



MASON COUNTY
MICHIGAN

DATA BOOK 2020



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This publication was prepared as part of the process to update the Mason County Comprehensive Plan in summer 2019. 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 efforts to update it in 2012 and 2019 enabled 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 2019. Chapters 4, 6 and 7 remain unchanged from 2006.

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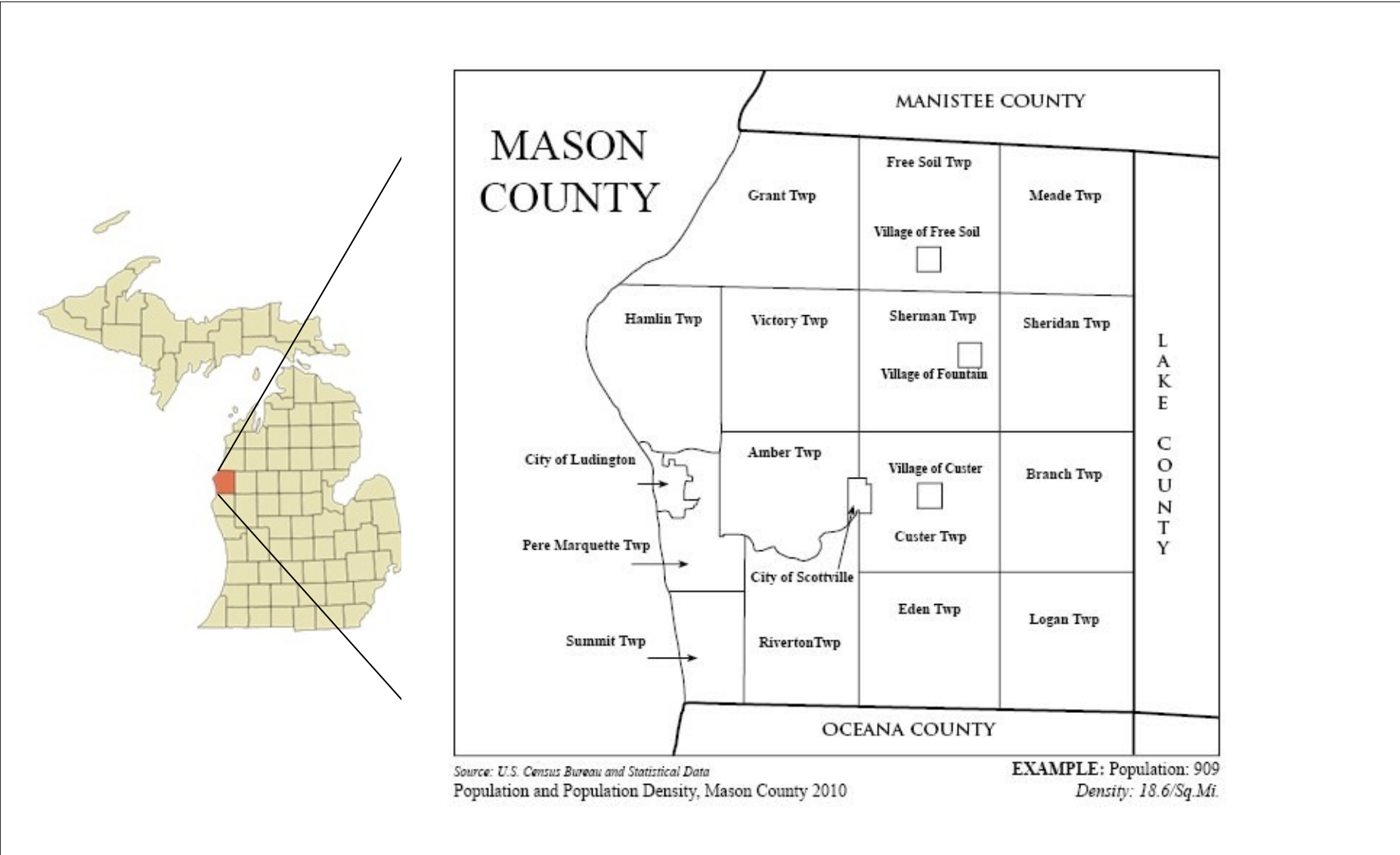
The data and trends presented in the Mason County Comprehensive Plan Data Book should be studied by elected and appointed officials, community leaders, service organizations, developers, realtors, and interested citizens. The results can help inform decisions involving Mason County land, natural and 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 1,242 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. Last updated in 2019.

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. Last updated in 2019.

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. Last updated in 2019.

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. The most current Census data (2010) was used along with 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates. 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.

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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. Because the most recent Census data was collected in 2010 and is already included in this document, demographic data has been updated using the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, where applicable or available. It should be noted that these are estimates and may not always provide an accurate representation of the community. However, they have been included in our analysis to enhance our understanding of community trends until the next census is completed in 2020.

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). According to 2017 ACS estimates, this trend of increasing population has likely continued.

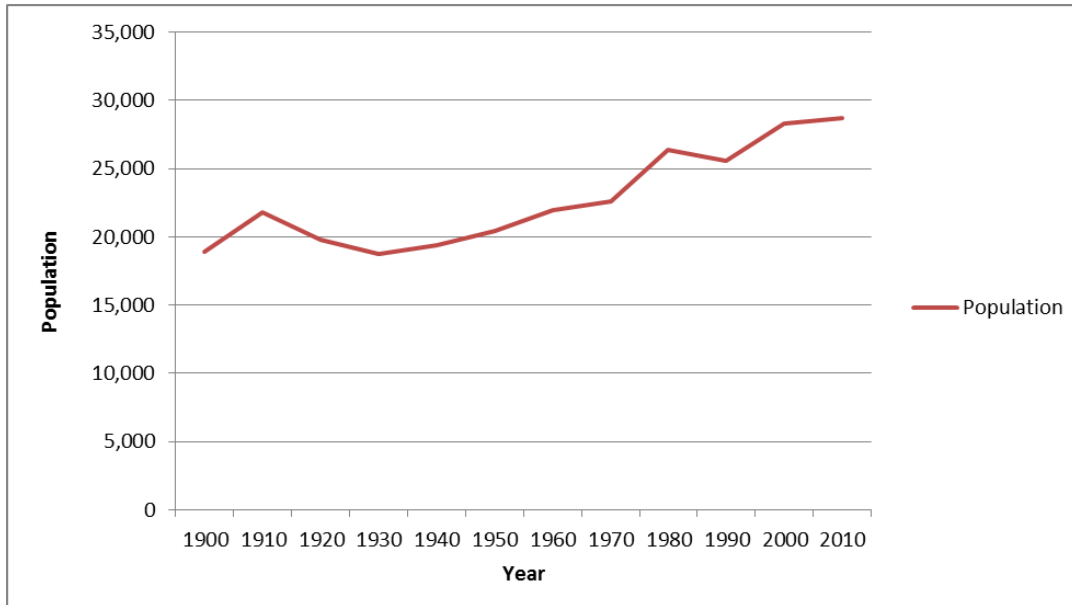
Table 2-1
Population Change for Mason County, 1900-2010

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%
*2017	28,800	95	0.3%
Change in Population 1900-2010		9,820	52%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

*2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Population Estimates

Figure 2-1
Population for Mason County, 1900-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

POPULATION PROFILE OF THE LAST DECADE

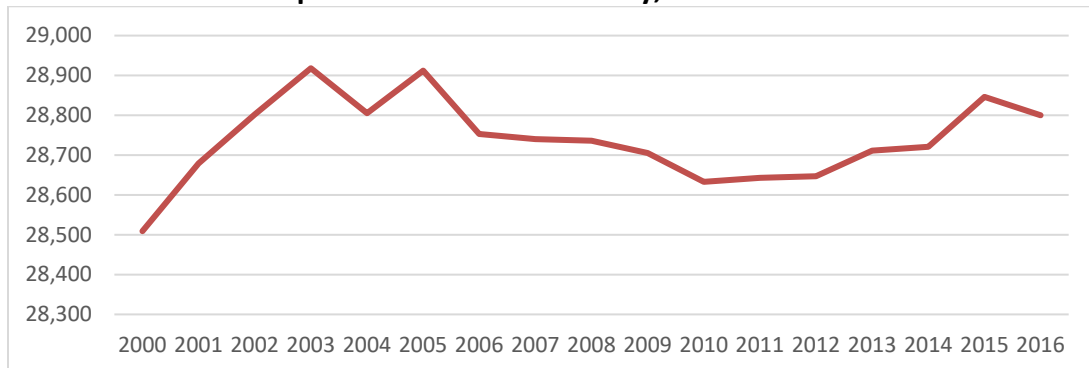
From 2000 to 2010, Mason County saw little change in its population. **Table 2-2** illustrates this change. The greatest growth occurred in the first half of the decade, between 2000 and 2004. Between 2004 and 2010, Mason County's overall population declined at a rate of roughly -0.2% every year; however, recent trends indicate population stabilization and slow growth. **Table 2-2** illustrates this change. Michigan 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%. 2017 American Community Survey estimates reveal that this modest rate of population growth has likely continued.

