

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

OCTOBER 1, 2024 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2025



**BAY COUNTY** *Florida*  
[BAYCOUNTYFL.GOV](http://BAYCOUNTYFL.GOV)





# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2024 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

## A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN



*doug moore*  
District 4

Bay County offers the very best of Florida with its pristine beaches, abundant sunshine, and strong sense of community. Our Southern hospitality, charm, and low taxes make Bay County not only a premier destination for visitors but also one of the most desirable places in Florida to live and work.

This Annual Report highlights the accomplishments of Fiscal Year 2025, which spans from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025. It provides an overview of how each department and division within county government works daily toward a shared goal of enhancing the quality of life for our residents and strengthening the community we serve.

The Bay County Board of County Commissioners remains committed to advancing our county in a thoughtful and efficient manner. We take pride in the professionalism and dedication of our staff, whose efforts continue to make Bay County a wonderful place to live, work, and visit. Our focus remains on providing exceptional service to the citizens of Bay County while maintaining fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability. The Board welcomes continued public input and values the partnership of our residents as we work together to ensure continued excellence in county government.

## BAY COUNTY STATISTICS Per U.S. Census Bureau

**POPULATION:** 199,717  
**AREA (SQUARE MILES):** 758  
**ESTABLISHED:** 1913

**COUNTY SEAT:** PANAMA CITY  
**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME:** \$65,999  
**MEDIAN AGE:** 39



## ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The Bay County Board of County Commissioners is a five-member governing board elected at-large to represent the citizens of Bay County. The board defines the role and guides the actions of the organization in ensuring the future of Bay County. The commission hires a county manager to implement policies established by the board and to manage the operations of the county. The commission annually adopts the millage rate and approves the budget, which determines the revenue and expenditures necessary to operate all county departments. The powers and duties of the county commission are established by Florida Statutes, Chapter 125. The majority of offices of the Bay County Commission are located at the Bay County Government Center at 840 W. 11th Street in Panama City. The campus also houses the offices of the Bay County Supervisor of Elections, the Tax Collector and the Property Appraiser.

## THE 5 COUNTY DISTRICTS



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BAY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER  
840 WEST 11TH STREET  
PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA 32401

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**PRODUCED BY:**

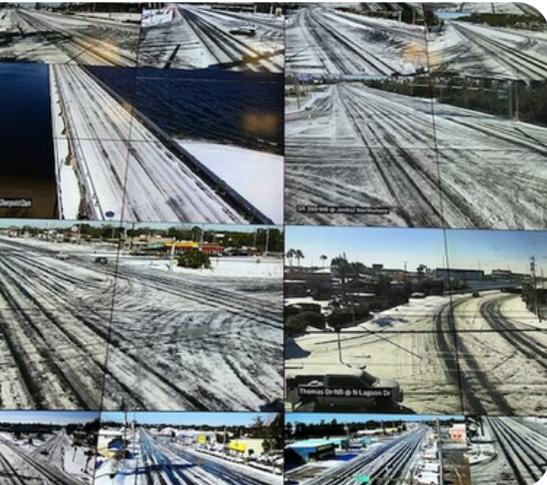
Bay County Communications Department

**INTRO**

**county manager**



*robert "bob" majka*



**MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER:**

In Fiscal Year 2025, Bay County continued to advance the long-term priorities outlined in our Strategic Plan. These efforts focus on strengthening public safety, delivering essential and high-quality services, preserving the family-friendly character of our community, protecting our natural resources, and fostering a resilient local economy.

Every day, Bay County employees work to turn these goals into meaningful results. This publication, along with the 2026 Budget Summary and the Strategic Plan, provides a clear picture of what has been accomplished, how taxpayer dollars are being managed responsibly, and where we are headed as we plan for the future.

Our employees serve this community with professionalism, dignity, and integrity. Their continued commitment and hard work make Bay County a better place for all who call it home.

**A FEW HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2025 INCLUDE:**

- > Maintained the county's property tax rate of 5.43 mills, the 13th-lowest out of Florida's 67 counties.
- > Worked to provide public information that culminated in the reinstatement of the Half-Cent Surtax, which provides roughly \$18 million annually for infrastructure improvements in Bay County.
- > Continued the implementation of Half-Cent Surtax projects, including the resurfacing of roadways, improved intersections and improved public safety with the addition of sidewalks and multi-use paths.
- > Responded to several emergency situations, including Winter Storm Enzo, which brought record snowfall of up to six inches in some parts of the county.
- > Combined Bay County Fire Services and Bay County Emergency Medical Services into the Bay County Fire Rescue Division, an effort aimed at streamlining resources and personnel.
- > Successfully renamed a portion of Thomas Drive to Navy Boulevard in support of Naval Support Activity-Panama City's contributions to our nation and our community.
- > Continued efforts to expand the areas recreational fishing and diving resources with the sinking of several vessels into the Gulf.

**ROBERT "BOB" MAJKA  
BAY COUNTY MANAGER**

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**WHO WE ARE**

The County Attorney's Office represents the Board of County Commissioners in all legal matters. The three attorneys on staff represent Bay County in lawsuits, administrative hearings, and at public meetings. In addition, legal staff prepares and reviews ordinances, contracts, and other legal instruments. The attorneys also render legal opinions and provide legal support to commissioners, boards, and departments.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

*Legal staff worked on the following legal issues and projects this past year:*

- > With the retirement on the County Attorney Don Banks in December 2024, the Board of County Commissioners named Brian Leebrick the new Bay County attorney in January 2025. Brian has worked in the County Attorney's Office since 2017, starting as the assistant county attorney and working his way up to the deputy county attorney. Brian accepted the county attorney position and has taken on this role with precision and professionalism. Along with that move, Alicia Carothers moved to the deputy county attorney position, and Beverly McAllister-Brown joined our office as the assistant county attorney.
- > In 2025, the County Attorney's Office remains active as the contact for the Northwest Florida Health Network's CORE programs, which distribute the opioid settlement funds to the county. The Attorney's Office is responsible for the annual contract implementation for each program and completing the monthly reporting requirements established by the Department of Children and Families, who oversee the opioid settlement programs. This year, the county continues to assist our Emergency Services department with the purchases of the much-needed ventilators and the construction of the Lifeline Program, which is intended to help addicted inmates with necessary skills to recover from chemical dependency.
- > The County Attorney's Office was proactive in the completion of a litigation case involving the Southport Ballpark/Fire Station parking lot land dispute. This case was resolved with an agreement involving the use of the parking lot for Bay County Fire Services personnel along with the disposition of the building.
- > The County Attorney's Office continues to manage litigation cases involving Bay County, with several cases being handled by our insurance carriers and with most of these cases ending with the mediation conferences. Cases not handled by the insurance carriers are being managed by the county legal team, who diligently handle the matters of each case to include answering complaints, filing briefs and pleadings, and participating in mediation/settlement conferences.
- > The County Attorney's Office also continues to process the public records for Bay County. In October 2025, lien search requests were added to the software to streamline the county lien search process. Since January 2025, the attorney's office has processed 12,488 public records and lien search requests. The attorney's office also continues to staff monthly Planning Commission meetings, code enforcement magistrate hearings, and Animal Control dangerous dog appeal hearings, as well as monitor new legislation that may have an impact on county business.
- > The County Attorney's Office has been working on updating the county's Code of Ordinances. The attorneys have been reviewing each chapter and requesting edits from the county departments to streamline and ensure we have the latest information and policies and that the chapters are in line with the current Florida Statutes. Once the changes are approved by the board, the ordinances are codified by Municode for public access.



*brian leebrick*

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### WHO WE ARE

The Budget Office creates, modifies, and monitors the annual budget for the Board of County Commissioners. We work closely with the county departments to develop the expenditure budget for the board. The office also develops financial projections for the county's revenues. It serves as a hub for financial data for the various departments under the board and assists the departments with any financial matters.

### WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- > The Budget Office adheres to Florida's Truth-in-Millage (TRIM) law, enacted by the Florida Legislature to ensure transparency regarding tax proposals from local taxing authorities. Property owners receive TRIM notices from the Bay County Property Appraiser after the millage rates are determined through voting by each taxing authority. These notices provide a property estimate, list all relevant taxing authorities, and present the total estimated property tax. Property taxes are calculated at a rate of \$1 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. For instance, a property valued at \$100,000 would generate \$100 for one mill. In FY 2025, the taxable value for the General Fund was \$29.5 billion, resulting in ad valorem tax collections totaling \$152 million.
- > Preparations for the annual budget begin nearly nine months in advance, meaning that most of the budgeting process for FY26 took place in FY25. This was the second year that all TRIM requirements were submitted online through the Department of Revenue's OASYS ePortal system. The Budget team successfully completed and submitted certifications without the need to print packets, email large attachments, or overnight documents to the state.
- > The Budget Office oversees all calculations related to payments from the county to the various Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs) established throughout the county. A CRA is created in areas identified as experiencing blighted conditions within counties and municipalities. Once established, the tax base for the CRA is frozen for a period of 30 to 40 years. During this time, the taxing authority can only collect tax revenue equivalent to the amount received in the base year. Any revenue generated beyond this limit is redirected to the CRA to fund redevelopment projects within its boundaries. There are currently 13 CRAs in Bay County. In 2025, out of the \$152 million in ad valorem tax revenue allocated to the General Fund, \$30.6 million was distributed to these CRAs.
- > Disaster response and recovery funding is spearheaded by the Budget Office. Events like hurricanes, tornadoes, pandemics, and mutual aid deployments require large amounts of documentation and auditing in order to maximize Bay County's reimbursements from agencies like FEMA and the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM). In 2025, our office tracked expenses, documentation, and reimbursements for Hurricane Helene, the January winter snowstorm, and mutual aid deployments for Hurricane Milton.

### AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- > In 2025, Bay County participated in the second year of FDEM's F-ROC (Florida Recovery Obligation Calculation) program, which involved a comprehensive application and review of our existing policies and procedures. Bay County was one of only three entities in the state to achieve a perfect score of 60/60. This high score, coupled with improved forms from FDEM, enables the county to recover up to 80 percent of our immediate debris removal and emergency work costs from the State upfront, before FEMA begins any reviews.

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**WHO WE ARE**

The Bay County Communications Office is responsible for producing a variety of publications, maintaining media relations and supervising other special projects that help strengthen the communication between the Board of County Commissioners and the community.

The Communications Office also aims to enhance the community's access to Bay County government both directly and via traditional media outlets. This office is responsible for maintaining positive community and media relations through frequent contact and constant availability, preparation and distribution of informational publications, fact sheets, news articles and related materials, and through the use of social media outlets.

Communications also leads in dissemination of information to the public, news media, and other governmental entities during disasters.

Governmental transparency and integrity is of the utmost importance, and the Communications Office strives to ensure openness and accountability to the media and public on behalf of the Bay County Board of County Commissioners.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

*In Fiscal Year 2025, the Bay County Communications Office:*

- > Coordinated the public information response to a private contractor's cross connection contamination at RiverCamps that rendered the community unable to use their water for several days.
- > Coordinated the public information response to Winter Storm Enzo, which delivered up to six inches of snow in some parts of Bay County and necessitated a significant effort to keep motorists off the roadways.
- > Assisted with the implementation of an ordinance that gives the county manager or his designee the authority to issue a burn ban in the unincorporated areas when certain criterion are met.
- > Coordinated public information campaigns, including crosswalk safety and the relaunch of the county's double red flag public information campaign.
- > Organized and coordinated the Fall Citizens Academy in cooperation with Gulf Coast State College.
- > Responded to approximately 400 media inquiries.
- > Coordinated the publication of the 2024 Annual Report and 2025 Budget Summary.
- > Assisted with public information concerning the renaming of a portion of Thomas Drive to Navy Boulevard in recognition of Naval Support Activity-Panama City's contributions to the community.
- > Coordinated meetings of the Bay County Public Information Network, a group of communicators from governmental and nonprofit organizations throughout the county.
- > Coordinated the launch of the MyBayCounty app with Information Technology



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# cooperative extension



## WHO WE ARE

At UF/IFAS Extension Bay County, we combine science and research to tackle challenges in our local community. Think of us as your friendly neighbors working alongside university experts and dedicated volunteers to share knowledge that enhances daily life.

