 acre lot)	<b>17.0%</b> Apartment/duplex/ or attached condo	<b>24.3%</b> Mixed (housing & commercial)
	<b>3.5%</b> Mobile/modular	<b>8.9%</b> None

**24. In the community where you live, what types of new housing should be encouraged? (check no more than 2)**

<b>17.2%</b> Single Family (3+ acre lot)	<b>23.6%</b> Single Family (1-3 acre lot)	<b>32.0%</b> Single Family (1/4 - 1 acre lot)
<b>15.6%</b> Single Family (less than 1/4 acre lot)	<b>15.6%</b> Apartment/Duplex or Attached Condo	<b>2.7%</b> Mixed (Housing & Commercial)
	<b>3.6%</b> Mobile/Modular	<b>11.1%</b> None

**25. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

- a. Keeping new housing spread out on large lots helps to preserve the rural feel of the County.
- |                                |                       |                          |                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>18.9%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>43.8%</b><br>Agree | <b>14.5%</b><br>Disagree | <b>4.6%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>5.2%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- b. New development should occur only when the needed municipal sewer and water services are available.
- |                                |                       |                          |                                   |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>12.9%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>28.0%</b><br>Agree | <b>27.2%</b><br>Disagree | <b>12.1%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>6.6%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- c. This area needs industry to provide higher paying jobs.
- |                                |                       |                         |                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>44.2%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>30.8%</b><br>Agree | <b>8.1%</b><br>Disagree | <b>1.6%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>3.0%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- d. Strong enforcement is needed to get some messy properties cleaned up.
- |                                |                       |                          |                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>28.1%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>36.0%</b><br>Agree | <b>14.6%</b><br>Disagree | <b>3.0%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>5.9%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- e. Retaining and attracting talent is important for attracting industry and jobs.
- |                                |                       |                         |                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>41.2%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>35.5%</b><br>Agree | <b>5.5%</b><br>Disagree | <b>1.5%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>3.7%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- f. Zoning rules are intended to help me make the best use of my property.
- |                                |                       |                          |                                   |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>11.5%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>34.5%</b><br>Agree | <b>21.8%</b><br>Disagree | <b>13.7%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>6.4%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- g. I support increased controls on development to protect groundwater and water quality in the rivers, lakes and streams.
- |                                |                       |                         |                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>33.1%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>43.7%</b><br>Agree | <b>4.0%</b><br>Disagree | <b>1.9%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>3.9%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- h. A land owner (including my neighbor) should be able to do pretty much what he/she wants with his land.
- |                                |                       |                          |                                   |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>10.7%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>21.8%</b><br>Agree | <b>32.6%</b><br>Disagree | <b>19.5%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>2.9%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- i. Ensuring the County is "business -friendly."
- |                                |                       |                         |                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>33.1%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>43.7%</b><br>Agree | <b>4.0%</b><br>Disagree | <b>1.9%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>3.9%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- j. The County needs programs to prevent the conversion of large tracts of farmland into residential or commercial developments.
- |                                |                       |                          |                                  |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>18.5%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>28.2%</b><br>Agree | <b>24.0%</b><br>Disagree | <b>9.1%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>7.6%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
- k. I am willing to pay a little higher taxes for government to purchase and protect areas threatened by development.
- |                                |                       |                          |                                   |                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>11.4%</b><br>Strongly Agree | <b>28.1%</b><br>Agree | <b>23.0%</b><br>Disagree | <b>15.9%</b><br>Strongly Disagree | <b>9.5%</b><br>Don't know |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|

26. If Mason County were to encourage economic development, how should they do so?

- 34.3% Tax abatements
- 31.7% Expedited zoning/permitting process
- 11.1% Allow in County-owned buildings
- 4.4% Rent subsidies
- 12.4% Hire a development advocate/liaison
- 5.4% Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 13.5% I want new emerging economic / industrial development, but no incentives
- 2.6% I don't want any new emerging economic or industrial development in Mason County
- 18.4% I don't know

27. What do you see as the future of clean energy in Mason County?

- |                       |                       |             |               |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 3.1%                  | 8.5%                  | 8.2%        | 16.7%         |
| Biodiesel             | Solar                 | Geothermal  | Hydroelectric |
| 12.5%                 | 21.1%                 | 12.4%       |               |
| Wind<br>(small scale) | Wind<br>(large scale) | Other _____ |               |

28. Please use the remaining space to write down your ideas and opinions concerning the development of the Mason County area.

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Thank you very much for your cooperation. Please fold the questionnaire with our address on the outside, tape it closed and drop it in a mailbox - no postage is needed. Please reply by December 7, 2012.

*Thanks again for your help!*

# Mason County Planning & Zoning Department

102 E. FIFTH STREET  
SCOTTVILLE, MICHIGAN 49454  
(231) 757-9272 • FAX (231) 757-9253  
[www.masoncounty.net](http://www.masoncounty.net)

**November 15, 2012**

**Dear Mason County Resident,**

The Mason County Planning Commission is in the process of updating the County Master Plan. That plan serves as a general guide to growth and development in the County. As we go through this process, it is very important that we have as much input from the community as possible. We ask your cooperation in completing the enclosed survey form. Your confidential reply will be very helpful as we work to make Mason County an even better place to live and work.

The form should be completed by an adult in your household. Please take a few minutes in the next few days to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire. No postage is required and you do not need to put your name on the form.

When you are finished, just fold the questionnaire so that the return address is visible, tape it closed and drop it in the mail. Please return your survey form prior to December 7, 2012.

If you prefer, you may complete the survey online at: [www.masoncounty.net](http://www.masoncounty.net) and go to the Zoning Department for a link to the survey.

In addition to filling out the survey form, if you would like to stay informed about the effort to update the Master Plan or if you would like to participate in some of the community meetings we are having on the proposed plan, check out our website at [www.masoncounty.net](http://www.masoncounty.net). You will find updates on the planning process, draft reports, a community bulletin board and notices of meetings.

Thank you for your time and support.

**MASON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

Please give us your thoughts!

Planning Commission  
Mason County  
102 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Scottville, MI 49454