Table 2-2
Population Change for Mason County 2000-2017

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%
2011	28,633	-72	-0.025%	-0.01%
2012	28,643	10	0.03%	0.11%
2013	28,647	4	0.01%	0.13%
2014	28,711	64	0.22%	0.16%
2015	28,721	10	0.03%	0.04%
2016	28,846	125	0.43%	0.29%
2017 Population Estimate*				28,800
Change in Population from 2000-2010				431
% Change in Population from 2000-2010				1.5%

Source: Michigan Department of Community Health and U.S. Census Bureau
 *2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Population Estimates

Figure 2-2
Population for Mason County, 2000-2016



Source: Michigan Department of Community Health and 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). According to the 2017 American Community Survey, the overall population for the five counties was estimated to have decreased by 0.64% since 2010.

Table 2-3

Mason and Adjoining Counties Population Change 1970-2010

County	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	*2017	Population Change 1970-2010	Percent Change in Population 1970-2010
Mason	22,612	26,365	25,537	28,288	28,705	28,800	6,093	27%
Manistee	20,094	23,019	21,265	24,527	24,733	24,432	4,639	23%
Lake	5,661	7,711	8,583	11,333	11,539	11,669	5,878	104%
Newaygo	27,992	34,917	38,206	47,874	48,460	47,899	20,468	73%
Oceana	17,984	22,002	22,454	26,873	26,570	26,317	8,586	49%
Five County Total	94,343	114,014	116,045	138,881	140,007	139,117	45,664	48%

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

*Estimated from the 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Population Estimates

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
Mason	25,537	28,288	28,705	2,751	11%	417	1.5%
Manistee	21,265	24,527	24,733	3,262	20%	206	0.8%
Lake	8,583	11,333	11,539	2,750	32%	206	2%
Newaygo	38,206	47,874	48,460	9,668	25%	586	1%
Oceana	22,454	26,873	26,570	4,419	20%	-303	-1%
COUNTY TOTAL	116,045	138,881	140,007	22,836	20%	1,126	.8%

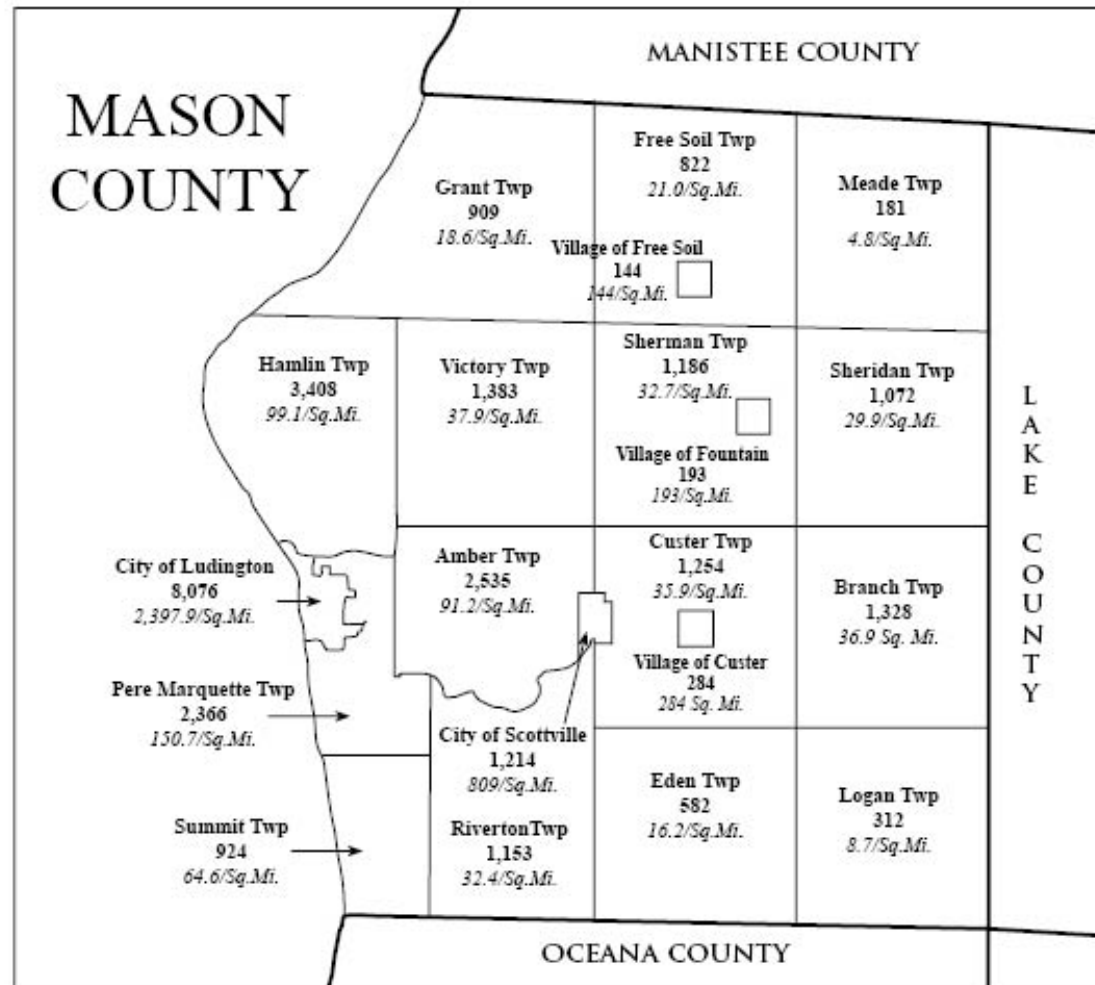
Source: Michigan Department of Community Health and U.S. Census Bureau

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). Due to the small sample size and higher margin of error of American Community Survey estimates in many of the County's smaller jurisdictions, 2017 American Community Survey population estimates were not included in the 2019 update for township, city, and village population.

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 56 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	Land 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	27.0	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%
MASON COUNTY TOTAL	512.8	28,451	55.5	28,705	56.0	431	1.5%

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 ¹	318	1%	284	0.9%
Village of Fountain ¹	175	0.6%	193	0.6%
Village of Free Soil ¹	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	1,307	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%
MASON COUNTY TOTAL	28,274	100%	28,705	100%

¹The U.S. Census Bureau reports village population counts within the township values. Therefore, village population values are not used to calculate the Mason County Totals.

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. Amber Township had the greatest percent increase during this period, as well as the most new units added (48%, 390 new units). Grant Township (17%) had the second highest percent increase with 25 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 a 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. According

to the American Community Survey, housing in Mason County was estimated to have increased by 1.1% between 2010 and 2017 for a total of 17,483 housing units. Due to the small sample size and higher margin of error of American Community Survey estimates in many of the County's smaller jurisdictions, 2017 American Community Survey housing estimates were not included in the 2019 update for the County's townships, cities, and villages.