We offer a wide range of programs and activities. For the young explorers (ages 5-18), our 4-H programs and clubs provide opportunities to learn, grow, and build friendships. Whether you are a gardening enthusiast or new to planting, we offer expert advice on cultivating beautiful landscapes and healthy plants. For families, our Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) programs offer guidance to promote well-being, happiness, and financial success at home. For commercial operations managing landscapes, timber, or leading maritime ventures, our Horticulture and Sea Grant programs provide the training and tools needed to thrive as professionals. We are committed to the stewardship of our renowned beaches, coastal waters, and unique natural resources.

Together, we are making Bay County an even more vibrant place to live, work, and play!

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

### Contacts

- > Average number of unique volunteers per month – 39
- > Individual calls, office visits, and emails – 2,618
- > Group education participants – 6,193

### Horticulture

- > We taught more than 3,800 community members and green industry professionals about best management practices for growing plants in Bay County.
- > The horticulture agent and Master Gardener volunteers taught 1,300 participants through one-on-one consultations and 2,500 participants in group classes.
- > Individual consultations were conducted in the office, at site visits, and through online communication. Class topics ranged from basic gardening information to professional licensing exam preparation.
- > Our 42 Master Gardener volunteers donated 3,221 hours towards our Extension programming.
- > We supported community outreach through Habitat for Humanity, the Henry Davis Park Community Garden, seed kit distribution at the library, and youth gardening programs.

### CONTACT US:

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### 4-H Youth Development

4-H reached youth through a variety of delivery methods in 2025:

- > **After-School Clubs** - three sites reaching 98 youth
- > **Military Clubs** - two sites reaching 107 youth
- > **In-School Clubs** - one site serving 18 youth
- > **Community Clubs** - three clubs engaging 37 youth

In collaboration with Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS), 4-H provided engaging summer learning opportunities for youth. Programs included a tailgate grilling camp, "Timeless Traditions," and art and science classes. Additionally, youth participated in summer enrichment programs at the University of Florida, where the county 4-H faculty member led Food Challenge and Fashion Review sessions as part of the iLEAD intermediate youth leadership program and 4-H University for teens. These sessions emphasized food safety, kitchen skills, safe food handling practices, and recipe preparation and included take-home recipes for youth to prepare under adult supervision. Fashion review participants learned basic sewing and modeling techniques.

The 4-H program does many partnership programs. School enrichment and community events reached approximately 1,500 participants in 2025. Our 4-H faculty also partnered with regional colleagues to provide county, regional, and state training for volunteers, focusing on integrating 4-H science curriculum into after-school and community club programs.

### Marine/Coastal

- > **RESTORE Project** - Concrete and other debris were collected from various sites throughout Bay County. The debris was used to enhance habitats and recreation in offshore artificial reefs. Phase II was initiated in August 2025.
- > **NRDA Projects** - With \$900,000 from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), three deployments occurred during Phase I - a federally permitted area designed to expand marine habitats and recreational fishing. A combination of 30 Super Reefs and Amberjack Super Reefs were placed in Bay County's LAARS B permitted area, with more reefs planned for 2026. The artificial reef program management has moved to Tourist Development Council.
- > **Bay County Artificial Reef Program Website** - The website benefits the community by providing publicly deployed artificial reefs in a variety of accessible formats including PDF, Excel, CSV, GPX, and KML. An interactive artificial reef map is maintained that allows users to navigate by material type. The website address is <https://bit.ly/baycoreefs>.

### Family and Consumer Sciences

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) programs include the areas of housing, financial wellness, healthy eating, lifestyle behaviors, and food safety.

- > Housing and financial wellness HUD-certified, first-time home buyer classes were taught to 178 people. This class is one step in the application process for State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) funds.
- > Food safety, heart-healthy (Mediterranean-style) food preparation, private well and water quality, and a variety of other FCS and science-related youth programs reached 1,215 participants.
- > The FCS agent served as president of the Florida Extension Association of Family and Consumer Science Agents in 2025. She was hired as the County Extension Director (CED) as of Aug. 29, 2025.

### AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- > 2025 Housing Outreach National and State Team Award (Melanie Taylor)
- > 2025 Environmental Education State Team Award (Melanie Taylor)
- > 2025 Habitat for Humanity of Bay County Most Valuable Volunteer (Bay County Master Gardener Volunteers)
- > 25-Year Service Award for UF/IFAS Extension and Bay County (Paula Davis)
- > 25-Year Service Award for UF/IFAS Extension and Retirement (Scott Jackson)



### WHO WE ARE

The Northwest Regional Library System has seven locations in Bay, Gulf, and Liberty counties as well as a mobile library. Our headquarters are at the Bay County Public Library in Panama City. We served 265,205 visitors in 2025, providing access to more than 370,000 books, DVD movies, musical instruments, puzzles, telescopes, e-books, downloadable audiobooks, and more. More than 177,000 digital items were borrowed in FY2025, an increase of 16 percent over 2024. We offer public computers with internet access and WiFi access in all locations. We also offer a variety of programming for all ages.

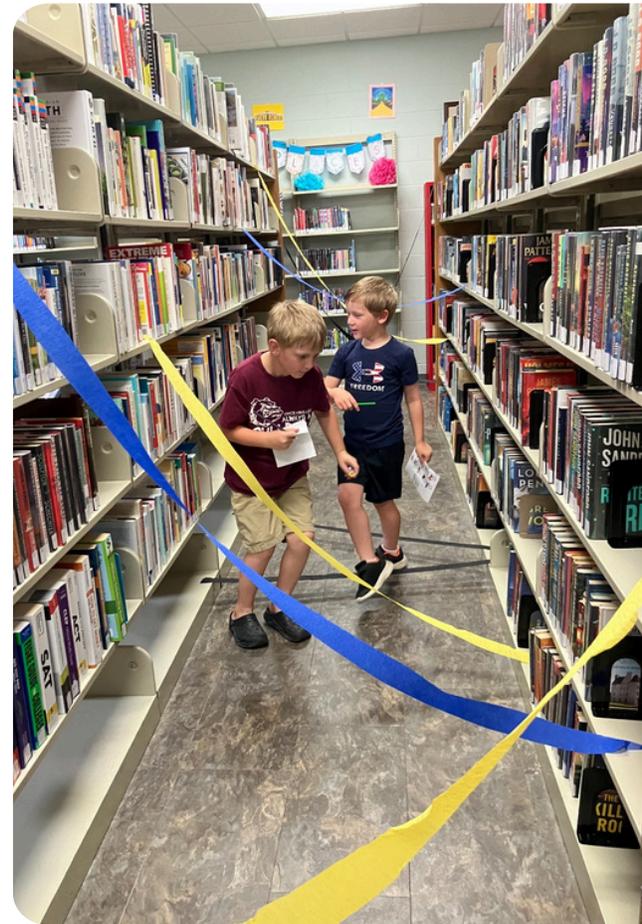
### WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- > The library continued to see an increase in the number of library cardholders and number of items borrowed. Total items borrowed from the library increased 4 percent, to more than 590,000 items. The number of library cardholders increased by 4 percent to 57,286.
- > The 2025 Color Our World Summer Reading Program was a huge success. Summer library programs encourage children to visit the library and continue to read while they are out of school. There were 88 in-person children's and family programs offered system wide in June and July, with a total attendance of 3,580. In Bay County, 46 programs were offered with 2,478 attendees. This year the library offered a BINGO Challenge, which encouraged children to read at least five books during the summer. During June and July 2025, there were 39,000 physical youth items (excluding digital books) borrowed from Bay County Library locations.
- > On June 7, 2025 the Charles Whitehead Public Library in Wewahitchka hosted the 150th Anniversary celebration for the City of Wewahitchka. Library staff, Friends of the Wewahitchka Library, and the Historical Society planned the event. Activities included food and craft vendors, kids' activities, a classic car show, and Muskogee Creek displays, dances, and music.

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- > The assistive technology software JAWS and Zoom Text were added in each of our seven libraries to assist blind and visually impaired patrons with using library materials. Additionally, each location also has a PEARL camera which scans book pages and documents to read aloud.
- > The Chapter Chat Book Club partnership between the Panama City Beach Public Library and WJHG-TV continued. Created in 2023 as a way to inspire young people to read when they see adults reading, WJHG newscaster Jessica Foster and library staff select a book and facilitate a book discussion at the Panama City Beach location each month. Authors Lisa See and Eliza Knight stopped by Chapter Chat to discuss their books.
- > Thanks to the support of the Edward F. Hickey Jr. Trust, the library system continues to provide scholarships to the Career Online High School program. Adults over the age of 19 who have not graduated high school are eligible for a scholarship that fully funds tuition to an accredited online high school. As of the end of September 2025, there have been 58 local graduates of this program.
- > Between September and December 2024, 391 Little Library Reader tote bags were distributed from Bay County Library locations for the “Little Library Readers” marketing campaign (ages 0-5). The tote bags included a board book and early literacy tips and resources from the Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida. The campaign was sponsored by the Friends of the Bay County Public Libraries and the Bay County Public Library Foundation.
- > The Mobile Library partnered with the Bay County Parks and Recreation Department to show a series of outdoor movies at Bay County’s Harder’s Park. Screenings included the movies “Hocus Pocus” in October 2024, the animated “Mulan” in November 2024, and “The Santa Clause” held in December 2024 during the Bay County Christmas Festival.
- > The third annual Bay County Writers Fest took place at the Bay County Public Library on Oct. 5, 2024. This event highlighted more than 30 local authors with booths selling their books and a Writers Workshop taught by two Gulf Coast State College professors. The attendance for this year’s Bay County Writers Fest was 297 individuals, with an additional 35 attendees at the Poetry Reading satellite event at Thistle and Thorne.



## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- > Bay County libraries and the Friends of the Bay County Public Libraries received a \$17,900 grant from NextEra Energy Foundation to replace Early Learning Computers in each Bay County library. These computers provide access to approximately 90 educational games for preschool and early grade children to help them build early-literacy skills.
- > The Bay County Public Library received a \$750 Seeds of Knowledge grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation. Funds were used to install a Florida native plant demonstration garden. Signage identifies each plant and a QR code is available to learn more about Florida native wildflowers. The Let’s Go Native! Native Plants program on Sept. 27, 2025 in partnership with Sweet Bay Native Plant Society, Florida Wildflower Foundation, UF/IFAS Bay County Extension Office, Sandhills Nursery, and the Hoeckley Family included educational presentations, information tables, plant/seed giveaways, and a planting activity for kids/teens. There were 150 attendees.
- > Ashley Burlon, community relations and marketing manager, was selected to participate in 2025-2026 Leadership Bay class. The Bay County Chamber of Commerce founded the program in 1983 to develop community leaders.



# housing



## WHO WE ARE

The Housing Division oversees state and federally funded housing programs for the county. The services include down-payment assistance and closing costs, emergency repairs and improvements, foreclosure prevention, impact fees for new construction homes, gap funding for multi-family developers. A new program was added this year assisting our low-income residents with purchasing homeowner's insurance and paying their property taxes.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

After Hurricane Michael in 2018, the Housing Division was awarded \$37 million in Hurricane Housing Recovery Program (HHRP) funds to assist families impacted by the storm find decent, safe, and affordable housing. First-time homebuyer education and counseling was provided to more than 600 families through a partnership with the Bay County UF/IFAS Extension Center. The Housing Division partnered with more than 400 realtors, 55 lending institutions and 38 title agencies.

The HHRP 2 and 2022-23 State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) grants closed out in July 2025 expending more than \$9 million on housing programs in our community.

## HHRP DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY

STRATEGY	EXPENDED	UNITS
PURCHASE ASSISTANCE	\$4,379,972	110
MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT	\$2,000,000	20
DEMOLITION/RECONSTRUCTION	\$1,874,788	11
RENTAL DEVELOPMENT	\$360,000	6
EMERGENCY REPAIR	\$355,377	11
FORECLOSURE PREVENTION	\$29,211	4
RENTAL ASSISTANCE	\$22,385	9
IMPACT FEES	\$17,076	5
INSURANCE AND PROPERTY TAX	\$2,765	2



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**WHO WE ARE**

Established in 1983, Bay County's public transportation system, Bayway, was created to provide residents and visitors with convenient, reliable, and affordable transit options. Over the years, as demand for public transportation grew, Bayway expanded its service area to include Callaway, Lynn Haven, Mexico Beach, Panama City, Panama City Beach, Parker, Springfield, and the unincorporated areas of Bay County.

