

HOUSING PROFILE

The housing stock in Ovid Township serves as an indicator of the quality of life for residents living in the community.

Table 7, below, shows the increase in housing units in the Township and County between 1990 and 2000. Although only 34 additional housing units were added to the total housing stock of the Township, the number of *occupied* housing units increased by over 150 during the 1990's. This is explained by a dramatic drop in vacancy rates from 53.3% in 1990 to 45.7% in 2000, as shown in Table 8.

Table No. 7
Household Characteristics, 1990-2000
Ovid Township

	Occupied Housing Units			Total Housing Units		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
<i>Ovid Township</i>	867	1,026	18.3%	1,855	1,889	1.8%
<i>Branch County</i>	14,921	16,349	9.6%	18,449	19,882	7.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 & 2000

As Table 8 shows, the Township does have a high vacancy rate. This is largely due to the fact that the census considers seasonal, recreational, or occasional use units as vacant. Therefore, any of the second homes, cottages, trailers, or other getaway spots surrounding the lakes and waterways of Ovid Township that fall under this category are counted as vacant because they were not permanently occupied when the census counts were taken. In 2000, 782 of the 863 total vacant units (almost 91%) fell into the seasonal category. If, for discussion's sake only, these seasonal homes were not considered vacant, the 2000 vacancy rate would be reduced to 4.3%. However, due to the fact that the County has a relatively high vacancy rate of 17.5%, it is unlikely that the Township's rate would be around 4%. Of the occupied housing units, the majority is owner occupied. The remainder of occupied housing units, 5.1% of the township's housing stock, is renter occupied. This is much lower than the County level, which typically correlates to community stability and a sufficient tax base for economic growth. However, the aforementioned vacancy rate may erode this advantage somewhat.

Table No. 8
Housing Units By Tenure, 2000
Ovid Township and Branch County

	Ovid Township	% of Total	Branch County	% of Total
Owner-Occupied Units	930	49.2%	12,905	65.1%
Renter-Occupied Units	96	5.1%	3,444	17.4%
Vacant Housing Units	863	45.7%	3,473	17.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

Table 9, below, shows the number of housing units by the year built within Ovid Township and Branch County. The age of housing is widely dispersed from before the 1930's through today. According to the U.S. census, the median year a house was built in the township is 1970, eight years more recent than the median age for the County. This is primarily due to an influx of construction in the Township in recent years. In the 1990's, a total of 376 homes were built, which was nearly the most of any decade. The fact that such a large number of homes were built in the past decade yet the total number of housing units only increased by 34 (as shown in Table 7) might indicate that the housing stock is turning over and that residents are reinvesting in the community by tearing down older, smaller, and/or dilapidated houses to build new ones. In the year 2000 alone, there were 28 permits granted for new construction, and most examples exist along the lakes where no new lots have been created. This is a positive sign for the township as it shows that our citizens are willing to take the initiative to improve their properties and neighborhoods. The new construction also supports the population growth that was described before and further supports the claim that there is growth occurring in the area and interest in living in Ovid Township.

Table No. 9
Number of Dwellings Built By Year
Ovid Township and Branch County

Year Structure Built	Ovid Township No. of Units	Branch County No. of Units
Total Housing Units	1,892	19,822
1999 to 2000	102	516
1995 to 1998	120	1,154
1990 to 1994	154	1,071
1980 to 1989	200	1,924
1970 to 1979	352	3,142
1960 to 1969	382	2,692
1940 to 1959	283	3,400
1939 or earlier	299	5,923
Median Year Structure Built	1970	1962

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000

Housing Profile Summary:

1. The number of occupied housing units increased considerably in the 1990's (18.3%) due in large part by a significant drop in the vacancy rate from 53.3% in 1990 to 45.7% in 2000.
2. Ovid Township has a very high vacancy rate (45.7% in 2000) largely because the census defines second residences, seasonal homes, and other recreational structures - such as many of those built along the shores of Coldwater Lake and Lake of the Woods - as vacant.
3. While many new units were built in the 1990's (376), the total number of housing units only increased by 34, possibly indicating that the housing stock is turning over and that residents are tearing down old houses to build new ones.