Table 2-7
Housing Units Mason County 1990-2010

Jurisdiction	2000 Total Housing Units	2010 Total Housing Units	Change 2000-2010	% Change in Units 2000- 2010
City of Ludington	4,227	4,432	205	5%
City of Scottville	574	578	4	0.7%
Village of Custer ¹	132	137	5	4%
Village of Fountain ¹	89	83	-6	-7%
Village of Free Soil ¹	93	84	-9	-10%
Township of Amber	820	1,210	390	48%
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	3%
Township of Grant	499	524	25	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	3%
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%
Mason County Total	16,063	17,293	1,230	8%

¹The U.S. Census Bureau reports village housing unit counts within the township values. Therefore, village values are not used to calculate the Mason County Totals.

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. In 2017, the county was estimated to have approximately 17,408 housing units, with 70% (12,186) being occupied and 30% (5,222) being vacant housing units. Out of the occupied housing units, 77% (9,398) were owner-occupied units and 23% (2,788) were renter-occupied units. This suggests that the county has maintained a strong tourism industry with vacant units being used for recreational, seasonal, or occasional use.

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. The 2017 American Community Survey reports the same percentages as the 2010 Census, with one-unit detached homes comprising 76% (13,213) of housing units and mobile homes comprising 11% (1,891) of the total 17,408 housing units in the county. Although the total number of housing units in the county are estimated to have increased, the proportions of housing units are estimated to be the same.

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 ¹	137	88	64%	22	16%	27	19.5%	2	7.5%
Village of Fountain ¹	83	57	67%	14	17%	12	14.5%	7	58%
Village of Free Soil ¹	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%
Mason County Total	17,293	9,128	53%	2,812	16%	5,353	31%	4,051	75%
AVERAGE- FOR TOTAL OF 20 JURISDICTIONS									
Owner Occupied Housing Units as Percent of Total Housing Units				57%	Vacant Housing Units as Percent of Total Housing Units				32%
Renter Occupied Housing Units as Percent of Total Housing Units				12%	Percent of Vacant Housing Units for Seasonal, recreational, or Occasional Use				65%

¹ The U.S. Census Bureau reports village housing unit counts within the township values. Therefore, village values are not used to calculate the Mason County Totals.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2-9
Type of Occupied Housing in Mason County, 2017

Type of Housing Unit	Mason County	As % of Total Housing Units	Michigan
1 unit- detached	13,213	76%	72%
1 unit attached	325	2%	5%
2 units	303	2%	2%
3 or 4 units	474	3%	3%
5 to 9 units	417	2%	4%
10 or more units	759	4%	9%
Mobile homes, RV, boat, van	1,917	11%	5%
Total housing units	17,408	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
 *2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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. The majority (58%) of housing in Mason County was constructed after 1970. Although a considerable number of housing units were built in 1939 or earlier (19.6%), significant development took place between 1970 and 2009 (**See Table 2-10**). This suggests that there is a variety of aged and newer structures throughout the county.

Table 2-10
Age of Occupied Housing Units in Mason County, 2017

Year Structure Built	Number of Units	% of Total
Built 2010 or later	192	1.1%
Built 2000 to 2009	2,479	14.2%
Built 1990 to 1999	2,402	14.2%
Built 1980 to 1989	2,227	12.8%
Built 1970 to 1979	2,783	16.0%
Built 1960 to 1969	1,410	8.1%
Built 1950 to 1959	1,556	8.9%
Built 1940 to 1949	939	5.4%
Built 1939 or earlier	3,420	19.6%
Total Housing Units	17,408	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 2-11
Building Permits Mason County, 2012-2018

	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	Mobile	Single Fam	Mobile	Single Fam	Mobile	Single Fam	Mobile	Single Fam	Mobile	Single Fam	Mobile	Single Fam	Mobile	Single Fam
Scottville	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Amber	2	4	2	2	0	1	0	1	0	4	2	6	3	4
Branch	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	1	0	4	0	4
Custer	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Eden	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	3	0	0
Free Soil	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	5	0	3
Grant	0	6	0	3	1	2	0	4	0	1	0	4	2	3
Hamlin	13	18	4	17	10	16	1	19	1	22	2	26	1	19
Logan	0	3	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	4	0	1
Meade	1	3	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	2
Riverton	0	2	0	4	0	3	1	3	0	3	0	3	0	3
Sheridan	0	1	0	5	1	3	0	4	2	4	0	5	0	1
Sherman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	2
Summit	1	1	0	5	2	9	3	3	0	6	2	5	0	3
Victory	0	1	2	4	0	3	0	4	1	5	1	4	1	7
County Total	17	43	11	47	16	50	7	48	4	54	8	72	7	56

Source: Mason County, 2018

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**). In 2017, the average household size was estimated to be 2.32, which is slightly less than in 2010. All jurisdictions experienced a decrease in the average number of persons per household in 2010 with the exception of the City of Scottsville, the Village of Fountain, and Meade Township. The community with the highest population per household was 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). Due to the small sample size and higher margin of error of American Community Survey estimates in many of the County's smaller jurisdictions, 2017 American Community Survey average household size estimates were not included in the 2019 update for the County's townships, cities, and villages.

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

Community	2000	2010	Change in PPH 2000-2010	% Change in PPH 2000-2010
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%
Average (of 20 listed communities)	2.50	2.43	-0.07	-2.9%
Mason County	2.43	2.37	-0.06	-2.47%
State of Michigan	2.56	2.49	-0.07	-2.73%

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.

According to the 2017 American Community Survey estimates, people aged 55 to 64 years continued to grow with an 8.4% increase since 2010. This age group was estimated to comprise 16.5% of the total population in 2017, remaining the largest age group overall and increasing in percent of the total population from 2010. The second largest growing age group in 2010 (65 to 74 years) also remained the second largest growing age group in 2017, growing 16.1% since 2010 and comprising 12.5% of the total population. The greatest decrease in an age group between 2010 and 2017 was for those aged 45 to 54, whose numbers decreased by 766 people and represented a 17.0% decrease since 2010. Changes in young age groups (19 years or younger) are consistent with past trends, continuing to decline in number and percent of total population between 2010 and 2017. **Table 2-14** compares the age breakdown of groups from 2010 to 2017. Overall, total growth in age groups between 2010 and 2017 (95 people) was lower than overall growth between 2000 and 2010 (431 people).

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
Mason County Total	28,274	100%	28,705	100%	431

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

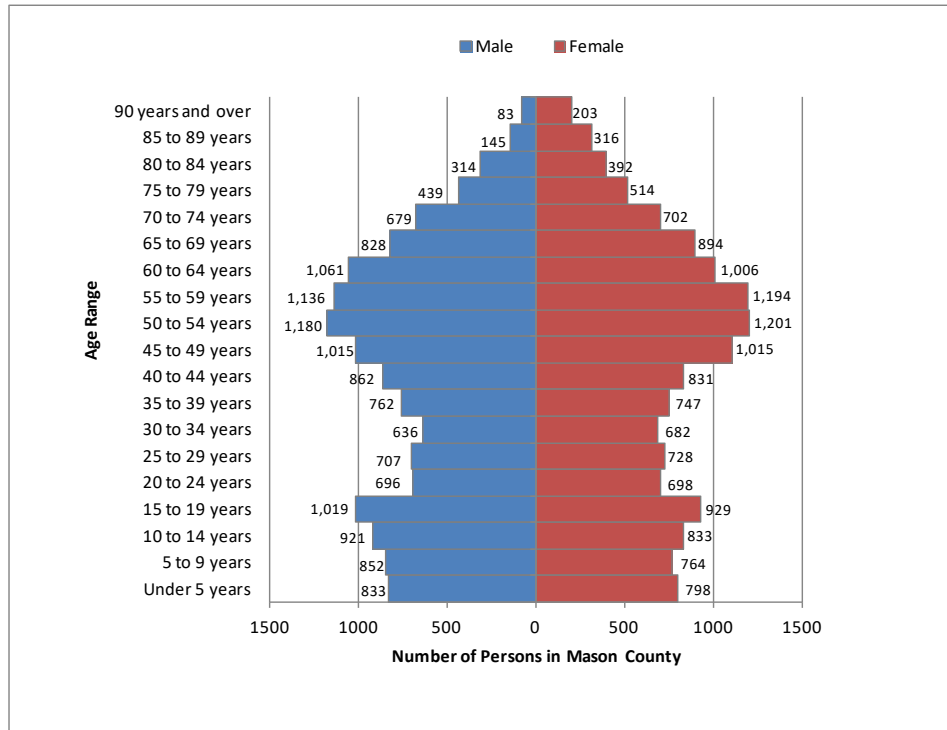
Table 2-14
Age Groups of Mason County, 2010-2017

