DEMOGRAPHICS

HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLDS

At the municipal level, the existence of safe, quality and affordable housing is extremely important - as an asset to maintain (and even expand) its tax base, and as a function of the police power of a municipality - "...to provide for the health, safety, general welfare and morals of the residents..." A sound, health, affordable housing stock will attract additional development, both residential, and nonresidential economic development. Quality housing can also affect the way residents view the Township itself. Housing is an asset of the Township, therefore, it is in the interest of the elected officials to support and maintain a safe and quality housing stock.

The data gathered for this element came from several agencies, each formatting the information in a variety of ways; however, the source was the same - the U.S. Census Bureau. Unfortunately, the data is already eight (8)) years old. We have tried to update the statistics where possible; thus the variety of time frames used in the various charts, tables and graphics.

This section will examine the HOUSING condition in Center Township, including:

1. Housing count
2. Housing type
3. Vacancy
4. Occupancy status
5. Tenure
6. Housing units in structure
7. Age
8. Housing value
9. Affordability

1. Housing Count

The 1990 Census identified a total of 2,436 housing units in the Township. During the previous two (2) decades (1970-1990), the Township experienced a very high growth rate, at almost forty percent (40%). A review of building permits issued by the

Township between 1991 and 1996 indicate that this high growth rate has continued, at approximately 18% during those six (6) years. The following table illustrates the trend of new housing construction in Center Township between the years 1970 and 1996:

TABLE 2

HOUSING UNITS

	1970	1980	1990	1991-96[1]	1970-96
Number of structures	1,731	2,209	2,436	2,876	
Percent change from previous					
Percent change	--	+ 27.6%	+10.3%	18.1%	
Percent change					+ 66.1%

[1] Based on Township permit records

A major part of the increase in housing units is due to the steady growth of mobile homes in the Township. Center Township contains seven (7) mobile home parks within its borders which provide an affordable alternative for homebuyers. The following table provides a graphic look at the mobile homesin Center Township.

TABLE 3

MOBILE HOMES[1]

	1970	1980	1990	1991-96[2]	1970-96
Number of mobile homes	110	283	363	495	
% of change from previous	----	+157.3%	+ 28.3%	+36.4%	
% change 1970-1007					+ 359.8%

[1] Also includes modular and pre-fabricated housing
[2] Based on Township permit records

2. Housing Types

As you can see in the preceding tables, the mobile home has played an increasing role in the Township housing market. In 1970, mobile homes accounted for about 6.4% of all housing units. In 1980, mobile homes made up almost thirteen percent (12.8%) of all the total housing units available, and this percentage increased to 15% in the 1990 Census. The review of Township records from 1991 through 1996 indicates a

continuing increase in the use of mobile homes, as the percentage increases to just under seventeen percent (17%).

TABLE 4

HOUSING BY TYPE

	1970	1980	1990	1991-96[2]
Single family	1,474	1,754	1,854	2,162
Multi-family	47	172	219	222
Mobile homes[1]	110	283	363	495
Total dwelling units	1,731	2,209	2,436	2,879
% Mobile homes	6.4	12.8	15	17.2

[1] Also includes modular and pre-fabricated housing
[2] Based on Township permit records

While the number of housing units, both conventional and mobile home/modular units, have increased at a relatively high rate, a portion of this increase can be attributed to the "shrinking" of the average household size, as can be seen in the following table:

TABLE 5

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

1970	1980	1990
3.54	2.91	2.65

The new-housing growth rate in Center Township has maintained a high level for the past twenty-five (25) years and, most likely, will maintain this pace for, at a minimum, the next five (5) years, and even longer should public facilities be expanded within the Township.

3. Vacancy

The 1990 Census listed only sixty-five (65) of the total number of housing units counted (2,436) as vacant. This translates to a vacancy rate of only 2.7%, much below that of the County figure of 6.33%. Housing units may be vacant for a number of

TABLE 17

POPULATION DENSITY

1980-1990

Municipality	Square Miles	1980	1990	% change
Center Twp.	24.5	254	255	0.4
Butler Twp.	21.9	852	804	- 5.6
Conoquenessing Twp.	23.5	121	132	9.1
Butler City	2.8	6,081	5,612	- 7.7
Franklin Twp.	22.6	100	95	- 5.0
East Butler Borough	1	799	725	- 9.3
Oakland Twp.	23.3	119	121	1.6
Brady Twp.	17.6	39	47	20.5
Concord Twp.	24.6	56	54	- 3.6
Summit Twp.	22.4	207	191	- 7.7
Butler County	**791.8**	**187**	**192**	**2.7**

POPULATION PROJECTION

The projection of future population figures for the Township is a necessary component of any plan, helping to guide decisions and planning for future land use needs, utility extensions, education needs, recreation facilities, public safety, employment and many other services and facilities. Population projections also helps determine future tax policies, zoning district formulation (or revision) and municipal policy decisions.