Our vision is to be recognized as Florida's premier transit system, delivering a well-balanced, multi-modal transportation network that supports community education, fosters economic development, enhances accessibility, and responds to customer needs.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

It has been an exciting and productive year for public transit in Bay County. Bayway continues to serve as an essential lifeline, providing safe, reliable, and affordable transportation for residents and visitors. As our community grows and evolves, we remain committed to accessibility, service excellence, and continuous improvement. We are proud to support the people who rely on us every day and to welcome new riders discovering the value of public transit.

- > **Bus Wash Facility Completed:** Construction of the new bus wash facility was finalized and Bayway is moving toward full operation, ensuring a cleaner and more sustainable fleet.
- > **New Operator Contract:** Bayway successfully negotiated a new operations and maintenance contract with Transdev that took effect December 2024.
- > **Federal and State Reviews:** Bayway underwent and successfully navigated a Federal Transportation Administration Drug and Alcohol Audit, Florida Department of Transportation Triennial Review and a Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged Quality Assurance Review.
- > **Sunday Service Extended:** In March, Bayway extended the popular Sunday Service for an additional year. The service will operate from the first Sunday in March to the last Sunday in November, providing expanded access across the community.
- > **CTD Reauthorization:** The Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged unanimously retained the Bay County Board of County Commissioners as Community Transportation Coordinator through June 2030.
- > **Innovative Service Development Grant:** We were awarded \$750,000, the largest in Bayway's history, to continue Bayway's partnership with Uber for transportation disadvantaged riders.
- > **Service Optimization:** Bayway announced the upcoming transition of low-ridership fixed routes to micro transit, aligning service with demand and maximizing efficiency.



**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

In September, Bayway was honored with four prestigious awards at the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) Annual Conference, recognizing our commitment to excellence in public transit and our continued efforts to serve the Bay County community with innovation, reliability, and care.

- > Best Workforce Development Marketing
- > Best Ridership or Sales Marketing
- > Best Educational Initiative Marketing
- > Best of the Best



**FIXED ROUTE SYSTEM**

TOTAL RIDERSHIP	# OF BUSES IN FLEET	# OF BUS ROUTES
383,930	13	7



**DEMAND RESPONSE SYSTEM**

TOTAL RIDERSHIP	# OF BUSES IN FLEET
51,069	23



**MICRO-TRANSIT SYSTEM**

TOTAL RIDERSHIP	# OF VANS IN FLEET
63,289	6

**UBER PARTNERSHIP**

**TOTAL RIDERSHIP**

11,252



**CONTACT US:**

Bay Town Trolley | (850) 769-0557 | info@baytowntrolley.org  
 Bay Area Transportation | (850) 785-0808  
 Transit 8161 Administration | (850) 248-8161  
 www.baycountyfl.gov



**WHO WE ARE**

Behind every veteran’s benefits claim is a veteran in need. The Bay County Veterans’ Services Office remains ready and willing to assist in obtaining those earned benefits. We provide dedicated service to all qualified veterans and their dependents, ensuring they are provided fair and just treatment in accordance with the published laws and regulations governing the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Our office assists veterans in applying for service-connected disabilities, obtaining non-service-connected pension benefits, healthcare eligibility, education benefits, life insurance, and VA home loan guaranty certificates of eligibility. Our office also helps veterans’ family members with burial claims, widow and widower benefits, and dependency claims.

The Veterans Services staff consists of three counselors, one senior staff assistant and one county veterans’ service officer. We average between 21 and 25 client visits daily. In between client visits, our staff will receive another 20 to 30 phone calls per day.

We are proud that our county veterans services officer is also the area vice president for the Northwest Florida Region of the County Veterans Services Officers Association, which includes all veterans service offices from Franklin County through Escambia County.

Our primary objective is customer service that may include: adding a spouse or a new baby to a veteran’s award, requesting a veteran’s eligibility to education, healthcare, home loan certificate, filing a service-connected disability claim, a pension claim, and a widow’s benefit claim or even notifying the VA of a veteran’s passing and burial. We assist veterans and their families from the cradle to the grave.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

In the past, military bases throughout the United States had VA personnel who assisted active duty military when they were leaving the service. Unfortunately, a number of these VA employees have left their position. This left our active duty men and women without someone to help them deal with the VA. Our office has stepped in to fill that gap. We are now assisting active duty personnel file claims to the VA in order for them to start receiving their earned VA benefits as soon as possible after their discharge date.

**Organizations and Events:**

- > Our office assisted the Bay County Board of County Commissioners and the Bay County Veterans Council with a Memorial Day Ceremony in May.
- > Unfortunately, due to weather, we were unable to celebrate Veterans Day with our annual parade and wreath laying ceremony.
- > We represent the Bay County Board of County Commissioners at the monthly meeting of the Bay County Veterans Council on the second Thursday of each month.
- > We support the veterans at Sims Florida State Nursing Home through the ‘Friends of Sims Nursing Home,’ a nonprofit organization run by the County Veterans Services Officers of Northwest Florida. Funds are donated to this organization and distributed to the nursing home to purchase items the State of Florida does not include in their budget.
- > Staff participate on the executive committee with the Board of Directors for Career Source Gulf Coast, the Disadvantaged Transportation Board to assist veterans in the local area, and on the advisory committee for the Veterans Treatment Court of the 14th Judicial Circuit.
- > We gave presentations at Tyndall Air Force Base for military personnel who will soon be discharged or retire on VA benefits.
- > Our office is available to any organization in the community for presentations showing the various programs offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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## WHO WE ARE

The Building Safety Division (BSD) is committed to providing ever-improving customer service to property owners, contractors, developers, and design professionals, focusing on ensuring buildings and structures are compliant with rigorous building standards and are safe for occupancy. BSD consists of a well-rounded staff of International Code Council (ICC) certified permit technicians, ICC-certified plans examiners and ICC-certified inspectors, Florida Building Code administrators, certified floodplain managers, Florida Department of Environmental Protection-licensed stormwater and drainage inspectors, an engineer, licensed contractors, and administrative support staff. We assist the general public, property owners, the design community, and contractors in meeting the minimum design and construction requirements outlined by the Florida Building Code and supporting standards.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- > The Building Safety Division is committed to delivering consistent service and clear communication to the public. Continued investment in recruiting and training has ensured we have well-qualified building code professionals serving both property owners and contractors.
- > In FY2025, staff supported Bay County's ongoing rebuilding and economic recovery by issuing 5,668 building permits valued at \$858 million. This included 1,438 single-family home permits worth about \$681.7 million and roughly 600 residential renovation permits totaling \$34.6 million. Major national developers also continued building in new communities such as Latitude Margaritaville, Breakfast Point, and Wards Creek.
- > Beyond reviewing plans and performing inspections, Building Safety works closely with DBPR and the Bay County Sheriff's Office to address unlicensed contracting and unpermitted construction.
- > The division also improved operations through staff training and upgrades to the permitting system. The online portal now allows users to submit permits, upload documents, request inspections, and search records more easily, helping reduce turnaround times.
- > This year, employee development remained a priority. Staff participated in a variety of training programs, including leadership, technical skills, and certification courses to strengthen expertise and support the division's overall effectiveness.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

We are pleased to carry a previous Insurance Service Office (ISO), Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) score of 4 for residential projects and 3 for commercial projects. This scoring is based on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the highest rating possible and 10 being the lowest.

Looking ahead, the Building Safety Division's commitment to the citizens and visitors of Bay County remains focused on aligning our training of employees and development initiatives with strategic goals and evolving operational needs. We will continue to ensure our processes and procedures directly enhance the quality, consistency and value of service delivered to our customers.



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# code enforcement



## WHO WE ARE

A Code Enforcement Officer is an agent of Bay County responsible for ensuring properties and activities within the county comply with health, safety, zoning, building, and environmental provisions of the Bay County Nuisance Ordinance and Land Development Regulations. The Code Enforcement Division consists of a manager, one coordinator, one senior staff assistant, one senior investigator, one building inspector, and seven investigators.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

Bay County Code Enforcement implemented a new compliance hearing process with our special magistrates. The compliance hearing is held approximately 30 days after the initial hearing. The compliance hearing was established in order for the magistrate to determine if the property owner had complied with the first order from the special magistrate. It also provides the property owner an opportunity to show the special magistrate any progress they had made concerning violations on the property. At this hearing, the magistrate will either extend the property owners time frame to correct the violations or order the property to be abated by the county.

Code Enforcement opened more than 1,700 cases with 60 percent being opened proactively. More than 590 cases were scheduled for a magistrate hearing. Of these cases, 60 cases were removed from the agenda after the property owner brought the property into compliance prior to the hearing and other various reasons. Approximately, 280 cases were presented to the magistrate. Of the 280 cases, 100 of these cases were brought into compliance by the property owner after the first hearing. Another 100 cases were brought into compliance by the property owner after a compliance hearing was held. The remainder of these cases were brought into compliance by the county and/or fines were placed against the property.

In addition to these 1,700 cases, over 1,400 illegal signs were removed from the county right-of-way and 20 citations were written for illegal solicitation on the sandy beaches of unincorporated Bay County.



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**WHO WE ARE**

The Planning Division’s mission is to guide the orderly growth and development of the community while protecting public health, safety, and welfare. The office strives to balance the needs of residents, businesses, and the environment by implementing comprehensive plans, managing land use and zoning regulations, and promoting sustainable development to help maintain and increase the quality of life in Bay County.

The division is staffed by certified planners, a certified floodplain manager, a senior planner, and an administrative coordinator dedicated to providing quality examination and review of new development projects for the citizens of Bay County. We also manage requests for sign permits, conditional-use permits, variances, and land-use and zoning changes.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

- > The Planning Division continued to experience a high volume of development. In FY2025, we received 63 development order applications, 62 total land disturbance permit applications (land clearing, fill placement, grading, and excavation), 45 sign permits as well as reviewed 3,412 low-impact developments in support of the Building Safety Division.
- > The Planning Division also reviews and oversees the process where applications to change the land use and zoning are considered by the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. We received 39 land use and zone change applications which were presented before both the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. Two Planned Unit Development (PUD) applications were received and approved. Six conditional use permit requests, as well as four variance requests, were presented to the Planning Commission in FY2025.
- > We fielded 8,573 phone calls and served 1,312 walk-in customers in FY2025.
- > Bay County’s Community Rating System (CRS) program is coordinated by the Planning Division’s certified floodplain manager. Bay County received its re-certification audit from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to evaluate the county’s floodplain management program during FY2023. Bay County maintained its Class 5 CRS rating which ensures all residents with flood insurance policies will continue to receive a 25-percent discount on their flood insurance premiums.
- > The development of the Bay-Walton Sector Plan area continues as the Planning Division received another application for a Detailed Specific Area Plan (DSAP). The Ward Creek community, also within the BWSP, continues to grow with 587 new residential lots currently under development, with another 638 residential lots under review for development approval.



Photo Courtesy: Minto Communities



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# emergency management



## WHO WE ARE

Bay County Emergency Management supports the Chief of Emergency Services in leading and coordinating the county's comprehensive emergency preparedness and response efforts. Our mission is to enhance the county's readiness by providing planning, training, and operational support to local jurisdictions, county agencies, and community partners before, during, and after disasters.

Throughout the year, Emergency Management leads the activation and operation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during incidents and disasters. The EOC functions as the county's central command hub for decision-making, information management, and resource coordination. It is staffed by skilled professionals and representatives from public safety, municipal governments, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, military partners, and other critical stakeholders. Working together, we ensure a timely, coordinated, and effective response that protects lives, property, and strengthens Bay County's overall resilience.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- > In 2025, Bay County Emergency Management welcomed three new specialists, Jennifer Wilburn, Erin Bartlett, and Timothy Minnick, whose expertise strengthened the department's planning, logistics, and operational capabilities.
- > The department supported response operations for major events such as the Gulf Coast Triathlon 70.3, Ironman 140.6, Gulf Coast Sea Breeze Jazz Festival, Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam, Thunder Beach Motorcycle Rally, and Fourth of July celebrations in Panama City Beach, working closely with public safety and community partners to ensure safe operations.
- > Community outreach remained a priority, with preparedness presentations delivered to faith-based organizations, the NAACP, Tyndall Air Force Base Wing leadership, and Margaritaville residents. Staff also partnered with Bay District Elementary Schools to teach students and families about disaster readiness.
- > Emergency Management participated in key planning efforts, including Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) updates, disaster housing discussions, Region One Emergency Response meetings, Rebuild Bay initiatives, Integrated Preparedness Plan sessions, and Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings, keeping Bay County aligned with state and regional priorities. The team also presented to the Bay County Citizens Academy to build public understanding of emergency operations and preparedness. These efforts strengthened countywide collaboration and enhanced the ability to respond to and recover from emergencies while maintaining a strong focus on public engagement and readiness.
- > A highlight of the year was the Bay County Emergency Services-sponsored Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) being named Florida CERT Team of the Year for 2024-2025, recognizing the team's outstanding contributions to preparedness, training, disaster response, and recovery support.