Age	Total Population in 2017	% of Total Population in 2017	Change in Age Group 2010-2017	% Change in Age Group 2010-2017
Under 5 years	1,497	5.2%	-134	-8.2%
5 to 9 years	1,653	5.7%	37	2.3%
10 to 14 years	1,697	5.9%	-57	-3.2%
15 to 19 years	1,657	5.8%	-291	-14.9%
20 to 24 years	1,628	5.7%	234	16.8%
25 to 34 years	2,943	10.2%	190	6.9%
35 to 44 years	2,968	10.3%	-234	-7.3%
45 to 54 years	3,735	13.0%	-766	-17.0%
55 to 64 years	4,766	16.5%	369	8.4%
65 to 74 years	3,604	12.5%	501	16.1%
75 years and over	2,652	9.2%	246	10.2%
Mason County Total	28,800	100%	95	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

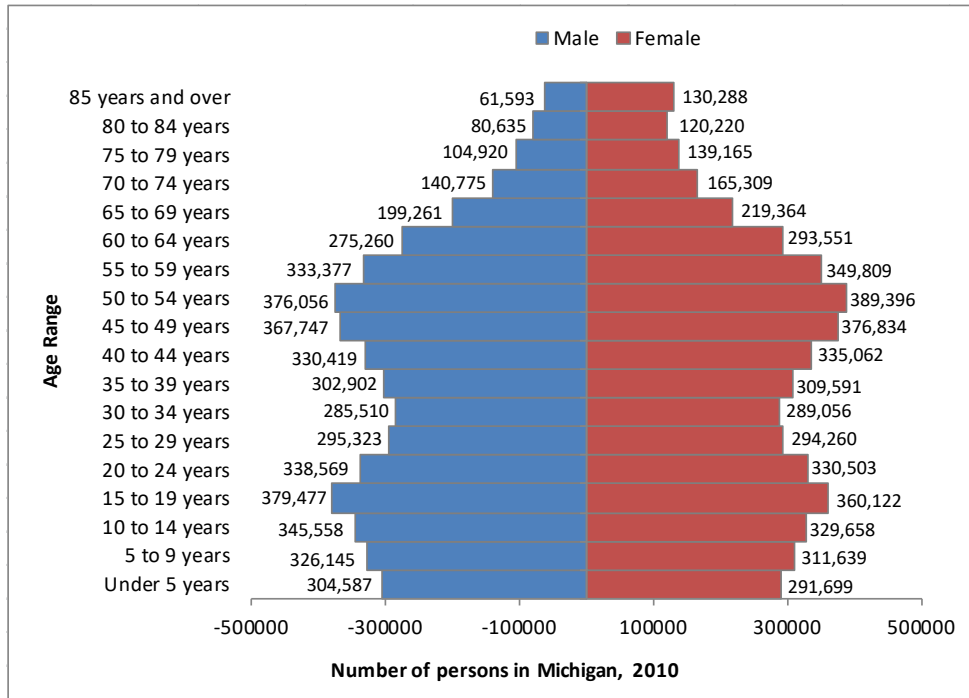
*2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

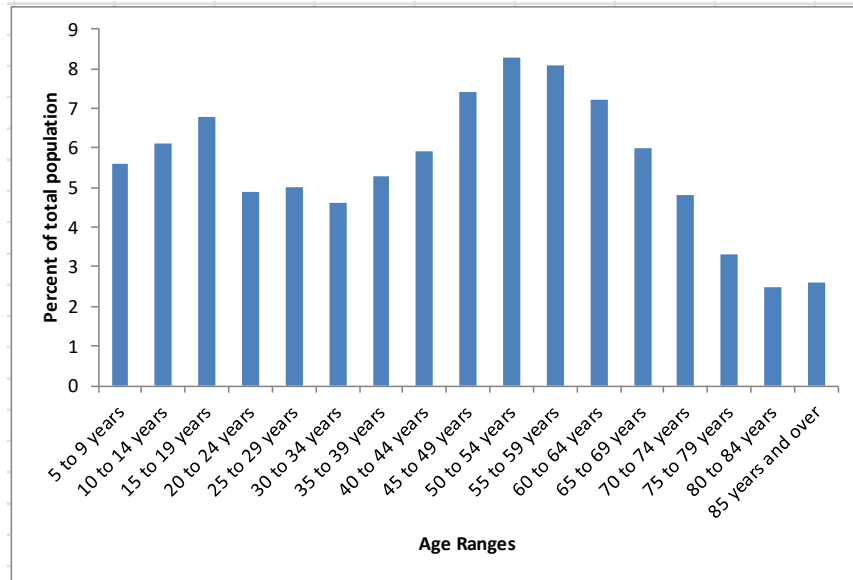
Figure 2-4
State of Michigan Population by Age and Gender, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2-5

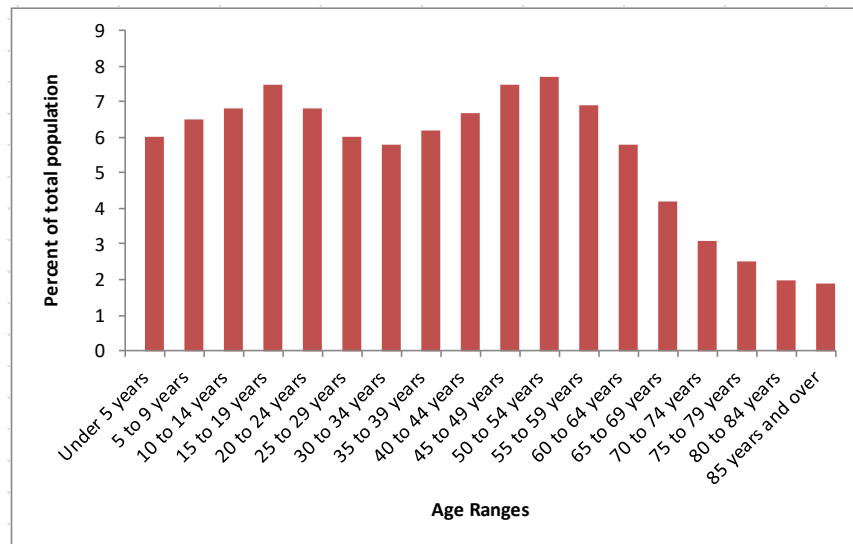
Age Ranges as Percent of Total Population, Mason County 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