The growth rate of the Township during the 1980-1990 decade was a very low .2%. Broken down, the average annual growth rate would be approximately .02%. A straight-line projection of a .02% growth rate will be used as the conservative estimate. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission (SPRPC) has developed projections for each municipality in the region. These figures will be used as the "mid-range" projection. The "high end" projection figures will be based upon the 1990 through 1995 building permit records for new housing in the Township. Based on these records, the growth rate has increased by almost 2.3% annually. Table 18 illustrates the population projections for Center Township:

decrease of 10.3% in the number of residents who have completed four (4) years of high-school. The percentage of the population who have less than a ninth grade education has declined, as well, from 13.5 to 6.7 percent.

TABLE 16

POPULATION BY SCHOOL YEARS COMPLETED

(AGE 25 AND OVER)

	1980		1990		
	#	%	#	%	% change
Elementary (1-	504	13.5	281	6.7	6.8
High school					
1-3 years	556	14.9	629	14.9	--
4 years	1,737	46.5	1,527	36.2	-10.3
College					
1-3 years	485	13	727	17.2	4.2
4+ years	456	12.2	1,051	24.9	12.7
Totals	**3,738**	**--**	**4,215**	**--**	**--**.

These figures represent a continuing change within Center Township residential make-up from a traditional rural area, to a suburban community.

POPULATION DENSITY

Another statistic which is used in ascertaining the "evolvement" level of a municipality is population density, that is the number of persons in proportion to the total land area. For Center Township, the density of the population has not changed drastically in the past twenty-five years. In 1970, the population density, per square mile, was 229 persons. The density for 1980 was 254 persons per square mile, and in 1990, 255 persons per square mile, an increase of only .4%. Compare this to the "explosion" between 1970 and 1980, when the density increased from 176 to 254 persons per square mile, an increase of over 44%. The following table (Table 17) compares Center Township's population density changes to several surrounding municipalities.

blacks, seven (7) American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut, sixty-two (62) Asian or Pacific Islander, and three (3) other race, residing in the Township, meaning that ninety-eight percent (98'%) of the population is white.

HOUSEHOLD MARITAL STATUS

In 1980, 77.t% (1,655) of the total households (2,136) were married couples. The number and percentage dropped in the 1990 Census to 69% (1,636,) of all households. The total number of households increased from 2,136 in 1980 to 2,371 in 1990, an increase of 11%. The number of single person households also increased, from 305 to 474, an increase of over 55%. Of those 474 single person households, 197 were age 65 and over (41%).

A detailed statistical breakdown of the Township's household characteristics is provided in the following table:

TABLE 15

HOUSEHOLDS, BY TYPE, 1990

Type	Number of Households	% of Total
Total Households	2,371	100
Family households	1,836	77.4
Married	1,636	69
Male householder	54	3
Female householder	146	6.2
Non-family households	535	22.6
Single person household	474	20
Householder 65 years & over	197	--

EDUCATION

Table 16 compares years of school completed by Township residents age 25 and older in 1980 and 1990. The most significant increase in the level of schooling completed was the number of residents who completed at least four (4) years of college, up 12.7% from 1980 figures. Unfortunately, this increase is off-set by a

	1980			1990			
20-24	250	251	501	205	198	403	- 19.6
25-29	266	266	532	209	202	411	- 22.7
30-34	209	217	426	242	288	530	24.4
35-44	414	422	836	508	489	997	19.3
45-54	370	388	758	368	410	778	2.6
55-59	192	198	390	160	202	362	-7.2
60-64	142	150	292	207	155	362	24
65 & over	234	270	504	345	430	775	53.8
TOTAL	**3,097**	**3,127**	**6,224**	**3,119**	**3,120**	**6,239**	**0.2**

Table 14 identifies the specific distribution of the Township's population in 1980 and 1990. Although the population total does not reflect much change, the make-up of the population, especially its' age, experienced drastic changes. The following list identifies some of the change in the population's age structure:

	1980-1990 Difference	
	Number	**%**
Pre-school age children	-52	-12.7
School age children	-312	-19.8
"Productive" age	46	+ 2.0
"Mature" age	62	+ 4.3
"Senior Citizens"	271	+ 53.8

The distribution of males and females within various age groups plays an important role in the formation of future families, and subsequent birth rates. According to the 1980 Census, there were 1,434 females between the ages of 15-44. In 1990, there were 1,376, a decline of 4%. The male population of the same age group dropped from 1,418 in 1980 to 1,391, a decline of 2%, leading one to suspect that birth rates will continue to decline through this decade, at a minimum.