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## WHO WE ARE

The Bay County Communications Division proudly serves as the vital link between our community and emergency services. Operating out of the Emergency Operations Center, the division is co-located with the Bay County Sheriff's Office and the Springfield Police Department, ensuring seamless coordination during critical moments.

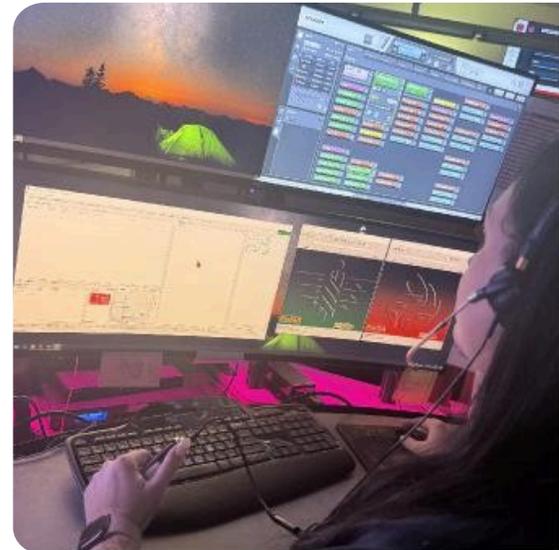
The 911 Call Center is staffed around the clock by highly trained Call Takers and Communications Operators who are committed to answering both emergency and non-emergency calls from residents and visitors. Emergencies can occur at any time, and the team stands ready 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide swift and reliable assistance. Call Takers and Operators are specially trained to manage highly stressful and often life-threatening situations. Many who dial 911 are experiencing what may be the worst day of their life. It is the responsibility of these professionals to remain calm under pressure, gather critical information, and ensure that help and resources reach those in need as quickly as possible.

The division fields 911 and administrative calls for Emergency Medical Services (EMS), all fire agencies within Bay County, and multiple law enforcement partners, including the Bay County Sheriff's Office, Panama City Police Department, Lynn Haven Police Department, Parker Police Department, Panama City Beach Police Department, and Springfield Police Department.

Every call matters, and every response counts. The Bay County Communications Division is dedicated to ensuring that help is always just a phone call away.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- This year, the Bay County Communications Division achieved full certification in both Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) and Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD), a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to public safety and professional excellence.
- EMD is a comprehensive system that equips trained 911 call takers with the tools to rapidly assess medical emergencies, provide potentially life-saving instructions over the phone, and dispatch the appropriate medical resources with precision and urgency.
- EFD serves a similar function for fire-related emergencies. Using structured, internationally recognized protocols, certified call takers quickly gather vital information, determine the nature and severity of the situation, and coordinate the fastest, most effective fire and rescue response.
- These certifications ensure every emergency call in Bay County is handled using a consistent, proven approach that prioritizes caller safety, enhances responder preparedness, and ultimately saves lives. This achievement reflects the division's dedication to continuous improvement and to delivering the highest standard of emergency communication services.
- Bay County Communications also began the implementation process for a new Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, a major step forward in modernizing how emergency calls are managed within the center. The CAD system serves as the core technology supporting dispatch operations, enabling dispatchers to manage calls, deploy resources, and coordinate responses more effectively. While still in the early stages of implementation, the upgraded system is expected to deliver significant improvements once fully operational in April.
- The Dispatch Center also implemented the Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP), a structured and standardized approach to onboarding and training new employees. Adapted from the widely recognized "San Jose Model," FTEP pairs new dispatchers with experienced Communications Training Officers (CTOs) who provide hands-on guidance and performance evaluations throughout daily operations. To support the program's success, six employees were certified as CTOs, ensuring consistent, high-quality training and evaluation for all new hires.
- Additionally, the Dispatch Center transitioned to a Unified Dispatch system, integrating Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and all fire departments within Bay County under a single, coordinated dispatch process. This approach ensures that all agencies are dispatched consistently and operate on the same communication channel, improving coordination, response efficiency, and overall service delivery across the county.



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# communications division



## BY THE (PHONE) NUMBERS

It was another busy year for our Communications Center, and our team rose to the challenge. Here's a snapshot of how we kept our community connected and safe:

- > The center answered 103,485 emergency (911) calls in FY2025.
- > July 2025 was the busiest month with 10,589 911 calls.
- > 175,280 total administrative calls were handled.
  - > Of those, 98,772 were inbound, with 9,535 calls in July 2025.
- > 99.4 percent of 911 calls were answered within 15 seconds, far exceeding national benchmarks.

According to the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), 911 centers should answer 90 percent of calls within 15 seconds and 95 percent within 20 seconds. Many centers across the country struggle to meet those standards, but our team continues to outperform them.

This record-breaking performance highlights the commitment, skill, and speed of our dispatchers; the calm voices behind the calls who make sure help is on the way when it matters most.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

### Promotions

Communications Operators Marissa Vananda and Makayla Howard were promoted to Communications Supervisors. Both have demonstrated exceptional leadership, professionalism, and dedication to the mission of the Dispatch Center. In their new roles, they provide guidance and support to staff, assist with daily operations, and help maintain the high standards of service and performance expected within the center.

### Promotion - CAD Administrator

Communications Supervisor Sara Wells was promoted to CAD Administrator this year. With her extensive knowledge and experience in communications, Sara brings valuable insight into the operational needs of the Dispatch Center. Her expertise allows her to effectively guide the development and implementation of the new Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, ensuring it meets the practical needs of dispatchers and supports efficient, accurate emergency response.

### Notable Call

On September 23, 2025, 911 Call Taker Ashley Dominguez received a call from a frantic caller whose partner was in active labor at home. Through calm, clear, and precise instructions, Dominguez guided the caller step-by-step, providing reassurance and life-saving direction until first responders arrived. Thanks to her composure and expertise while using ProQA, the baby was delivered safely.



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### WHO WE ARE

Bay County Fire Rescue Division is a state-licensed Advanced Life Support (paramedic level) service. The service provides ALS transport for all unincorporated areas and municipalities within Bay County. Our service provides fire suppression for structural fires and wild fires, response to emergency medical calls, open water surf rescue, fire prevention, and emergency hazardous materials response to the unincorporated areas of Bay County. Approximately 85 percent of the calls for service received are for medical emergencies. The division consists of mostly career firefighters with the assistance of volunteer firefighters. Our units respond from 14 stations throughout Bay County. Six advanced Life Support (ALS) engines are stationed in strategic areas to decrease the time before an ALS transport unit is on scene to a medical emergency. Those ALS units' primary response areas include Fountain, Sandhills, Southport, Bayou George, West Bay, West End, and Youngstown.

### WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

#### *Suppression and Transport Apparatus*

In FY2025, Bay County Fire Rescue units responded to nearly 34,000 calls for service. Approximately 15 percent of calls were fire related responses, while the remaining 85 percent were medical related responses.

In addition to emergency responses, Bay County units provide stand-by medical coverage for major events including Pepsi Gulf Coast Jam, Gulf Coast Triathlon, and Ironman Florida. We also assist with coverage for all of Bay District Schools junior varsity and varsity football games.

Our first responders enjoy community outreach and education. Along with medical coverage, our responders participate in show-and-tell events at local schools, daycares, and businesses.

#### *Surf Rescue*

Battalion Chief Dustin Marsden manages Bay County Fire Rescue's Surf Rescue Division. The division is comprised of 16 rescue swimmers certified by the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) as open water rescue swimmers.

The Surf Rescue Division is part of a total system that includes the coordinated efforts of surrounding agencies and jurisdictions including area fire departments, area law enforcement, and the United States Coast Guard.

The surf rescue "season" begins Mar. 1 and ends Oct. 31. Our rescue personnel begin training before the season starts to keep up their skills and physical agility. Not only do rescue swimmers perform primary rescues and water assists, they also provide education, assist with medical emergencies, and assist with finding lost persons on the beach. Between Mar. 1 and Oct. 1, rescue swimmers assisted in educating more than 49,000 visitors, completed 26 water rescues and 123 water assists. They also assisted with more than 240 medical calls and 40 lost person calls. Several Surf Rescue Specialists are also certified to the EMT, paramedic, and/or firefighter level.

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**Surf Rescue (Cont.)**

In addition to water rescues, some Surf Rescue specialists are also certified divers. With this added ability, they are capable of assisting with underwater cleanup beneath the M.B. Miller County Pier cleaning up fishing line, lures, and items that do not belong in the gulf. Their efforts not only protect Gulf marine life from becoming entangled, but also reflect their dedication to serving our community.

**Hazardous Materials Responses**

Capt. Brian Welborn manages the federally-funded HazMat Team. In FY2025, the HazMat Team responded to several complex incidents in the region, including an incident at the TA Truck Stop on Highway 71 in Jackson County, Florida and a chlorine leak in the City of Lynn Haven.

All county firefighters are required to complete 160 hours of HazMat technician training as well as refresher training quarterly to maintain their certifications.

Several Bay County Emergency Service firefighter-paramedics also maintain their Toxicology Paramedic certification. These paramedics are equipped to identify and intervene with victims of chemical exposures related to accidental or intentional releases. In addition to ensuring the public's safety, these toxicology paramedics will travel with the Regional Hazmat Team to assist in the protection and treatment of first responders in the event of a hazmat-related incident in our region.

**Fire Prevention Division**

The Fire Prevention Division is comprised of one lead fire inspector, three additional fire inspectors, and an administrative coordinator. The Fire Prevention Division is responsible for inspecting buildings to ensure they comply with fire safety codes, identifying potential fire hazards, testing fire protection equipment such as alarms and sprinklers, reviewing emergency evacuation plans, and educating building owners and occupants on fire safety practices to prevent fires.

The Fire and Life Safety Inspection Bureau is also responsible for inspection and certification for the county's short-term vacation rentals in accordance with the Bay County Board of County Commissioners Ordinance 23-18. Bay County has approximately 7,500 registered short-term vacation rentals.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

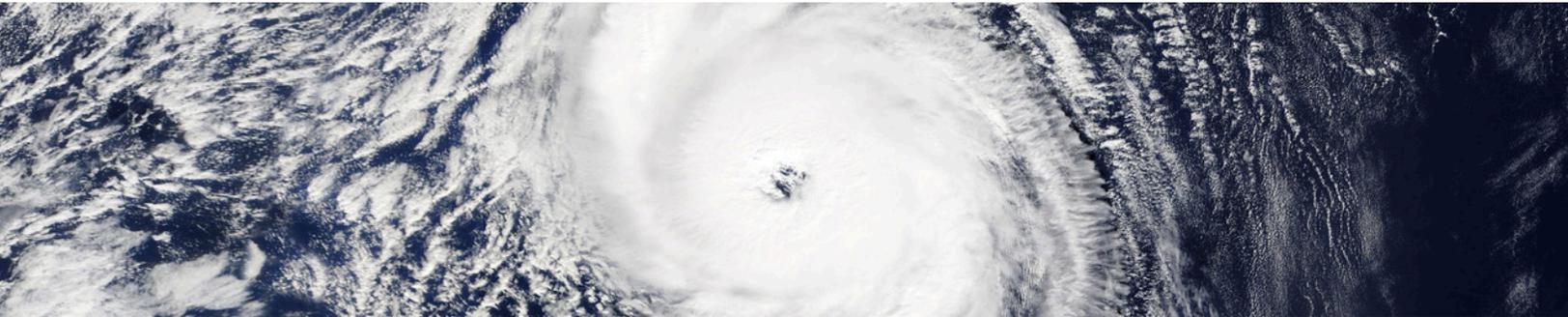
- > In August of 2025, Bay County Fire had ten employees graduate from the Paramedic Program at Gulf Coast State College. This program is a strenuous three-semester program that is offered annually. The program involves clinical rotations on the ambulance, in the operating room, emergency room, cardiac catheterization lab, labor and delivery unit, pediatrics unit, a respiratory rotation, and in the District 14 Medical Examiner's Office. Congratulations to Sydney Boyer, Cheyenne Cecchini, Kyle Gilmore, Spence Jordan, Jason Lodge, Leo Padua, James Sherrod, Kiersten Searcy, Connor Smith, Jordan Summers.
- > In November of 2024, Bay County Fire Rescue, in conjunction with Gulf Coast State College, hosted the first 15-week Florida Minimum Fire Standards Program. The program consisted of employees attending classroom lectures and drill field evolutions Monday through Friday, as their full-time job. At the end of the program, all students successfully passed their Florida Firefighter II State Certification. Congratulations to David Ammons, Carlos Blake, Jonathan Blas, Logan Gerber, Shannon Glynn, Caleb Hill, Lindsey Holmes, Derrick Kellar, Emiko Koyama-Allen, Joseph Layton, Gil Mandel, Cody Rowan, Mark Stangl, Ashley Trent, and Randall Wright.
- > Firefighter Paramedics Joshua Apking, Blaine Barfield, Christopher Burris, Drew Hilliard, Justin Hayes, Jalen Johnson, Spence Jordan, Paul Kotula, Carlos Mendiola, and James Sherrod were promoted to engineer. Firefighter EMT's Cheyenne Cecchini, Joshua Knowles, Eugene Kopacz, Brandon Luczaj, Nate Pennington, and Sean Salaty were also promoted to engineer.
- > Firefighter Paramedics Jesse Alday, Alan Ford, Shiquan Green, and James Lundeen were promoted to captain.
- > Capts. Nicolas Dickinson, Jake Keeney, Dustin Marsden, and Gina Salaty were promoted to battalion chief.
- > Capt. Isaac Smith and Firefighter Paramedic Shannon Glynn were transferred from field operations to accept positions in professional development as training captains. Capt. Amber Leach also transferred from field operations to accept a position in professional standards as the department's quality assurance/quality improvement officer.