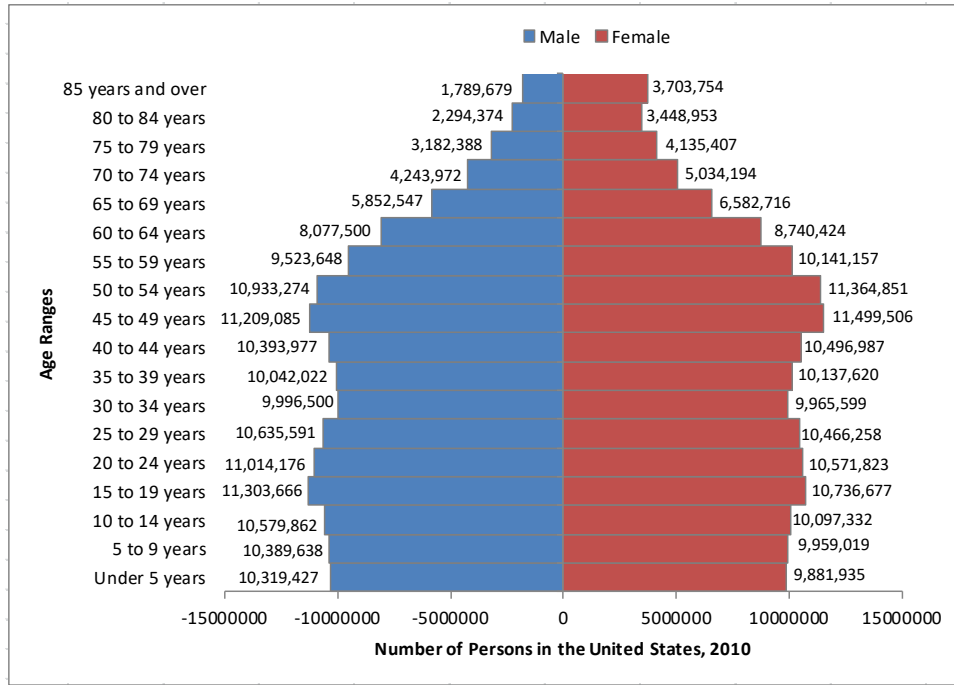
Figure 2-6

Age Ranges as Percent of Total Population, Michigan 2010



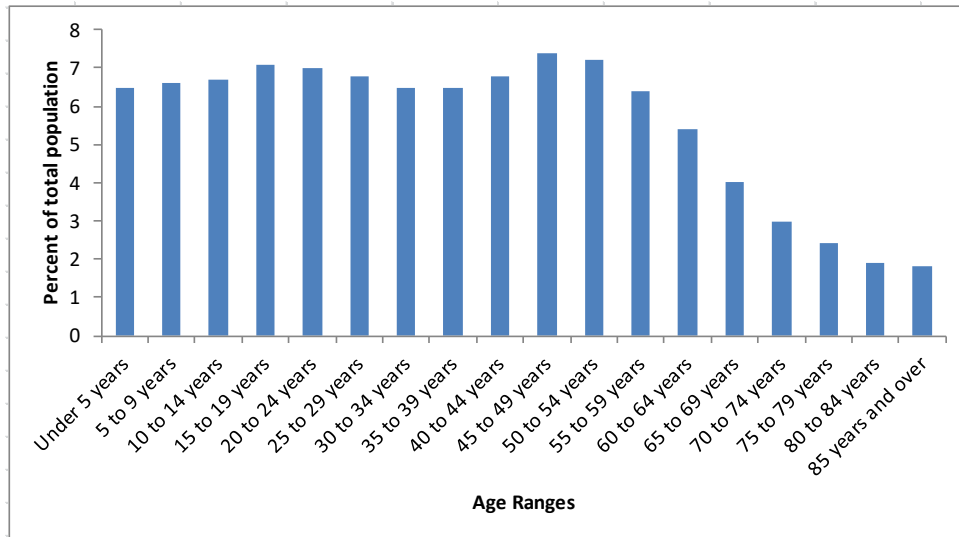
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

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 2010 statewide average of 19.8%. According to the American Community Survey, the total minority population in 2017 was estimated to be 2,586 persons, which comprised approximately 9% of the population in Mason County. Hispanic and Latino populations represented 4.5% of the total population and 49.7% of the minority population. Overall, the Hispanic and Latino population increased by 136 people (12%) between 2010 and 2017.

The largest minority population in Mason County in 2010 was persons of two or more races (547 or 37% of total minority population), followed by some other race (340 or 23%), persons of American Indian and Alaskan Native decent (289 or 19%), Black or African American (172 or 12%), and Asian (132 or 9%). In 2017, the largest minority population was still persons of two or more races (607 or 47% of the total minority population), followed by Black or African American (273 or 21%), American Indian and Alaskan Native decent (226 or 17%), and Asian (139 or 11%). Overall, the minority population decreased by 12.2% between 2010 and 2017. The Hispanic/Latino group indicates the number of people who identified as this ethnicity; however, because the Census allows people of Hispanic origin to be of any race(s), this is considered a broader category than other minority races. Those who identify as having a Hispanic/Latino ethnicity were estimated to increase between 2010 and 2017 by 11.8%. See **Table 2-15** for details.

Table 2-15
Minority Population in Mason County, 2010-2017*

Group	2010			2017*		
	Number of Persons	% of Minority Population	% of Total Population	Number of Persons	% of Minority Population	% of Total Population
Hispanic/ Latino Ethnicity	1,150	-	4.0%	1,286	-	4.5%
Black or African American	172	12%	0.6%	273	21%	0.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	289	19%	1.0%	226	17%	0.8%
Asian	132	9%	0.5%	139	11%	0.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0%	0.0%	0	0%	0.0%
Some Other Race	340	23%	1.2%	55	4%	0.2%
Two or More Races	547	37%	1.9%	607	47%	2.1%
Total	1,480	100%	5.3%	1,300	100%	4.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

*2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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.

In 2017, the median household income was estimated to increase for all five counties, averaging \$44,235. This represented an 8% increase over the median household income in 2010. Manistee County experienced the greatest percent increase of 19.8%; however, Mason County also had a high rate of increase at 17.4%. The average percent increase for all five counties was 17.2%, representing a substantial increase from 2010. All 2017 estimates for the five adjoining counties were still lower than the statewide income of \$52,668, but experienced increases greater than the statewide percent change of 16.1%.

Table 2-16
Median Household Income in Mason County, 1999-2010

County	1999 Median Household Income	2010 Median Household Income	*2017 Median Household Income	Change in Median Household Income 1999-2010	% Change in Median Household Income 1999-2010
Mason	\$34,704	\$38,776	\$45,524	\$4,072	12%
Manistee	\$34,208	\$37,479	\$44,882	\$3,271	10%
Lake	\$26,622	\$28,526	\$32,309	\$1,904	7%
Newaygo	\$37,130	\$38,846	\$45,645	\$1,716	5%
Oceana	\$35,307	\$37,629	\$44,382	\$2,322	7%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$45,354	\$52,668	\$687	2%
Five County Total - Average	\$33,594	\$36,251	\$44,235	\$2657	8%

Source: County Health, Population Health Institute, U.S. Census Bureau
 *2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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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, which further decreased by 0.73% between 2010 and 2019 (see **Table 3-1**). The number of those employed fell by 8.8% (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. This significant increase in unemployment was influenced by the Great Recession in the late 2000s, during which time there was a national economic decline. However, Mason County has experienced substantial recovery since 2010, as its jobless rate in 2019 was at 4.8%, similar to historic averages. Additionally, between 2010 and 2019, employment increased by 7.8% and unemployment decreased by 61.3%.

Table 3-1
Annual Average Employment Trends in Mason County 2000-2019

Status	2000	2010	2019	% Change	
				2000-2010	2010-2019
Labor Force	14,792	14,576	14,470	-1.5%	-0.73%
Employed	14,018	12,780	13,775	-8.8%	7.8%
Unemployed	711	1,796	695	153%	-61.3%
Jobless Rate	4.8%	12.3%	4.8%	156%	-60.9%

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget; Bureau of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives

*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/DataSearch/LAUS>

MASON AND ADJOINING COUNTIES EMPLOYMENT

Table 3-2 illustrates the total employed persons between 2010 and 2019 for Mason and its four surrounding counties. According to the Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget, Mason County had the second greatest number of persons employed in 2010 (12,780) and in 2019 (13,775) within the five-county area. Newaygo County had the greatest number of persons employed in 2010 and 2019 (18,692 and 23,040 respectively).

The number of employed persons increased in the nine-year period from 2010 to 2019. Newaygo had the greatest net gain in employment at 23% (4,348 persons) and Mason County had the second greatest increase at 8% (995 persons). Oceana County experienced the lowest increase in employment at 7% (822 persons). Overall, the five-county region experienced a 13% increase in employment between 2010 and 2019, equivalent to a total of 7,196 employed individuals.

