

Chapter Three: Community Profile

Introduction

The City of Grayling is located in the central portion of Crawford County, and is within a short driving distance of a number of metropolitan areas such as Detroit, Lansing, Ann Arbor, and Flint. The City has the benefit of direct access to the I-75 expressway and M-72, which carries large volumes of tourist traffic through the area, making Grayling a logical center for residences, businesses and tourist activity. The City of Grayling is surrounded by Grayling Township, which has an unusually large land area of 177.8 square miles. Conversely, the City encompasses just over 2 square miles, and so the demographic figures presented below should be considered in this context.

The following is a report of the existing demographic condition of the City of Grayling. This serves as a starting point for understanding the City and its unique characteristics. Included are discussion of key demographics such as population trends; a review of the age, race, and income characteristics of residents; a breakdown of key housing characteristics; a review of housing and construction activity; and a description of the labor force.

Population Characteristics

**Table 3-1
Population Trends
Grayling Area, 2000-2010**

| | 2000 | 2010 | % Change | 2011 Estimate | % Change |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| City of Grayling | 1,952 | 1,884 | -3.6% | 1,876 | -.47% |
| City of Boyne | 3,503 | 3,735 | 6.6% | 3,746 | .28% |
| City of Gaylord | 3,681 | 3,645 | -1% | 3,632 | -.35% |
| Village of Kalkaska | 2,226 | 2,020 | -10% | 2,022 | .1% |
| Beaver Creek Twp. | 1,486 | 1,736 | 16.8% | N/A | N/A |
| Grayling Twp. | 6,516 | 5,827 | -11.8% | N/A | N/A |
| Crawford County | 14,273 | 14,074 | -1.4% | 14,014 | -.44% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Trends

According to the 2010 Census, the City of Grayling had a population of 1,884. *Table 3-1* and *Figure 3-1* compares the City of Grayling's population to that of surrounding and similar communities in the area.

In July of 2011, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the City’s population at 1,876 residents. If this estimate is accurate, it would mean that the population has declined over the past eleven year period.

While some of the surrounding areas have experienced growth, many of the Cities and Villages in northern Michigan have experienced similar population stagnation or even decline. Overall, Crawford County saw an estimated population decrease of < 1% since 2010.

Educational Attainment

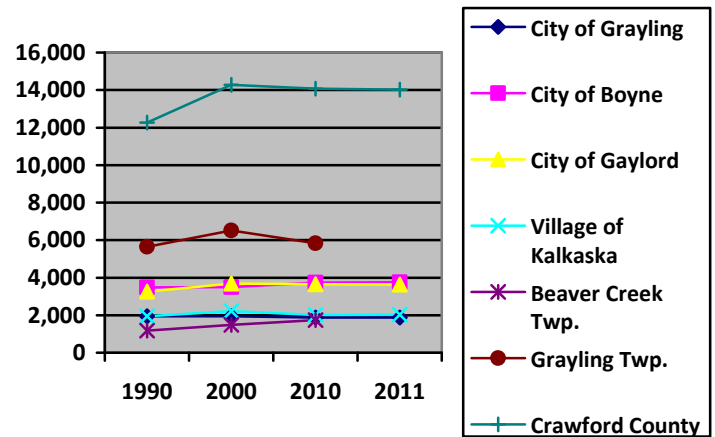
The educational attainment for the City of Grayling residents, age 25 years and older, in 2010 was comparable to Crawford County figures; however, both are significantly lower than State figures for college degrees. Less than 20% of City residents have a college degree, and almost 60% of residents have had no college experience.

The overall education level in the City increased between 2000 and 2010. For example, the proportion of residents that have a high school diploma rose from 78% in 2000 to 81% in 2010. Furthermore, the proportion of City residents that had at least some college education slightly increased from 41% in 2000 to 42% in 2010, and the proportion that had college degrees remained the same at 18%.