## alertbay - emergency notification system

stay prepared in an  
**emergency.**

When disaster strikes, how will you and your family be notified? Protect yourself and your loved ones in Bay County by signing up for **AlertBay Emergency Notifications.**



### ALERTBAY: A MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Bay County uses AlertBay, a partnership with the State of Florida's Division of Emergency Management and the AlertFlorida mass notification system, to keep citizens and visitors informed. The system is extremely valuable in keeping residents, visitors, government staff, and emergency personnel safe and in-the-know with quick and reliable emergency notifications and public safety announcements about a range of events, such as severe weather, fires, floods, active shooters, or other emergencies. Messages are sent to residents on their preferred contact paths—cell phone, SMS text messaging, home phone, email, and more—to ensure real-time access to potentially lifesaving information. The program is funded largely by the state, saving Bay County taxpayers more than \$100,000 annually.

AlertBay was especially useful during Winter Storm Enzo, multiple severe weather events, and notifying the public of dangerous surf conditions.

AlertBay was also used extensively throughout the year to alert our citizens to severe weather dangers, boil water notices, and much more. In FY2025, AlertBay issued 14,351 notifications between the county, municipalities, Tax Collector's Office, and the school district. Users were also able to text keyword "PCBFlags" to 888-777 for daily updates about beach surf conditions.

To ensure notification when a specific location in Bay County is threatened by an event or severe weather, simply register an address and contact information into an AlertBay profile, available at [www.alertbay.org](http://www.alertbay.org). Users may set up a separate profile for each person in a household to ensure each person gets the message. Once a message is confirmed, the system will not make any further contact about the event.

With multiple ways to subscribe, the free Everbridge app is the recommended way to receive alerts from AlertBay, as it allows alerts from throughout the state of Florida.

AlertBay is a partnership between the Bay County Board of County Commissioners, the Bay County Sheriff's Office, local municipalities, and the school district, enabling each entity to send out emergency calls specific to their audiences.

Visitors to Bay County can subscribe to AlertBay by texting the keyword **ALERTBAY** to **888-777**, and opt in to receive important alerts during their stay.

**FIND US ON FACEBOOK**  
**@BAYCOUNTYFLEMERGENCYSERVICES**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ALERTBAY OR FOR HELP REGISTERING, CONTACT BAY COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES AT (850) 248-6040.



**WHO WE ARE**

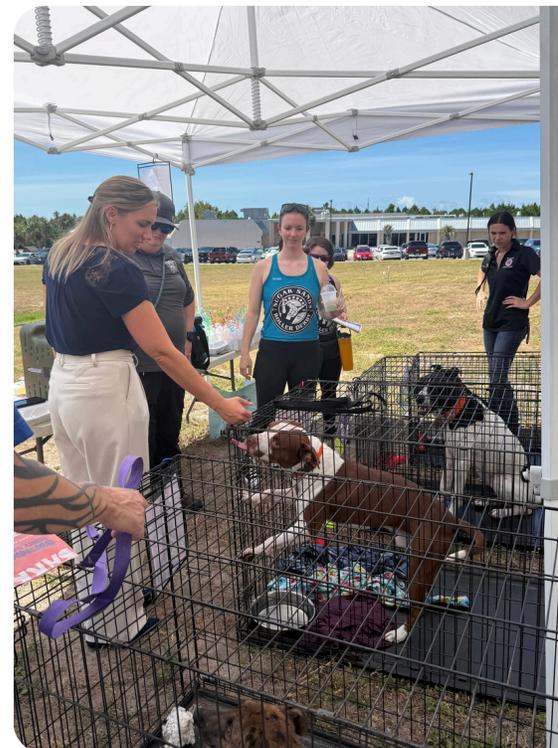
Bay County Animal Control is responsible for protecting the public's health and safety and enforcing Florida state statutes and Bay County ordinances related to animal issues and owners' responsibility for animals. Services are provided to all of the municipalities in Bay County, except the City of Lynn Haven, through interlocal agreements. Our goal is to protect the interests of animals, owners, and non-owners.

We are also responsible for the operations of Bay County's only open-admission animal shelter where all stray, unowned, and owned animals are accepted. We provide daily care for these animals while working to reunite them with their owners or find them a new home. Our shelter serves as the location for all Animal Control operations.

The Animal Control Division has 14 staff members trained to handle any of the tasks related to operations.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

- > Animal Control worked to develop new and meaningful ways to serve the public and build lasting partnerships across the community.
- > Animal Control proudly relaunched the Top Dog Program with the Northwest Florida Reception Center. Each 12-week training session provides shelter dogs with valuable obedience skills and socialization. By graduation, most of the participating dogs have received multiple adoption applications, making this one of the most successful and rewarding initiatives.
- > The team participated in several PetSmart adoption events and hosted shelter-based promotions, including the October "Fall in Love" campaign with reduced fees for all animals. We partnered with Tyndall Air Force Base for a successful event connecting shelter pets with service members and their families. The team also joined community outreach efforts, including the Deer Point Elementary field trip to the Government Center and Waller Elementary's Back-to-School event.
- > What began in 2016 as a small partnership with Pier Park PetSmart has become one of our greatest success stories, helping more than 1,966 animals find forever homes.
- > Despite a slight decrease in calls during 2025, Animal Control continued to respond to hundreds of calls monthly. By scheduling meeting with citizens and participating in ongoing professional training through the Florida Animal Control Association, staff strengthened community relations and improved service efficiency.
- > Animal Control continues working to bridge the gap between the community and the growing number of free-roaming cats. In partnership with Operation Spay Bay and other local groups, the department supports spay and neuter initiatives and engages residents in open discussions about cat overpopulation, reproduction, and nuisance concerns, helping reduce misunderstandings about Animal Control's role.
- > The shelter experienced a nearly 3-percent increase in animal intakes compared to the previous year. Despite the rise in admissions, adoptions saw an impressive 12.2 percent increase, resulting in roughly 110 more animals finding homes in 2025 than in 2024. Additionally, the euthanasia rate decreased by 9.7 percent overall reflecting the department's continued commitment to lifesaving efforts and positive outcomes for shelter animals.
- > Animal Control continues to grow with the changing needs of Bay County, welcoming community feedback and encouraging residents to visit the shelter to learn more about our services and shared commitment to animal welfare.



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# parks and recreation



## WHO WE ARE

Bay County Parks and Recreation is dedicated to enriching the lives of residents and visitors by providing exceptional recreational services, facilities, and experiences. With stewardship more than 1,000 acres of parks and natural spaces, the division maintains 30 athletic and recreational parks, 21 boat ramps, 12 small craft launches, 53 beach accesses, two community centers, the iconic M.B. Miller County Pier, Bay County Skate Park, and the Bay County Shooting Range. We listen to our community through active outreach and public input, we identify recreational needs and shape our planning and projects to meet them, ensuring our spaces remain welcoming, accessible, and vibrant.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

During FY2025, Bay County Parks and Recreation continued to strengthen its commitment to quality customer service through ongoing improvements in facility maintenance, upkeep, and preparation of high-quality athletic surfaces. Notable achievements included a \$600,000 matching boating improvement grant for the Highpoint Boat Ramp, the Parks Advisory Board's approval of the new Majette Park Master Plan, and increased use of partnerships to bring more recreational activities to Bay County.

### Projects

- > Under the Oaks Restrooms
- > ADA Beach Access 16

Special Events - More than 5,000 citizens attend free events with their families each year:

- > Easter Egg Hunt
- > Fall Festival
- > Christmas at H.G. Harder's Park
- > Movie Nights in the Park

Scheduled events increased from FY2024 to FY2025:

- > 2024 - 3,125 events
- > 2025 - 3,261 events

Staff performed approximately 23,000 hours of athletic field preparation and park maintenance activities, accounting for approximately 80 percent of maintenance staff work hours.

The M.B. Miller Pier welcomed approximately 210,000 visitors.



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## WHO WE ARE

Bay County Facilities Management provides maintenance and support to the buildings and departments under the purview of the Bay County Board of County Commissioners. Facilities maintains/manages 120 buildings/structures totaling two million square feet. Services provided by Facilities Management include large and small building improvements, routine and preventive building maintenance, custodial services, project management, and grounds maintenance.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

In 2025, Facilities Management executed and processed more than \$5.4 million in repair, maintenance, planned projects, and service contract management. The highlights accomplished over the past year include:

### Building Maintenance:

- > Responded to a total of 1,159 requests for maintenance including 196 high priority, 950 medium priority, and 13 low priority maintenance requests, and accomplished preventative maintenance on 1,497 pieces of HVAC equipment, 187 plumbing fixtures, 122 backflow preventers, and 20 generators.

### Building Improvements:

- > Government Center – various repairs and replacement of HVAC equipment to include replacing the outside air dampers, extended wall and constructed cabinet for the inclusion of large LED screen for use during public hearings
- > Bay County Library – replaced 22,500 square feet of carpet in Adult Services; replaced chilled water bypass valve, replaced mini-split HVAC in server room, completed LED lighting conversion project
- > Bay County Sheriff's Office – replaced standing seam metal roof, replaced Crime Lab roll-up door, upgraded HVAC controls to Tracer SC+, replaced drop ceiling in conference room, initiated restroom remodel
- > Bay County Sheriff's Office (Cedar Grove Sub Station) – completed painting of building interior
- > Bay County Courthouse – oversight and assistance provided to complete the remodel of the 1st and 2nd floors, installed electrical floor boxes in east courtroom on the 2nd floor, repaired roof top HVAC units, installed protective glass partition at 1st floor customer service desk, replaced 7.5 ton rooftop unit at sallyport
- > New Juvenile Justice Courthouse – completed construction project punch-list items including soundproofing holding cells and installation of Trusscore panels, installed radio control system for emergency responders
- > Bay County Jail – replaced bathroom fixtures in E-dorm, replaced gear box in the auger monster wastewater screen, replaced motors on sally port doors
- > Bay County Health Department – completed boiler repairs including the replacement of gas regulator, installed and seal coated fence at rear property line
- > Bay County Roads and Bridges (Fleet Maintenance) – initiated refurbishment of the exterior restroom building
- > Bay County Emergency Services (Star Avenue) – completed plumbing retrofit allowing the building to tie into City utility services, completed LED light conversion in truck bay
- > Bay County Water Plant (Operations Building) – replaced roll-up door with double doors
- > Bay County Landfill – replaced septic system and leach field
- > Bay County Traffic Engineering/Sign Shop – applied seal coating to metal roof
- > Gainer Bayou Pump Station – repaired foundation settlement, installed pop-up drainage emitters, caulk and seal block building
- > Bear Creek/Youngstown Fire Station – completed kitchen remodel to include upgrades to cabinets and commercial hood range
- > Radio Communication – replaced wall-pack HVAC units at the EOC
- > Bay County Tax Collector (Callaway Branch) – replaced wall-pack HVAC unit, installed upgraded electrical panel
- > Bay County Parks and Recreation – installed 40kw generator
- > Bay County Pier – completed parking lot lighting upgrades to turtle friendly LED lighting
- > Bay County Utility Services (Laboratory) – completed interior painting of offices, refurbished break area with new cabinetry, sink, countertops, and LVP flooring



### CONTACT US:

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### WHO WE ARE

The Solid Waste Division provides solid waste disposal, household hazardous material disposal, and recycling services for all of the citizens of Bay County. Waste disposal services provided are the operation of the Bay County Steelfield Road Landfill, available to both commercial and residential customers, and the residential-only drop-off facility located at 6510 Bayline Drive. The Division is also responsible for the long-term care and environmental monitoring of the closed landfill located at Majette Park.

### WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- > **The "Hill"** - The Steelfield Road Landfill has been actively accepting waste since the fall of 1987. As a result, the height of the landfill has continued to increase. From a starting elevation of around 47 feet above sea level, over the years it has increased in height and currently stands at about 220 feet in elevation. As Bay County continues to grow, so will this massive monument. It will continue to grow until it reaches 247 feet above sea level, possibly making it, at that time, the highest point in Bay County. Since 2010, the landfill has taken in nearly 3.2 million tons of waste.

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- > **Tonnages and Customer Usage** – During FY2025, 94,569 vehicles crossed the scales at our facilities. In total, the division processed and disposed of 290,114 tons of discarded material. Based upon a Monday through Saturday operational work week, this is an average of 795 tons per day.
- > **Waste Amnesty Days** – The Solid Waste Division hosts two waste amnesty events each year, allowing residents the opportunity to dispose of waste and debris from their properties at no charge. This provides Bay County residents with an economical way to clean up their residence and assist us in keeping potentially hazardous materials out of the waste stream. Bay County has hosted these events for more than 20 years. During FY2025, we had 2,410 customers cross the scales and took in 914 tons of waste. We also collected 2,524 waste tires and 4,470 gallons of paint.





**WHO WE ARE**

The seven Human Resources professionals in our department are committed to providing exemplary service to our employees and the external customers we serve. Our primary mission is to develop and administer value-added human resources policies, programs, and services that support the county's ability to provide opportunities to our employees. We are talent seekers, advocates, advisors, coaches, and more so we can recruit and retain outstanding employees and support management.

It is also incumbent upon us to stay abreast of current employment law and share that knowledge with our employees to ensure legal compliance and minimize losses to the county by helping to avoid litigation. We strive for engagement with our employees, assisting and guiding them throughout their employment on matters related to benefits, promotional opportunities, policy understanding, educational opportunities, retirement, and more.

Our focus is to foster a workplace that promotes mutual respect, personal and professional growth, fairness, and diversity. We concentrate our efforts every day to advance Bay County as a proven place to build a long and rewarding career.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

During this past year, we worked diligently with our departments to recruit top notch candidates to fill our vacancies in the competitive job market we are faced with. We:

- > Received and reviewed 3,193 applications, of which 2,480 met the minimum qualifications and were referred to the respective departments
- > On-boarded 140 new hires
- > Processed 70 promotions, 79 resignations, 19 retirements, eight probationary dismissals, five involuntary separations and 66 disciplinary actions
- > Processed 68 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) packets
- > Reviewed and processed 571 Employee Performance Evaluations with an above average score of 3.5 out of 5

**Major Projects**

Human Resources developed a policy for Alternate Work Schedules, which was presented to all departments eligible to participate. This initiative allows employees to tailor their weekly schedules to improve their work/life balance.

In February, we successfully launched Workday, our new HRIS software, following a thorough implementation process. This new system streamlines procedures for our employees and provides them with easier access to information.



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**human resources**

**Training and Development**

Through the continued support of the county manager who understands and supports the value of providing training initiatives to our employees, we continue to develop our training programs to give our employees the tools they will need to hone their skills and succeed in their careers.

During this past year we continued to conduct our Servant Leadership Program for our employees in management roles in order to practice this leadership philosophy throughout our organization. The goal of this program is to develop leaders whose main goal is to put the needs of their employees first by providing the means necessary to develop and succeed at their jobs.

We also continued our Leadership Development Academy comprised of 20 unique courses, including a Capstone Course that requires participants to present a project before attendees in order to be eligible to graduate. Employees voluntarily go through this program to enhance their leadership skills and will no doubt make our organization and the employees they serve stronger and more capable.

A total of 40 classes were offered in our New Employee Academy with 139 new hires in attendance. These classes provide education on important employment law topics, as well as workplace culture and relationships. This curriculum also includes process improvement training as an introduction to Six Sigma philosophies, ensuring employees are exposed to this topic from the beginning of their careers with Bay County. New employees must attend all required classes before they are eligible to move out of probationary status employment.

**Giving Back to the Community**

Bay County employees continued to meet the needs of our citizens by participating in three blood drives that we hosted in 2025. As one of the biggest donors for OneBlood, they depend on our employees to provide the life-saving blood donations for those in need in our local hospitals. Our employees donated 282 units of blood, which all stays here locally, potentially saving 846 lives.

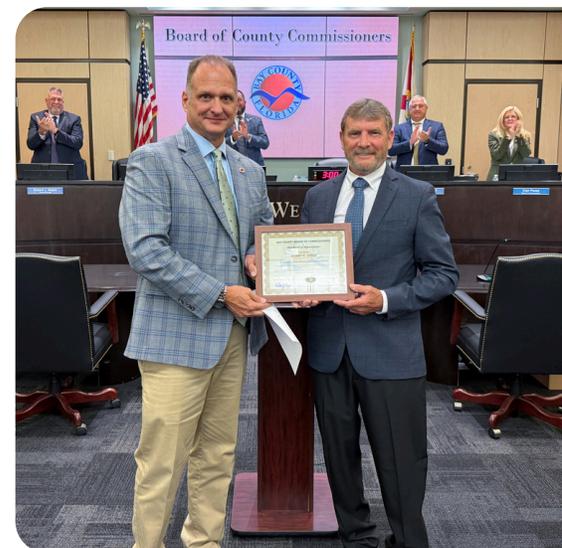
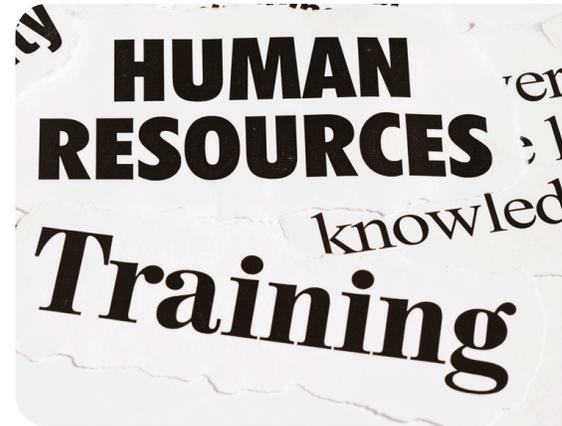
**Wellness Initiative**

The EVOLVE Wellness Initiative, led by Coach JT, remains one of Bay County BOCC's most impactful employee benefits. Since launching in 2018, the program has helped employees and their families improve their physical, mental, and emotional well-being, earning the title of "Best Weight Loss Program" in Bay County for eight consecutive years (2018–2025).

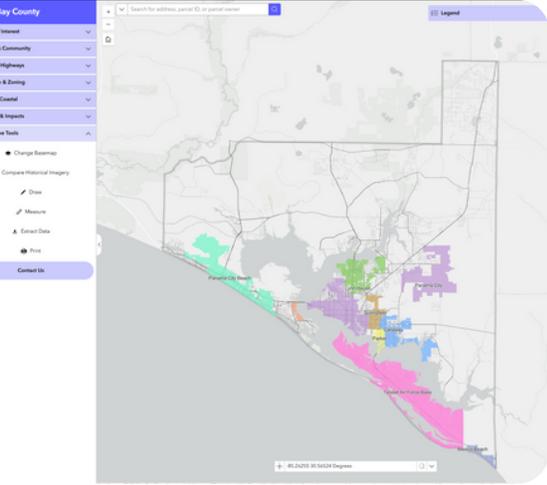
In 2025 alone, Coach JT conducted 181 site visits and held 1,310 free coaching appointments, supporting participants through individual sessions, group workshops, and a growing online platform. Results continue to be outstanding, with thousands of pounds lost, including several individuals losing over 100 pounds, as well as improved energy, sleep, mental health, and productivity.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

- > Ten employees were recognized for 15 years of service with Bay County
- > Nine employees were recognized for 20 years of service with Bay County
- > Four employees were recognized for 25 years of service with Bay County
- > Three employees were recognized for 30 years of service with Bay County
- > Three employees were recognized for 35 years of service with Bay County



# information technology / geographic information systems



## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

### WHO WE ARE

The Information Technology Division supports county operations by providing reliable and stable telecommunications and data management infrastructure and by maintaining all computers, video security systems, access control systems, mobile devices, and other electronic systems. IT assists with the technical aspects of our various websites and helps others with reports and technical matters. IT is also responsible for network connectivity, software deployment, database creation and management, email services, and overall information security.

### WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- > Supported county operations by providing a reliable and stable network with 99 percent uptime, making county services available to citizens without delays.
- > Averaged 84,000 unique website visitors monthly, totaling more than 1 million visitors during FY2025.
- > Received over 2 million emails during FY2025, with 20 percent intercepted by a security filter.
- > Awarded the Florida Digital Service Cybersecurity Grant to expand cybersecurity initiatives.
- > Developed and launched the enhanced MyBayCounty mobile app, working with the PIO office, which delivers up-to-the-minute emergency information, road closure information, Adopt-A-Animal, Problem reporting, and more to mobile devices.
- > Passed a third-party assessment/audit to validate backup procedures and infrastructure to assess National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) compliance.
- > Implemented and maintained building Access Control, keeping the county's buildings safe and secure.
- > Implemented and maintained patch management, keeping the county's data safe and secure.

## GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

### WHO WE ARE

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) provides mapping services and products to internal county departments, the public, and other agencies. The GIS Division functions as a service-focused central resource of geographic information. We provide customer assistance, mapping, spatial analysis, data integration, application development, and deployment of content-specific web-mapping solutions to provide access to geographic data. Our web maps are available 24 hours a day for users to access the information they need.

### WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- > Averaged 23,000 unique visitors to the BayView app each month, totaling more than 276,000 visitors during FY25.
- > Continued collaboration with Emergency Services to facilitate a significant GIS-centric upgrade to Next Generation 9-1-1.
- > Worked with Esri Professional Services to migrate Bay County's BayView interactive map to Esri's new Experience Builder Platform.
- > Continued training of the department and divisions using Cartegraph, the County's asset management software.
- > We managed and maintained an interactive story map with locations of Bay County Surtax projects.

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**WHO WE ARE**

The Capital Projects Division provides project oversight for the county's vertical capital projects to ensure feasible and cost-effective designs and construction. The capital projects team oversees each project during the planning, design, permitting, and construction phases, including coordination with other departments, architects, and engineering consultants until the completion of the project.

Capital Projects is dedicated to the construction and renovation of Bay County's vertical infrastructure; providing project management to ensure completion of projects on time, within budget and to the highest quality for its citizens.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

In FY2025, Capital Projects managed approximately \$7.5 million in vertical construction projects and design, including grant-funded projects, renovations, and construction of new buildings

**Projects include:**

- > Completed the design and construction bid of the Fountain Community Northern Resiliency and Fountain Fire Station.
- > Partnered with the Bay County Parks and Recreation division to construct new restrooms at Under the Oaks and Ira Hutchinson Parks. The Bay County Capital Project team was the general/owner contractor directly managed subcontractors.
- > Managed the construction of the Emergency Services Jail Safe Room at the Bay County Jail.
- > Managed the construction of the substance abuse unit at the Bay County Jail.
- > Value engineered and designed the new restroom layout for Lake Powell park.