Table 3-2
Mason and Adjoining Counties, Annual Average Employment 2010-2019

Region	2010 Employed*	2019 Employed*	Change 2010-2019	
			Total	%
State				
Michigan	4,147,000	4,788,000	641,000	15%
County				
Mason	12,780	13,775	995	8%
Lake	3,336	3,594	258	8%
Manistee	9,756	10,529	773	8%
Newaygo	18,692	23,040	4,348	23%
Oceana	11,781	12,603	822	7%
Five County Total	56,345	63,541	7,196	13%

* Not seasonally adjusted

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget; Bureau of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives

*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/DataSearch/LAUS>

MASON COUNTY ECONOMIC BASE

Mason County's economic base is diversified, with a major contributing sector being the manufacturing industry, which employs 2,048 persons and 23.8% of the labor force as of 2017 (**See Table 3-3**). The county's retail trade industry follows with 1,477 persons making up 17.1% of the total. The third largest contributor to the economic base in Mason County is the health care and social assistance field which employs 1,159 persons and makes up 13.4% of the total in 2017.

The major changes in employment distribution between 2010 and 2017 for Mason County are highlighted by the dramatic increases in the agriculture/forestry/fishing sector with a 110.6% increase and the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector with a 77.5% increase. Other sectors that saw increases between 2010 and 2017 were utilities (15.2%), construction (46.5%), manufacturing (12.3%), retail trade (13.9%), transportation and warehousing (28.1%), professional and technical services (21.4%), administrative support/waste management (44.6%), accommodation and food service (42.2%), and other services (24.0%). Sectors that experienced decreases during the seven-year period were wholesale trade (-11.3%), information (-17.7%), real estate and rental leasing (-15.2%), and health care and social assistance (-11.0%). Sectors that remained fairly consistent over a seven-year period were finance and insurance (5.0%) and private education services (0.0%). Overall there was a 13.7% increase between 2010 and 2017 in total private sector employment. The distribution of private employment sectors can be viewed in **Figure 3-1**.

Table 3-3

Industry (Private Sector)	Total Employed 2010	Percent	Total Employed 2017	Percent	Percent change
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	141	1.8%	297	3.4%	110.6%
Utilities	92	1.2%	106	1.2%	15.2%
Construction	312	4.1%	457	5.3%	46.5%
Manufacturing	1,823	24.0%	2,048	23.8%	12.3%
Wholesale Trade	150	1.9%	133	1.5%	-11.3%
Retail Trade	1,297	17.0%	1,477	17.1%	13.9%
Transportation and Warehousing	270	3.5%	346	4.0%	28.1%
Information	124	.16%	102	1.2%	-17.7%
Finance and Insurance	219	2.8%	230	2.7%	5.0%
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	112	1.4%	95	1.1%	-15.2%
Professional and Technical Services	145	1.9%	176	2.0%	21.4%
Administrative Support/Waste Management	323	4.2%	467	5.4%	44.6%
Private Education Services	20	0.3%	20	0.2%	0.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,302	17.0%	1,159	13.4%	-11.0%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	71	.9%	126	1.5%	77.5%
Accommodation and Food Service	701	9.2%	997	11.6%	42.2%
Other services	312	4.1%	387	4.5%	24.0%
Total private sector employment	7,414	100%	8,623	100%	13.7%

Private Sector Employment Distribution in Mason County, 2010-2017

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

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

Source: <http://milmi.org/DataSearch/QCEW>

Changes in agricultural industries include an increase in persons employed in crop production between 2000 and 2017, from 128 persons in 2000 to 217 in 2017. According to Table 3-4, the animal production employment sector grew from 0 in 2000 to 51 in 2017. Average weekly wages for both crop production and animal production had slight increases between 2000 and 2017, totaling \$481 per week for crop production and \$432 per week for animal production in 2017. The number of crop production facilities has grown from 16 to 18 between 2010 and 2017, and the number of animal production facilities has remained steady between 2010 and 2017.

Table 3-4
Farming and Agriculture Employment in Mason County, 2000-2017

Type of Agricultural Industry	Total Employed			Average Weekly Wages			Number of Establishments		
	2000	2010	2017	2000	2010	2017	2000	2010	2017
Crop Production	128	120	217	\$284	\$353	\$481	16	16	18
Animal Production	0	57	51	\$0	\$272	\$432	0	8	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).

Source: <http://milmi.org/DataSearch/QCEW>

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 (2.9%) followed. As of 2017, there were 1,677 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. However, those employed in local public school districts (West Shore Educational Service District, Mason County Eastern, Mason County Central, and Ludington Area School District) totaled 1,153 employees during the 2017-2018 school year. Therefore, public schools contribute to a high employment number in the local public sector.

Table 3-5
Public Sector Employment, Mason County, 2017

Public Sector	Total Employed 2017	Percent
Federal	73	4.4%
State	49	2.9%
Local	1,555	92.7%
Total public sector employment	1,677	100%

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

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

Source: <http://milmi.org/DataSearch/QCEW>

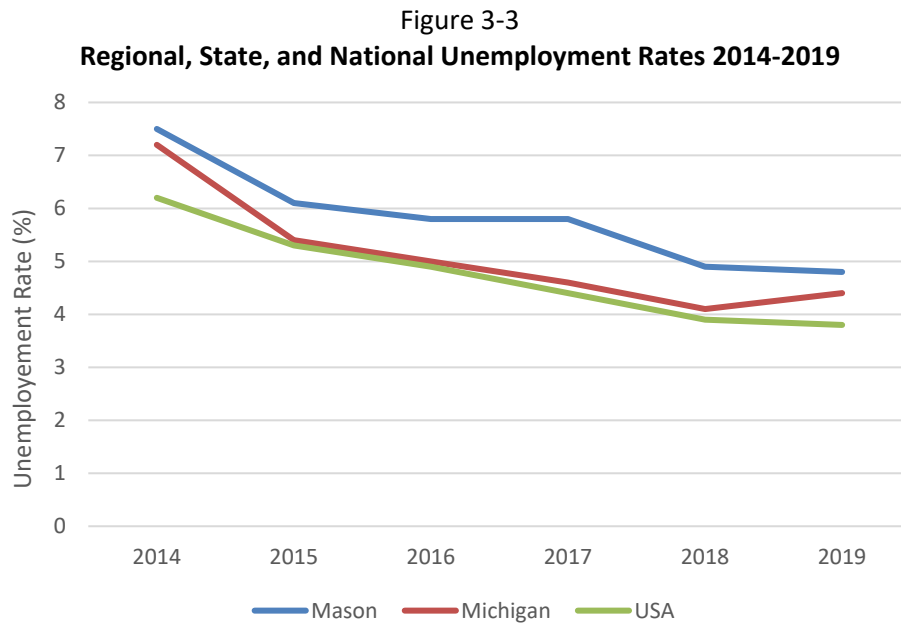
UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment fluctuated considerably between 2000 and 2019 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. The significant increase in unemployment rate from 2008 to 2012 reflect the nationwide recession and economic crisis which peaked in 2009. However, more recent regional unemployment numbers from August 2014 to June 2019 (See Figure 3-3) reflect the substantial recovery after this recession. The unemployment rate in Mason County jumped from 5.0% in 2000 to 12.6% in 2010, and has since dropped to 4.8% as of June 2019.



Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget



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 2000 to 2019 can be viewed in **Table 3-6** and more recently from 2015 to 2019 in **Table 3-7**. Unemployment rates rose significantly from 2000 to 2010 within the five-county area including Mason County, with an average increase of 162%. Rates peaked in August of 2009 with an average unemployment rate 12.5%. Since then, unemployment rates have somewhat stabilized at an average of 5.4% as of June 2019 for Mason and adjoining counties. As of 2019, Mason had the second lowest unemployment rate (4.8%) compared to adjoining counties. Newaygo County had the lowest unemployment rate at 4.6%. Lake County has had the highest unemployment rate since 2008, while Newaygo County had the smallest percent change between 2015 and 2019 (-16.3%). However, substantial recovery has occurred for all adjoining counties, as decreases above 30% were experienced for every County between 2015 and 2019. The average unemployment rate for Mason and adjoining counties was 5.4% in 2019, with a 22.2% decrease since 2015. This average unemployment rate falls just above the statewide 4.4% unemployment rate and the national 3.8% rate as of June 2019.