Age Characteristics

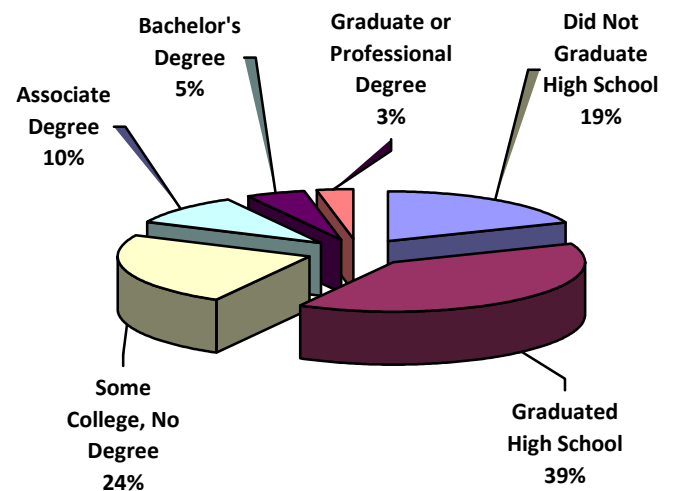
Age characteristics of the City assist in indicating economic, transportation, recreational, education, and other community needs. By examining the demographic mix of residents both now and in the future, Grayling can better plan for the future demand for community services and amenities. Study of the median age can provide a general gauge of residents’ ages, while a breakdown of ages is most useful when broken

**Figure 3-1
Population Trends
Grayling Area Communities, 1990-2011**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 3-2
Educational Attainment
City of Grayling, 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2007-2011 American Community Survey

into three main categories: school age, labor force, and senior citizens, to gain a better sense of the needs and desires of the population. The median age in Grayling was 38.6 in 2010, which is lower than the County average of 47.7, but consistent with the state average of 38.9.

**Table 3-2
Age Characteristics
City of Grayling, 2000-2010**

| Age Cohort | 2000 | 2010 | Age Group |
|------------------|-------|-------|-----------------|
| Age 0 to 4 | 6.8% | 6.6% | School Age |
| Age 5 to 19 | 22.3% | 20.4% | |
| Age 20 to 34 | 15.0% | 19.6% | Labor Force |
| Age 35 to 64 | 33.4% | 32.7% | |
| Age 65 and older | 22.5% | 20.7% | Senior Citizens |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As shown in *Table 3-2*, the largest population segment is comprised of those age 35 to 64, which suggests there are a significant number of residents and families with active needs such as improved recreation programming and increased community activities matched to their age.

Table 3-2 also reveals that the senior population is expected to grow as the baby-boomer generation ages and people are living longer due to improved health care. The share of the retirement-age population is typically growing in relation to the other age groups. The City should consider additional services, targeted toward the emerging seniors, as this segment continues grow.

Race and Ethnicity

**Table 3-3
Race and Ethnicity
City of Grayling, 2010**

| Race | Percent |
|------------------|---------|
| White | 97.2% |
| Black | 0.7% |
| American Indian | 0.5% |
| Asian | 0.5% |
| Pacific Islander | 0.1% |
| Other Race | 0.1% |
| Multi-Racial | 0.9% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The vast majority of City residents, slightly over 97%, identified themselves as White. The remaining races identified on the Census made up the remaining 3%.

Employment Characteristics

There are two important factors to consider when evaluating the employment characteristics of the City. First, it is important to review employment by industry, which identifies the types of jobs held by Grayling residents. Second, it is useful to know the occupation breakdown of the population in order to establish the experience and employment specialization of City residents.

Employment

Table 3-4 provides information relative to the types of industries that employ Grayling residents. Retail Trade and Service jobs have historically been the predominant employers. In 2010, the leading job class in the City was Services, employing 58.8% of residents. This typifies the nationwide trend over the last twenty years as the United States evolves into a more service-oriented economy and, more specifically, supports the tourist economy prevalent in Grayling.