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West lingers longer road  
08 Jul 2025, 10:24:50 AM



Bay County Engineering  
January 29, 2025 8:52 AM

### WHO WE ARE

The Engineering Division is staffed with professional engineers, a licensed professional surveyor, surveying parties, engineering technicians, FDOT-certified inspectors, and administrative staff dedicated to providing quality surveying, transportation and stormwater engineering, and construction management for the citizens of Bay County.

Engineering aims to provide the citizens of Bay County with quality, best-value engineering services in support of the construction, maintenance, and repair of Bay County's roads and stormwater management systems and capital improvement projects.

The Engineering Division is responsible for providing program management, design, permitting, inspection, and construction management services necessary to implement Public Works' transportation and stormwater programs. Additional responsibilities include improving the safety and efficiency of the county's transportation and stormwater systems; assisting Roads and Bridges in road maintenance; handling citizen inquiries; managing the Participating Paving Program (PPP); and managing the Adopt-a-Highway Program.

### Engineering's priorities include:

- > Assisting the Roads and Bridges Division and other county departments as needed.
- > Facilitating the Half-Cent Surtax Capital Improvement Program.
- > Completing design of projects generated by Roads and Bridges work requests.
- > Applying for and managing grants.

### WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

- > Continued implementation of the surtax projects.
- > Provided assistance to other departments in surveying, environmental and engineering services.

Engineering has been working on many grant opportunities such as dirt road paving, safety projects, capacity improvement projects, stormwater improvement projects, intersection improvements, east pass evaluation, and flooding home buyout.

### Engineering also completed or initiated the following Capital Improvement Plan projects:

- > FY2024 Local Dirt Road Stabilization
- > FY2024 Resurfacing Phase I and II
- > FY2025 Pavement Preservation
- > W. Linger Longer Road Stabilization
- > FY2025 Urban Local Dirt Road Stabilization
- > FY2025 Resurfacing Phase I and II
- > Redwood Avenue Drainage Improvements
- > Minge Branch Connector Roadway
- > Sherman Avenue Improvements
- > County Line Road Stabilization Project
- > Rollohome Road Stabilization Project
- > Kings Point Multiuse Path
- > Ivydell Road Stabilization
- > Owenwood Road Stabilization
- > East Hiland Park and Sherman Avenue Drainage Improvement Projects
- > Titus Road and C.R. 2321 Roundabout
- > Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Dirt Road Stabilization Project
- > East Pass Evaluation

### CONTACT US:

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# mosquito control

## WHO WE ARE

Bay County Mosquito Control Division's priority is the protection of public health by the suppression of pestiferous mosquitoes capable of potentially spreading viruses. We are staffed by professional technicians certified in public health pest control and licensed through the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). We provide specialized mosquito control services for the citizens of our county. Our main areas of operation are mosquito sample collection and identification, arbovirus surveillance and testing, larvaciding, adultciding, and source reduction. These operations cohesively work to service 25 districts in Bay County.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

Mosquito Control had a strong start to the spray season, as early weather patterns and rising temperatures set conditions for spring activity. Our teams carefully monitored and maintained a special focus on known low-lying areas that are prone to holding water. As always, with a unified effort, the teams worked to address common weaknesses identified in previous years across the county.

The adulticide team faced challenges with persistent rainy conditions throughout much of the summer. However, positive results were achieved by rotating products across districts to reduce the risk of pesticide resistance—a recurring concern in adult mosquito populations. These methods have proven effective in disrupting and reducing mosquito colonies that might otherwise develop chemical resistance.

For the larvicide team, granular products delivered long-lasting results in vast swampy areas where stagnant water accumulates. These remote sites remain difficult to access and present an ongoing challenge to treat and maintain. The goal is to target the earliest stages of the mosquito life cycle, preventing larvae from maturing into adults. Since introducing granular products, the larvicide team has seen significant improvements in treatment effectiveness over extended periods.

As the season progressed into late summer and fall, rainfall and humidity gradually eased, allowing drier conditions to emerge. This shift supports a smoother transition as the spray season winds down and cooler winter weather approaches.

The surveillance team conducted approximately 300 randomized, triple-panel tests, all of which returned negative for mosquito-borne diseases. Collectively, these efforts reflect a season of strong performance, delivering positive outcomes for county residents.

### Identification Operations

- > Deployed, set, and retrieved traps 2,240 times
- > Counted and identified 243,152 mosquitoes

### Larvaciding Operations

- > Answered 160 service requests
- > Inspected 8,231 mosquito breeding sites
- > Treated 3,135 sites
- > Stocked 25 pools with minnows
- > Manually back-pack sprayed 37 sites for a total coverage of 5.44 acres
- > Removed 1,368 abandoned waste tires
- > Performed 19 neighborhood sweeps
- > Treated 4,952 storm drains

### Adultciding Operations

- > Traveled 21,947.91 miles
- > Sprayed 1,120 times
- > Treated 798,105.85 acres

### CONTACT US:

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# roads and bridges



## WHO WE ARE

The Roads and Bridges Division is staffed by licensed construction operators and truck drivers, skilled craftsmen, maintenance workers, customer service representatives, resource accountants, and program managers. Our mission is to provide efficient and high-quality operations and maintenance of county roads, bridges, and stormwater facilities.

The Roads and Bridges Division is responsible for the maintenance and repair work necessary to sustain the county's transportation and stormwater infrastructure at an acceptable level of service. When possible, system improvements are made to enhance capacity, improve service, and protect the environment. Work is identified through route maintenance schedules, routine and special inspections, customer service work requests, state inspections, and regulatory requirements.

The division answers customer inquiries regarding the location and ownership of transportation rights-of-way and stormwater drainage easements, and it also responds to commissioner inquiries and assists other governmental agencies when possible. The division manages the Residential Driveway Permit Program, which regulates the connection of residential properties to county roadways. The program provides the direction required, providing for safe access connections to the county transportation network while maintaining roadside drainage systems.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

In FY2025, the Bay County Roads and Bridges Division staff conducted the following daily maintenance duties:

- > Received approximately 2,000 service requests.
- > Maintained approximately 560 miles of county-owned asphalt roadways.
- > Maintained approximately 170 miles of county-owned dirt roadways.
- > Inspected approximately 100 miles of stormwater pipe, while replacing approximately two miles of stormwater pipe and 165 inlet boxes.
- > Maintained or repaired the Public Works equipment fleet. In FY2025, Roads and Bridges service technicians completed over 1,154 repairs with a value of approximately \$543,121.

## CONTACT US:

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**WHO WE ARE**

The Traffic Engineering Division is staffed by experienced transportation professionals, including engineering, technical, and administrative personnel specializing in the planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and management of transportation technology systems. These include the countywide advanced traffic signal system, the regional Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), and the Traffic Management Center (TMC).

The Division designs, installs, and maintains all road signs and pavement markings on roadways within unincorporated Bay County, and maintains all traffic signals, school zones, and traffic control devices countywide, including those within municipalities. It also operates the regional ITS, which covers 196 traffic signals and numerous roadside devices managed through the TMC.

A key ITS component is the administration of 200+ miles of underground fiber optic cable — including design changes, utility locates (about 12,000 annually through Florida Sunshine 811), and emergency repairs. Other ITS assets include 152 traffic cameras, over 40 travel-time sensors, five dynamic message signs, portable message boards, and other roadside technologies.

The Division maintains more than 21,000 road signs and manages various state- and federally funded transportation grants.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

- > Oversaw two engineering capacity projects for Philip Griffiths Sr. Parkway and CR 2321.
- > Provided monthly updates to the county's Concurrency Management System to align with FDOT service levels.
- > Completed a \$2.5 million fiber hardening project to improve network connectivity and redundancy.
- > Expanded traffic management capabilities with new equipment and connections at five intersections.
- > Replaced 14 span-wire intersections with storm-rated mast arms.
- > Completed two emergency fiber repairs to restore countywide connectivity.
- > Replaced two light poles and repaired 34 light heads on the West Bay Bridge (SR 79).
- > Coordinated with FDOT on emergency mast arm replacement at Hutchison Blvd. and Alf Coleman Rd.
- > Partnered with FDOT on the SMART BAY project, training, inspections, and ongoing maintenance for Bay County's first connected vehicle corridor (40 intersections on US 98).
- > Adjusted signal timing to improve school traffic flow along US 231.
- > Inspected and accepted six traffic signal construction projects.
- > Maintained 196 signalized intersections with annual inspections, upgrades, and repairs.
- > Replaced three signal control cabinets and three pedestrian poles due to crashes.
- > Repaired 15 battery backup units and added six new ones.
- > Installed remote power monitors at 29 intersections to reduce maintenance downtime.
- > Added 21 new CCTV cameras to enhance traffic monitoring.
- > Installed three new Bluetooth travel-time monitoring devices, four solar-powered speed feedback signs in neighborhoods, two enhanced crosswalks with RRFBs on Thomas Drive, and installed two pilot beach warning light systems to modernize sea condition alerts.
- > Restriped roadways including CR 2321, CR 2302, Navy Blvd., Magnolia Beach Rd., CR 388, CR 2301, Blue Springs Rd., Berthe Ave., and Thomas Dr.
- > Maintained over 21,000 traffic control signs along 746 miles of county roads.
- > Replaced 1,262 and installed 191 new roadside signs through inspections and departmental requests.

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# infrastructure surtax

Bay County has completed the following projects with funding from the surtax:

**RESURFACING:**

- > North Lagoon Road with multi-use path, Silver Lake Road, Center Drive, Camelia Street, County Road 2302, High Point Road, Indian Bluff Road, East Avenue (State 77 to County 390), East Avenue (390 to Baldwin), County Road 2297, Laird Street, Allison Avenue, Harvard Boulevard, Bayou George Drive, Merritt Brown Road, Cherokee Heights Road, Edwards Road, County Road 388, Pine Log Road, Frankford Avenue, Wildwood Road, and Thomas Drive

**DIRT ROAD STABILIZATION AND DRAINAGE PROJECTS:**

- > Bertha Nelson Road
- > Wendy Road
- > Cowels Road Veal Road
- > Nehi Road
- > Silver Lake Road
- > S. Silver Lake Road

**INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS:**

- > County Road 389 and State Road 77
- > County Road 389 and U.S. 231
- > Moylan Road and Panama City Beach Parkway
- > County Road 389 and Dundee Lane

**BRIDGE REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT PROJECTS:**

- > Deer Point Dam repair/rehabilitation
- > East Avenue bridge replacement
- > County Road 2297

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION NOTICE OF VIOLATION PROJECTS:**

- > Webber Road
- > Sorrel's Drive Old
- > Allentown Road

**CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS:**

- > Loop Road Phase 2
- > Jenks Avenue widening - Baldwin to State Road 390
- > County Road 2321 to State Road 390 Connector Road

**ROADWAY SAFETY PROJECTS:**

- > Laird Street sidewalks
- > Frankford Avenue sidewalks
- > Magnolia Beach Road sidewalks, phases 1 and 2
- > Merritt Brown Road sidewalks
- > Front Beach Road sidewalks

**STORMWATER CAPACITY PROJECTS:**

- > Allison Avenue Regional Stormwater Facility
- > Laird Stormwater Basin Study



## ABOUT THE INFRASTRUCTURE SURTAX

Voters first approved the Bay County Half-Cent Infrastructure Surtax in 2016 by a margin of greater than 10 percent, with the funding aimed at improving area roadways and infrastructure. Collection of the sales tax began in early 2017. The county collects about \$18 million annually and works to leverage that funding for grants and partnerships that often significantly augment the county's annual surtax revenues each year. Voters again approved the sales tax in November 2024, this time by a margin of

The tax is for use exclusively in Bay County to repair local roads, reduce neighborhood flooding, and reduce traffic congestion. The sales tax generates roughly \$21 million annually split between the county and its cities by a formula based on population. Bay County's Revenue must be spent on needed roadway and infrastructure improvements, as mandated by the ballot language. As an added layer of protection to ensure that the money is spent wisely, a citizens' oversight committee was empaneled as part of the referendum and meets regularly to check the county's progress.

The increased revenues have allowed the county to address a more than \$57 million backlog in needed road resurfacing as well embark on other infrastructure improvements, including bridge replacements, intersection improvement projects, dirt road stabilization, capacity and stormwater improvements, roadway safety, and more.

The dollars raised by the sales tax must be spent inside Bay County on local projects. Tallahassee and Washington, D.C. have no say on how or where the money is spent; however, the availability of funding may make grant applications that require matching funds more competitive. Bay County has been able to leverage the tax to obtain more than \$42 million in grant funding.