RACE

For the past two (2) Census periods, race composition was delineated in six (6) different categories: white; black; American Indian, Eskimo/Aleut; Asian; and other races. In Center Township, according to Census statistics, there were only ten (10)

TABLE 12

POPULATION TREND

	1950	1960	1970	1985	1990
population	2,614	4,303	6,606	6,224	6,239
% change	--	+ 64.6	+ 30.3	+ 11.0	+ 0.2

TABLE 13

MEDIAN AGE 1980-1990

	Median Age - 1980	Median Age - 1990	80-90 % increase
Center Township	31.1	36.3	17.7
Butler County	29.7	34	14.5
Pennsylvania	32.1	35	9.7

AGE/SEX DISTRIBUTION

Center Township's population has grown steadily older during the past two decades. In 1970, the median age was 27.1 years. In 1980, the median age jumped to 31.1, and in 1990, it increased even more, to 36.6 years. Over that 20 year span, the median age increased by 9.5 years - a jump of 35%! This increase could be due to a number of factors, which will be addressed elsewhere.

TABLE 14

AGE – SEX DISTRIBUTION

	1980			1990			
Age	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	% change
under 5	220	191	411	201	158	359	- 12.7
5-9	240	215	455	196	176	372	- 18.2
10-14	281	281	562	251	213	464	- 17.4
15-19	279	278	557	227	199	426	-23.5

TABLE 11

RENTAL AFFORDABILITY INDEX

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income	Median Annual Rent	Purchase Index
Center Township	$32,118	$4,368	13.59
Seven Fields Borough[1]	40,852	6,708	16.42
Parker Township[2]	21,146	1,896	8.97
Butler County	29,368	3,300	11.23
Pennsylvania	29,069	3,864	13.29

[1] Highest annual median rent in Butler County
[2] Lowest annual median rent in Butler County

The rental index is the proportion of household income divided by the yearly rental costs, providing the percentage of the total income which is required for rental housing. Center Township's rental index places it among the highest in the County, more than 2 points (2.37) higher than the average (11.21) and slightly above the State-wide figure, 13.58 to 13.27, respectively.

These tables illustrate that Center Township's housing affordability index is representative of the County-wide average, creating a housing market that is more affordable than the State-wide average. The rental index is higher in Center Township than the County average, indicating that rental units cost more in the Township; but is about the same paid by residents State-wide.

POPULATION COUNT

Center Township experienced a 138% increase in its population base between 1950 and 1980 (that's almost 2.5 time the 1950 population count). However, the 1990 Census indicated almost a "standstill" in population change during the decade of the 80's, with an increase of only fifteen (15) residents (.2%). This compares to a 10.4% increase in year-round housing units during the same decade.

9. Housing Affordability

When the housing stock is examined in relationship to its affordability to the public, the income levels of that public must also be considered. Typically, the more expensive the home built, the more affluent the community. Yet, this is not always the case. When housing costs increase due to construction costs, utility increases, taxes, etc., and income levels do not in the same proportion, then affordability becomes an issue.

In examining affordability in the context of income, it is necessary to compare the cost of housing, as well as the income levels. Housing affordability is based on those two factors. Comparison of the two creates a proportional index of housing affordability. This process will indicate the average incomes and costs and help to determine what the "typical" Township family pays for a "typical" Township residence.

TABLE 10

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY INDEX

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income	Median Housing Value	Purchase Index
Center Township	$32,118	$69,400	2.16
Cranberry Township[1]	41,006	86,000	2.1
Petrolia Borough[2]	16,786	26,600	1.58
Butler County	29,368	62,900	2.14
Pennsylvania	29,069	69,700	2.4

[1] Highest median housing value in Butler County
[2] Lowest median housing value in Butler County

This table illustrates the number of years it would take an "average" family to pay for a home in the Township. The purchase index is derived by dividing the housing value by the household income. This purchase index, basically, means that the "average" family in Center Township will spend just over twice (2.16) their annual income when purchasing a home. This index is almost identical to Butler County's (2.14), and lower than Pennsylvania's average (2.38).

