



II. Community Description

Bay County is located in east central lower Michigan along the mouth of the Saginaw Bay. The County is largely rural with the majority of the land being used for agricultural purposes. There are 444 square **miles** in Bay County and approximately 30 miles of Saginaw **Bay/Lake** Huron shoreline. Bay City is the county seat of Bay County and it serves as the commercial and employment center of the County.

According to the 2000 Census, Bay County has a population of 110,157 in 43,930 households, giving it an average household size of 2.47 persons. The 2006 Census estimate of the population in Bay County is 108,390, showing a slight decline in population over 2000. The median age of residents in Bay County is 38.4 years. This is almost three years greater than the median for Michigan, which is 35.5 years. Figure 1 shows some of the significant demographic data regarding the residents of Bay County as it compares to Michigan and the United States.

	Bay County	Michigan	United States
Median Age	38.4	35.5	35.3
Average Household Size	2.47	2.56	2.59
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	14.2%	21.8%	24.2%
All parents in family in labor force	67.1%	60.9%	58.6%
Median household income	\$38,646	\$44,667	\$41,994
Per capita income	\$19,698	\$22,168	\$21,587
Disabled	19.7%	18.7%	19.3%

Figure 7 – Selected demographic statistics show that Bay County's population is older, less well educated, and earns less money than that of the population of Michigan or the United States. These facts are important when considering the recreational needs of the community. *Source: US Census*

Bay County led the effort to complete this recreation plan. Fourteen of the governmental jurisdictions within Bay County have also participated in this multi-jurisdictional recreation plan. Those 14 governmental jurisdictions include 11 townships and three cities:

- City of Auburn
- Bangor Charter Township
- Beaver Township
- City of Essexville
- Frankenlust Township
- Fraser Township
- Gibson Township
- Hampton Charter Township
- Kawkawlin Township
- Merritt Township
- Monitor Charter Township
- City of Pinconning
- Portsmouth Charter Township
- Williams Charter Township

Figure 2 shows a map of Bay County and the communities that are participating in the recreation plan.

The plan is an update of the 2003 Recreation Plan that included Bay County and seven participating constituent communities: Beaver Township, City of Pinconning, Frankenlust Township, Fraser Township, Garfield Township, Kawkawlin Township, and Portsmouth Township. The current plan focuses on all aspects of recreation in Bay County and the 14 participating communities.



Figure 2 - Bay County and the communities that are participating in the multi-jurisdictional recreation plan.

The document is organized so that Sections I through VIII address the overall Bay County portion of the plan. Section IX covers each of the other individual communities. Please note that the various methods of Public Input described in Section V cover all of the participants in the plan.