The occupational breakdown for the City, as shown in Figure 3-3, provides insight into the skills, expertise and training of Grayling residents. This information can be useful when developing economic development programs since the strategies developed can draw upon specialized training of citizens. The highest-ranking occupational categories are Services, Sales/Office, and Management/Business/Science/Arts. In 2010, residents commuted an average of 14.8 minutes to work

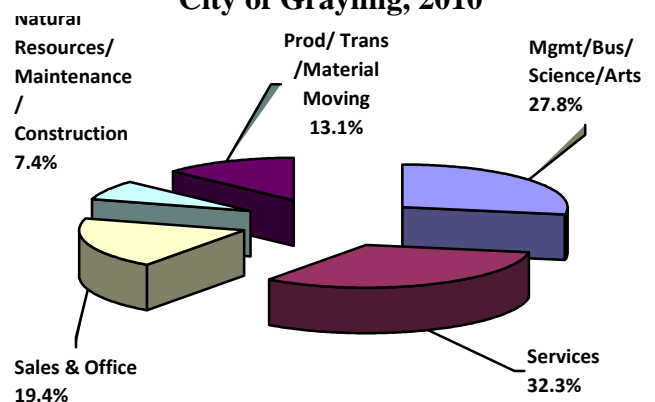
In 2010, unemployment rates for the City were consistent with the County average of 13.0%, which was slightly higher than the State average of 12.7%. Since that time, the job market in Michigan has been on the rise and unemployment rates within the City, surrounding communities and the State overall, continue to slowly decline. The State Department of Labor and Economic Growth reports unemployment rates for the County on a monthly basis. Table 3-5 provides the monthly reports from March 2012 to March 2013. It shows

Table 3-4
Class of Jobs Held by Residents
City of Grayling, 2010

| Industrial Class | Percent |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Agriculture/Natural Resources | 1.9% |
| Construction | 6.3% |
| Manufacturing | 1.9% |
| Transportation/Warehousing/Utilities | 2.9% |
| Wholesale Trade | 1.7% |
| Retail Trade | 12.0% |
| Financial, Real Estate | 4.0% |
| Services | 58.8% |
| Public Administration | 10.5% |

Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Figure 3-3
Occupation of Residents
City of Grayling, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2007-2011 American Community Survey

**Table 3-5:
Unemployment Rates
Crawford County and State of Michigan, 2012-
2013**

| Month | County Rate | State Rate |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| March, 2012 | 11.9 | 9.6 |
| April, 2012 | 10.2 | 8.5 |
| May, 2012 | 9.6 | 8.9 |
| June, 2012 | 9.6 | 9.6 |
| July, 2012 | 10.2 | 10.5 |
| August, 2012 | 9.0 | 9.2 |
| September, 2012 | 8.5 | 8.4 |
| October, 2012 | 8.5 | 8.3 |
| November, 2012 | 8.9 | 8.0 |
| December, 2012 | 10.3 | 8.9 |
| January, 2013 | 11.0 | 9.7 |
| February, 2013 | 11.1 | 9.2 |
| March, 2013 | 10.5 | 8.8 |
| Average | 9.95 | 9.05 |

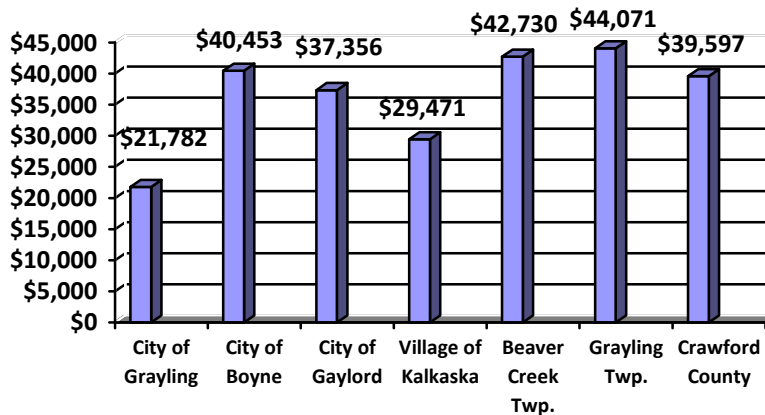
Source: State of Michigan

the trend common for tourist-based communities, with the lowest unemployment during the late summer months and the highest rates during the winter months. Overall, the County averaged an unemployment rate of 9.9% during this period.