The drop in the unemployment rates 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 to maintain the relatively low unemployment rate and job growth.

Table 3-6
Unemployment for Mason and Adjoining Counties, 2000-2019

Region	2000	2005	2010	2019	% Change 2000-2010	% Change 2010-2019
USA	4.0	5.1	9.6	3.8	140%	-60%
Michigan	3.6	6.8	12.6	4.4	250%	-65%
Mason	5.0	7.8	12.6	4.8	152%	-62%
Lake	5.8	10.4	16.2	6.7	179%	-59%
Manistee	5.5	8.0	13.1	5.5	138%	-58%
Newaygo	4.7	7.5	12.7	4.6	170%	-64%
Oceana	6.0	8.1	16.2	5.3	170%	-67%
Average of 5 County Area	5.4	8.4	14.2	5.4	162%	-62%

Unemployment rate not seasonally adjusted

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget; Bureau of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives

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/DataSearch/LAUS>

Table 3-7
Unemployment Rate for Mason and Surrounding Counties, August 2015- August 2019

Region	August 2015	August 2016	August 2017	August 2018	June 2019	% Change 2015-2019
Nation						
USA	5.3	4.9	4.4	3.9	3.8	-28.3%
State						
Michigan	5.4	5	4.6	4.1	4.4	-18.5%
County						
Mason	6.1	5.8	5.8	4.9	4.8	-21.3%
Lake	8.6	7.5	8.1	6.9	6.7	-22.0%
Manistee	6.7	6.6	6.6	5.7	5.5	-17.9%
Newaygo	5.5	4.9	5	4.3	4.6	-16.3%
Oceana	8	7.3	7.2	6.1	5.3	-33.7%
Average of 5 County Area	7.0	6.4	6.5	5.6	5.4	-22.2%

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/DataSearch/LAUS>

MAJOR EMPLOYERS AND TOP EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

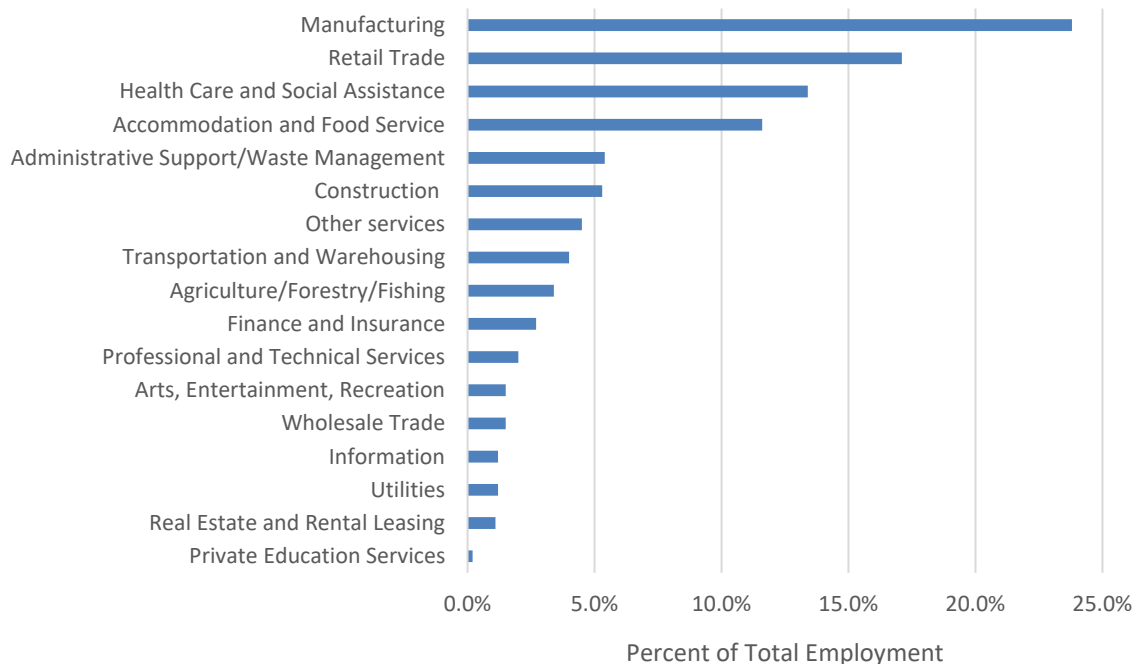
Major employers within Mason County are detailed in **Table 3-8**. The majority of major companies with over 50 employees are within the City of Ludington. West Shore Community College (100-249 employees) is the largest employer outside of the City of Ludington. Based on **Figure 3-4**, the largest employment sector for Mason County was manufacturing 2017, comprising roughly 24% of total employment, followed by retail trade (17%) and health care and social assistance (13%). Substantial changes of top sectors between 2008 and 2017 include an approximately 8% increase in manufacturing, a 13% increase in retail trade, and an 8% increase in health care and social assistance.

Table 3-8
Major Employers in Mason County, 2018

TOP EMPLOYERS IN MASON COUNTY		
50-99 Employees	Mason County Elementary School, Custer	Mason/ Lake Intermediate School District, Ludington
Hardman Construction, Ludington	Michigan Food Processors, Ludington	Tendercare, Ludington
Kaines West Michigan, Ludington	Foster Elementary School, Ludington	West Michigan Community Mental Health, Ludington
Brill Manufacturing Co., Ludington	Eagle Xpress, Ludington	Oakview Medical Care Facility, Ludington
Shop N' Save, Ludington	Mason County Central Schools, Scottville	West Shore Educational Service District, Ludington
Manistee National Golf and Resort, Manistee	Srs Industries LLC, Ludington	West Shore Community College, Scottville
S.S. Badger, Lake Michigan Car Ferry, Ludington	Franklin Elementary School, Ludington	250-499 Employees
Applebee's Neighborhood Grill, Ludington	Haworth Inc., Ludington	Metalworks Inc., Ludington
Big Boy, Ludington	UPS Customer Center, Ludington	Meijer, Ludington
P M Steamers Restaurant, Ludington	Western Land Service Inc., Ludington	Indian Summer Co-Op, Ludington
Scotty's Restaurant, Ludington	100-249 Employees	Ludington Area School District, Ludington
McDonald's, Ludington	Flora Craft Corp, Ludington	Occidental Chemical Corp, Ludington
Ludington City Hall, Ludington	Great Lakes Casting Co., Ludington	Spectrum Health Ludington Hospital
Diversified Natural Products, Scottville	Home Depot, Ludington	Whitehall Industries, Ludington
Mason County Jail/Sheriff, Ludington	Lowe's Home Improvement, Ludington	
Mason County, Ludington	Walmart, Ludington	
Mason County Eastern High School, Custer	Needlefast Evergreens, Ludington	

Source: Michigan Department of Management, Technology, and Budget
Source: <https://milmi.org/DataSearch/EmpDb>

Figure 3-4
Major Employment Sectors in Mason County, 2017



Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget
 Source: <https://milmi.org/DataSearch/QCEW>

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCIAL BUSINESS

Of the 650 industrial and commercial businesses within Mason County, the retail trade sector had the greatest number of establishments in 2017 (101). **Table 3-9** lists other sectors with the greatest number of establishments including accommodation and food service (82), construction trades (73), other services (66), and health care and social assistance (63).

Table 3-9
Types of Businesses within Mason County, 2017

Industry	2017 Total
<i>Total</i>	650
Retail trade	101
Accommodation and Food Service	82
Construction	73
Other services	66
Health Care and Social Assistance	63
Manufacturing	41
Professional and Technical Services	39
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	30
Administrative Support/Waste Management	30
Finance and Insurance	28
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	27
Transportation and Warehousing	20
Wholesale Trade	18
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	17
Information	7
Utilities	4
Private Education Services	4

Source: Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget
Source: <https://milmi.org/DataSearch/QCEW>

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. According to the American Community Survey Estimates, the average travel time to work for residents in the County was 17.6 minutes in 2017. This indicates that many residents in the community travel a considerable distance for work and that the County has a few major employment centers that likely serve a large number of residents.