Year Built	Number	% of Total
1970-1979	600	21.4
1960-1969	472	16.8
1950-1959	532	19
1940-1949	153	5.5
Before 1990	233	8.3
TOTAL	**2,804**	**100**

8. Housing Value

The collected owner-estimated value of housing can reveal how the residents perceive their neighborhood and its "place" in the community. While the date is somewhat inaccurate, the estimation of value by the owner can provide insight into the affordability of housing within that neighborhood. In 1990 in Butler County, the median owner-occupied housing value was $62,900. In Center Township, that number was $69,400, over ten percent (10%) higher. The following table indicates the range of occupied housing unit value in Center Township:

TABLE 9

HOUSING VALUES

$ Value	Owner-Occupied Units	% of Total
Less than $15,000	13	0.9
15,000-19,000	0	0
20,000-24,000	11	0.8
25,000-29,000	11	0.8
30,000-44,000	187	13.1
45,000-74,000	624	43.8
75-000-99,000	302	21.2
100,000-149,000	219	15.4
150,000 & over	58	4

Rental units in Center Township are provided at a wide range, for no cash rent to over $1,000 per month. The median rent in Center Township is $364, which is about 13% higher than the Statewide average ($322) and over 32% higher than the Butler County average ($275). The higher rental rates can be attributed to the Township's close proximity to the City of Butler.

6. Housing Units in Structure

According to the 1980 Census figures, just over 79% of the housing stock were single-family, detached units. This average declined somewhat, to about 75.4% in the 1990 Census. The decline in the percentage of single-unit structures was off-set by an increase in percentage of mobile homes, from 12.8% in 1980 to 15.6% in 1990. The overall breakdown of housing units per structure is identified in the following table:

TABLE 7

HOUSING UNITS PER STRUCTURE - 1990

Number of Units in Structure	Number of Structures	Percent
1 unit	1,837	75.4
2-4 units	168	6.9
5-9 units	39	1.6
10+ units	12	0.5
Mobile homes	380	15.6

7. Age

Included among the many factors used to analyze residential growth within a municipality is the age of housing. By combining 1990 Census data with Township building permit records, 814 housing units, including mobile homes, have been constructed or located in the Township since 1980, just over 29% of the current housing stock, a clear indication of the Township's attractiveness for residential location. When you add the number of homes constructed since 1970 (600) to this total, you find that a majority of the housing stock is less than thirty (30) years old. The following table breaks down the age of housing units in the Township:

TABLE 8

AGE OF HOUSING

Year Built	Number	% of Total
1990-1996	368	13.1
1985-1989	176	6.3
1980-1984	270	9.6

reasons - they may be waiting to be sold or rented; they may be seasonal dwellings (vacation, weekend uses), or they may be vacant for other reasons. It is this last category that is the cause for alarm at the Township. Units vacant for "other" reasons can often be determined to be dilapidated and/or unfit for habitation. These types of units are those that must be "targeted" for enforcement actions in order to preserve a quality housing stock, due to their aptness of spreading blight conditions to adjacent properties. The following table identifies twenty (20) of those vacant units identified in 1990 were classified as "other," a decrease of over fifty percent (53.2%) from the 1980 figures, indicating some limited Township action, "natural" attrition or conversion to another use.

TABLE 6

VACANCY RATES

			Change	
Units	**1980**	**1990**	**#**	**%**
For sale	13	6	- 7	- 53.8
For rent	17	20	3	17.6
Seasonal*	--	19	19	
Other	43	20	- 23	- 53.2
TOTAL	**73**	**65**	**- 8**	**-10.9**

* 1980 census did not include definition for seasonal.

4. Occupancy Status

According to the 1990 Census, 2,371 of the total identified housing units (2,436) were occupied, a 97.3% occupancy rate, as compared with a rate of 96.7% in 1980.

5. Tenure

In 1990, of the 2,371 occupied units within the Township, 1,979 were owner-occupied, a rate of 81.2%. In 1980, 1,770 units were owner-occupied, a rate of 82.9%. These figures are typical for rural municipalities where rental properties are not prevalent throughout the Township, but can be found in the denser settlements.

TABLE 18

POPULATION PROJECTION

	1990	2000	2010	2015
Conservative	6,239	6,254	6,269	6,276
Mid-range	6,239	6,581	6,942	7,751
High-end	6,239	7,649	9,409	10,489

It must be realized, as with any projections, that a number of variables play a role in their determination. Economic factors, access, utility availability, market forces, birth and death rates, all have a role in determining the population count of a municipality at a given time. Low tax rates, proximity to employment centers and recreation facilities, a good school system and positive environmental factors for development, all act as growth stimulants. At this time, Center Township is blessed, or cursed, depending on your outlook, with all of these.