Income

Median household incomes for the City of Grayling, similar and surrounding communities, and Crawford County have been collected. In 2010, income levels in all of the study communities fell below the State average of \$48,669. The City’s income levels were the lowest, with 33% of individuals and 29.6% of

**Figure 3-4
Median Household Income
City of Grayling, 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2007-2011 American Community Survey

families reporting income levels below the poverty level in 2010. The City of Grayling experienced an 11.3% decrease in median household income between 2000 (\$24,250) and 2010 (\$21,782). All other similar and surrounding communities studied reported an increase in median household income.

Housing Characteristics

Households

Population change is only one of the factors that affects whether development will occur in a community and to what extent. The makeup of households in Grayling is changing. *Table 3-6* shows that the average household size increased slightly between 2000 and 2010, while the number of households has declined. The average household size in 2010 for the City of Grayling was still lower than State and County averages, 2.49 and 2.31 respectively.

Housing Units

As of 2010, there were 890 housing units in the City of Grayling, a decrease of .6% since 2000. *Table 3-7* on the following page shows that housing vacancy rates in the City increased from 7.5% in 2000 to 14.2% in 2010, which is one of the lowest rates reported for all communities studied. This is partly due to the fact that many homes in the City, County and the region are seasonal vacation homes and possibly an increase in foreclosures. The City has a higher percentage of renter-occupied homes than most other areas studied, and the percentage of owner-occupied homes within the City of Grayling has decreased from 53.1% in 2000 to 51.3% in 2010.

Table 3-6
Household Trends
City of Grayling, 2000-2010

| | 2000 | 2010 | Percent Change |
|-------------------------------|------|------|----------------|
| Number of Households | 828 | 764 | -7.7% |
| Average Household Size | 2.24 | 2.27 | 1.2% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3-7
Housing Characteristics
City of Grayling and Surrounding Areas, 2010

| | Total Housing Units | | | Median Value |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| | Occupied Units | | Vacant Units | |
| | Owner-Occupied | Renter-Occupied | | |
| City of Grayling | 51.3% | 48.7% | 21% | \$76,200 |
| City of Boyne | 71.5% | 28.5% | 29% | \$134,200 |
| City of Gaylord | 61.4% | 38.6% | 14.5% | \$86,800 |
| Village of Kalkaska | 58.2% | 41.8% | 15.8% | \$81,600 |
| Beaver Creek Twp. | 88.7% | 11.3% | 41% | \$115,100 |
| Grayling Twp. | 85.1% | 14.9% | 48% | \$108,700 |
| Crawford County | 83.0% | 17.0% | 48.8% | \$102,700 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Housing values for the City almost doubled for the period 1990-2000 (from \$38,000 in 1990 to \$62,400 in 2000). However, values have shown a moderate increase of 22% from 2000 to 2010. *Table 3-7* indicates that while values are increasing in Grayling, the City still remained well below the County average and most other comparable or surrounding communities.

**Table 3-8
Year Structure Built
City of Grayling, 1939-2010**

| Time Period | <i>Percent</i> |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 2000 and later | 2% |
| 1980-1999 | 23.5% |
| 1970 – 1979 | 12.8% |
| 1960 – 1969 | 10.6% |
| 1940 – 1959 | 24.9% |
| 1939 or earlier | 26.2% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2007-2011
American Community Survey

As shown in *Table 3-8*, over half of the housing units in the City were built before 1959. Development of new housing has been moderate, averaging about 10% each decade until 2000. The drop in construction in 2000 and later reflects the fact that the City is largely built-out, with relatively little vacant land available for new development.