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

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 2010 and 2019 was an increase in value of industrial land (58.7%). Agriculture (4.6%) and residential (5.1%) had similar percent increases in value while commercial property lost value between 2010 and 2019 (-12.6%). 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 2010 to 2019 in Mason County. **Figure 5-1** illustrates the shift in tax class from 2010 to 2019.

As property values fluctuate over time, classes comprise different percentages of the County’s total SEV value. The percent of total SEV dedicated to industrial uses increased from 18% in 2010 to 25% in 2019. The distribution of agriculture (5% to 5%) remained the same. Although residential property increased in value overall, its share in the percent of total SEV slightly declined from 67% in 2010 to 63% in 2019. Commercial property decreased in both value and its share of the percent total SEV (9.5% to 7%).

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

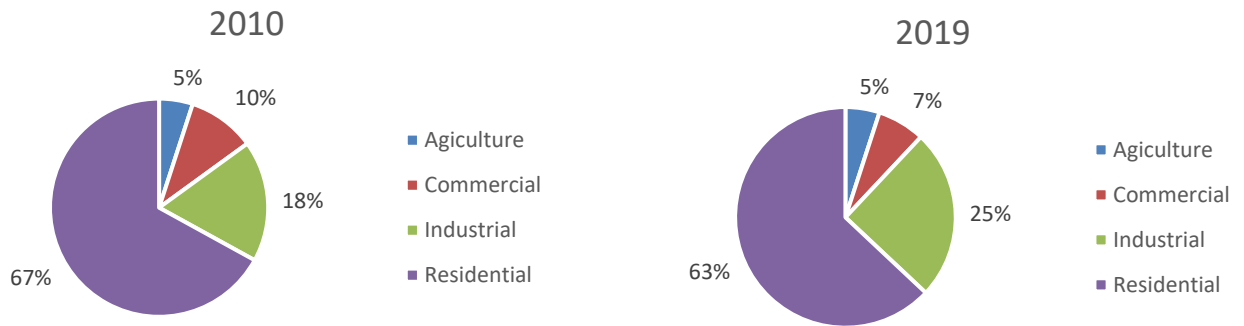
Class	2010 (\$)	% of total	2019 (\$)	% of total	Total Change	% change
Agriculture	92,487,600	5%	96,726,600	5%	4,239,000	4.6%
Commercial	178,939,900	9.5%	156,381,200	7%	-22,558,700	-12.6%
Industrial*	338,111,800	18%	536,506,700	25%	198,394,900	58.7%
Consumers Facility**	278,998,000	15%	486,069,100	23%	207,071,100	74.2%
Residential	1,259,828,885	67%	1,323,924,960	63%	64,096,075	5.1%
Total	1,869,368,185	100%	2,113,539,460	100%	244,171,275	13.1%

Source: Michigan Department of Treasury, 2019,

*Figure includes Consumers Energy facility

**Figure included to demonstrate impact of Consumers Energy facility on Industrial SEV

Figure 5-1
Percentage of Tax Class



Source: Michigan Department of Treasury, 2010 and 2019

INDIVIDUAL JURISDICTIONS

Among individual jurisdictions in Mason County, the greatest increase in tax class values between 2011 and 2019 was seen in Logan Township for agriculture (29%), the City of Ludington for residential (26%), Branch Township for commercial (26%) and Hamlin Township for industrial (107%). **Table 5-2** lists these changes.

Among individual jurisdictions in Mason County the greatest amount of agricultural land value in 2011 and 2019 was in Riverton Township. Valued at over \$26 million in 2019, Riverton’s agricultural land value makes up 27% of the total agricultural land value in Mason County. Four jurisdictions saw a decrease in their agricultural land values, Branch Township (-2%), Hamlin Township (-25%), and Pere Marquette (-10%), and Summit Township (-8%). County-wide, agricultural land values increased by 8% between 2011 and 2019.

Hamlin Township has the greatest residential tax class land value at \$267 million, making up 20% of the total. Six jurisdictions saw a decrease in residential land value from 2011 to 2019, with Logan Township having the largest decrease of 15% from 32.6 million to 27.6 million. The greatest increase in residential tax value was the City of Ludington, whose residential land value grew 26% from \$187.2 million to \$235.6 million. The county total of residential land values increased 11% from 2011 to 2019.

Branch Township saw the greatest commercial land value growth from 2011 to 2019, a 26% increase from \$2.3 million to \$2.9 million. Most jurisdictions saw minimal growth or decreased in commercial land values during this period. Sherman Township and Logan Township experienced the greatest declines in commercial land values at 71% and 38%, respectively. Overall the county experienced an 8% decrease in commercial land values during this period.

There were several missing figures for individual jurisdiction's industrial property values; however, Hamlin Township was recorded as having the greatest increase in industrial land values from \$495,500 to \$1.0 million, a 107% increase from 2011 to 2019. The City of Scottville (-27%), Amber Township (-8%), and Riverton (-8%) experienced drops in value during this time. For all of Mason County, industrial property values rose 61% from 2011 to 2019.

Village totals are included in township totals.

Table 5-2
SEV by Tax Class by Jurisdiction in Mason County, 2011 and 2019

Area	Agriculture			Residential			Commercial			Industrial		
	2011 (\$)	2019 (\$)	% Change	2011 (\$)	2019 (\$)	% Change	2011 (\$)	2019 (\$)	% Change	2011(\$)	2019 (\$)	% Change
City												
Ludington			NA	187,187,300	235,554,750	26%	54,745,500	53,397,800	-2%	13,107,200	12,591,300	-4%
Scottville			NA	14,467,100	15,448,000	7%	3,648,000	3,189,300	-13%	3,778,500	2,749,900	-27%
Amber	4,082,400	4,391,000	8%	61,454,900	70,552,200	15%	40,321,900	35,130,900	-13%	1,717,600	1,578,600	-8%
Branch	2,056,400	2,013,400	-2%	55,717,600	58,912,400	6%	2,294,600	2,889,700	26%			NA
Custer	10,442,200	10,664,200	2%	31,794,700	36,241,400	14%	1,268,700	1,099,700	-13%			NA
Eden	9,117,500	9,817,100	8%	29,129,000	27,701,200	-5%			NA			NA
Free Soil	4,459,500	5,456,100	22%	35,097,550	38,435,000	10%	528,700	518,400	-2%			NA
Grant	2,388,500	2,886,400	21%	69,213,800	69,797,700	1%	873,500	926,500	6%	1,279,300	1,474,700	15%
Hamlin	901,300	675,500	-25%	214,297,600	266,986,800	25%	13,365,100	11,746,200	-12%	495,500	1,025,300	107%
Logan	2,663,100	3,447,800	29%	32,584,500	27,608,100	-15%	517,000	319,100	-38%			NA
Meade			NA	20,798,500	19,830,800	-5%			NA			NA
Pere Marquette	3,625,000	3,258,300	-10%	142,305,200	161,137,060	13%	42,229,900	42,865,700	2%	244,773,600	443,395,300	81%
Riverton	23,303,200	26,110,200	12%	30,491,200	32,726,050	7%			NA	1,599,300	1,467,200	-8%
Sheridan	3,486,100	3,634,300	4%	63,188,700	61,574,100	-3%			NA			NA
Sherman	5,912,100	6,828,700	16%	36,271,600	35,833,000	-1%	1,585,400	455,600	-71%	323,900	332,000	3%
Summit	6,861,000	6,294,000	-8%	121,442,400	116,310,200	-4%	2,707,600	2,496,300	-8%	65,480,800	71,892,400	10%
Victory	10,374,100	11,249,600	8%	47,963,600	49,276,200	3%	1,525,700	1,346,000	-12%			NA
County Total	89,672,400	96,726,600	8%	1,193,405,250	1,323,924,960	11%	169,611,000	156,381,200	-8%	332,555,700	536,506,700	61%

Source: Michigan Department of Treasury
<https://eequal.bsasoftware.com/ReportViewerPage.aspx>

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