The sales tax is levied on eligible goods with a value of up to the first \$5,000 of value – the tax is capped at \$25 per item.

For more information about the surtax, visit [www.bayhalfcent.com](http://www.bayhalfcent.com).

**CONTACT US:**

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## WHO WE ARE

The Purchasing Department is responsible for coordinating the county's central procurement system, promoting efficiency, economy, and fair and open competition in an effort to reduce the appearance and opportunity for favoritism or impropriety. We strive to inspire public confidence that purchase orders and contracts are awarded equitably and economically. It is essential for effective and ethical procurement that there is a consistent system of procedures which establish basic guidelines to regulate procurement activities, contract management, and the resulting distribution of funds.

The Purchasing Department is staffed with five full-time employees charged with abiding by, upholding, and adhering to the county's procurement code and manual to guard against the misuse or misinterpretation of those rules and regulations.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

### *In FY2025, the Purchasing Department:*

- > Provided management oversight of the county's purchasing card program with a purchase volume of more than \$2.9 million and realized an annual rebate of more than \$40,000.
- > Provided sales and support to county staff through ordering goods and services valued at more than \$155 million through 698 purchase orders.
- > Provided sales and support to county staff and vendors through 59 solicitations resulting in contracts valued at more than \$77 million.
- > Utilized online and on-site auction services to dispose of surplus and obsolete equipment in order to maximize the county's investment. Purchasing conducted six auctions resulting in a return of more than \$77,000.
- > Represented Bay County at the Central Gulf Coast Chapter of the NIGP Reverse Trade Show, meeting with more than 100 new vendors interested in providing goods and services to Bay County.
- > Held annual vendor open house at the Government Center providing training to multiple local business on how to do business with Bay County.



### **CONTACT US:**

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**WHO WE ARE**

In July 2012, the federal RESTORE Act (Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act) established a trust fund from administrative and civil penalties related to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Five “pots” of funds were set up in the federal trust fund.

A portion of funds from Pot 1 and Pot 3 are reserved for Bay County. Settlement payments will be made into the trust fund over a number of years and will gradually be available to the county. The county’s share of Pot 1 will be approximately \$42 million over 15 years. Pot 3 will provide about \$11 million. The county will also pursue matching funds. The money can be used to restore and protect the natural resources and economy of the Gulf Coast region.

The Bay County Board of County Commissioners decides which eligible projects to fund. Based on recommendations from a citizens advisory committee, the board selected projects for the first funds available from Pot 1, the Direct Component, and for all funds which will be available from Pot 3, the Spill Impact Component. A grant application must be submitted to the U.S. Department of the Treasury for each Pot 1 project and to the Gulf RESTORE Council for each Pot 3 project.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

- > The North Bay Wastewater Reuse grant will be used for pumps and infrastructure to provide reuse water to the new Southport Sports Complex, the Bay County Emergency Operations Center and the Gulf Coast Community College North Campus. The project is currently in the final design stage.
- > East Pass Project’s Feasibility study and preliminary engineering is complete. The project is currently in the permitting stage.
- > The Bay County Artificial Reef website - Bay County Artificial Reefs – Bay County – University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences – UF/IFAS (ufl.edu) went live early spring of 2024. Materials deployment contractor completed installation of eight artificial reefs. Installation of the remaining two artificial reefs is in progress. The reefs are located about six nautical miles southwest of St. Andrew Bay Pass.
- > The East Bay Living Shoreline and Seagrass Project is in the planning and preliminary design phase. Project location was moved from East Bay and to the southern side of Tyndall Air Force Base in the St. Andrew Sound due to the East Bay project location being unsuitable for seagrass enhancement activities.
- > With funding provided by the Nature Conservancy and Bay County RESTORE Act funds, the St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program (SASJBEP), hosted by FSU Panama City, has developed a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. They can be found at CCMP | St. Andrews and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program (sasjbep.org). Additional information on SASJBEP’s program and available resource can be found at St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program (SASJBEP.ORG)
- > The St. Andrew Bay Watch group continues water quality testing program in the St. Andrew Bay.
- > The project includes construction of a sewer collection system for residents in the Deer Point Protection Zone and removal of failing septic tanks within this zone. The county has received a Gulf Consortium (Pot 3 funding) grant and initiated construction of Phase I A project.
- > The grant application for construction of East Highland Park Stormwater Treatment Facility has been approved and funded with Pot 3 money. The project is currently in the permitting phase.
- > The grant application for paving dirt roads has been approved by the Gulf Restore Council (Pot 3) and funded. The project is currently in the design phase.

*Additional information on RESTORE is available at [baycountyfl.gov](http://baycountyfl.gov).*

**CONTACT US:**

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[www.baycountyfl.gov](http://www.baycountyfl.gov)



**WHO WE ARE**

The mission of Risk Management is to ensure the safety and well-being of all Bay County employees, its properties, and the citizens of Bay County. Our responsibility is to produce and implement safety programs that provide a safe work environment, provide essential training for employees, and maintain safe facilities for citizens to enjoy.

Risk Management also works to administer the Americans with Disabilities Act Program for the county. Under this same umbrella, the department oversees a very successful and long-standing Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Program with three of the five constitutional offices participating. The County Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Program includes a Drug Free Workplace Program and an active Safety Program. Additionally, Risk Management is responsible for the management of the county's insurance programs, hazardous chemical state reporting, incident/accident reporting, and claims processing. We are dedicated to providing the best products, safest environment, and most diligent service to employees and the citizens of Bay County.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

- > Risk Management recovered \$47,213.96 in third-party claims for damages to county property. These recoveries came directly from other parties' insurance carriers.
- > The team logged and investigated more than 249 reported incidents across the county during FY2025, ensuring each case was thoroughly reviewed and addressed.
- > Risk Management successfully placed 100 percent of employees with Workers' Compensation restrictions into light-duty assignments. This proactive approach is a key factor in helping reduce the workers' compensation premiums and is further reflected in the latest experience modification of 0.60 (best in more than 15 years).
- > The Safety Training Program continued to expand with courses designed to protect both county employees and the public. Offerings included bucket truck operations, temporary traffic control, and CPR/First Aid training.
- > Risk Management met the state-regulated Tier II reporting deadline for the 15th consecutive year, demonstrating continued regulatory compliance and operational consistency.
- > The CDL Program supported nine county employees in obtaining their commercial driver's licenses, helping to strengthen workforce capacity across multiple divisions.

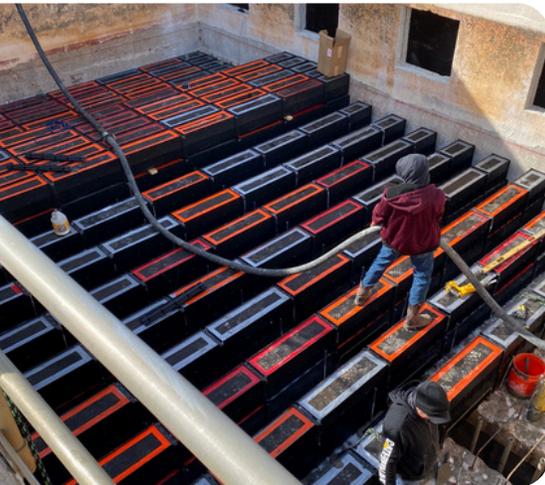


**CONTACT US:**

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[www.baycountyfl.gov](http://www.baycountyfl.gov)

## UTILITY SERVICES

# water and wastewater



## WHO WE ARE

For more than 60 years, Bay County Utility Services (BCUS) has provided Bay County with reliable, economical, and high-quality water and wastewater services. We employ highly trained people and use state-of-the-art equipment while continuing to set industry standards as they relate to procedures, methods, and customer service. Bay County Utility Services is committed to customer satisfaction and is always looking for ways to streamline processes to reduce redundancy and expense. Our customers receive the most cost-effective service to reduce water losses while conserving one of the world's most precious resources.

The Utility Services Department employs more than 100 people who make up the Water, Wastewater, and Utility Permitting divisions, along with laboratory and administrative staff dedicated to providing quality water and wastewater services. The Water Division treats and distributes drinking water to the local municipalities, Tyndall Air Force Base, and the county's retail customers in the unincorporated area. The Water Division also provides untreated raw water for local industry use in their cooling processes. Utility Services owns and operates one water treatment plant which is permitted to treat 60 million gallons of water per day, two raw water pumping stations, seven water booster stations, with approximately 400 miles of retail and wholesale infrastructure.

The Wastewater Division provides wastewater treatment services to unincorporated Bay County and the cities of Callaway, Parker, Springfield, Mexico Beach, and Tyndall Air Force Base. Utility Services operates two wastewater treatment plants strategically located throughout the county to provide sewer services to residents. The Wastewater Division also manages the Bay County Environmental Laboratory, which provides short hold-time analysis for the department.

The Permitting Division facilitates the review and processing of plans and permits for the Utility Services Department, which includes water and wastewater construction contract assistance and bid preparation. The Permitting Division performs construction site inspections and project management and performs water and wastewater utility locates for public and private development and construction.

## CONTACT US:

(850) 248-5010 | [utilityservices@baycountyfl.gov](mailto:utilityservices@baycountyfl.gov)  
[www.baycountyfl.gov](http://www.baycountyfl.gov)

# water and wastewater

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

Bay County Utility Services has consistently provided high quality service to our citizens. Our talented team of employees were able to accomplish the following:

- > **Deer Point Raw Water Line Utility Mitigation** - This project will improve the potable water infrastructure of the County by replacing the existing raw water aerial pipe crossing affixed to the Deer Point Dam over Deer Point Reservoir, with a 36 inch, 2000 length feet (LF), Fusible Polyvinyl Chloride (FPVC) High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) subaqueous pipeline. The existing aerial pipe shall be left in place for use as an emergency bypass. \$4,512,000
- > **Potable Water Distribution System Hardening** - This project included construction in two areas. Zone A is along Highway 77 in Southport and includes the construction of a 10-inch PVC water main in steel casing directionally bored under the roadway at two locations. Zone B includes the construction of 18-inch potable water main piping for system looping and isolation gate valves along Transmitter Road, starting at Bob Little Road and traveling along Beaver Street, Sims Avenue, and Harvey Street to Seneca Avenue. \$2,469,000
- > **Williams Bayou Pump Station (WBPS) Generator and Utility Mitigation** - This project involved installing an additional generator and seven (7) new Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs) housed in a prefabricated E-House type enclosure. The project will allow the county to maintain the WBPS operations during future power outages. \$4,900,000  
Locate technicians performed 18,786 water and wastewater locates.
- > **Annual drawdown of Deer Point Reservoir** - Every year the county draws down Deer Point Reservoir from November through February at the request of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The annual drawdown decreases nuisance aquatic vegetation, consolidates and releases nutrients from the exposed shoreline sediments, improves fishing and boating access, and enhances fish spawning habitat.
- > **Military Point Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility (MPAWTF) Clarifier Restoration** - restore and rebuild the clarifier mechanisms. The scope included replacement of clarifier arms, drive components, and control systems to return the unit to full operational capacity and extend its service life. \$797,000
- > **MPAWTF BC29 Force Main and Lift Station Mitigation** - Enhances the resiliency of the County's wastewater distribution system by replacing and upgrading critical infrastructure serving the Military Point Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility. Work includes replacing approximately 3,800 linear feet of 6-inch force main with 8-inch PVC, installation of three air release valves, and new submersible pumps at Lift Station BC-29 rated for 600 gallons per minute (GPM). A permanently mounted diesel backup pump, capable of 3,660 GPM, was installed on an elevated concrete pad at AWT-5 above the 500-year flood elevation. These improvements will increase reliability during storm events and ensure continued service during power outages. \$1,411,764



### 2025 DRINKING WATER CONSUMPTION Million Gallons

	FY2024	FY2025
PANAMA CITY	2,381	2,575
PANAMA CITY BEACH	4,800	5,178
SPRINGFIELD	293	265
PARKER	130	138
CALLAWAY	552	649
LYNN HAVEN	238	239
MEXICO BEACH	166	173
TAFB	359	418
BAY COUNTY	1,011	981
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,930</b>	<b>10,616</b>

# economic development alliance



## WHO WE ARE

The Economic Development Alliance of Bay County (Bay EDA) is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to stimulating economic growth and improving the quality of life for the citizens of Bay County. Bay EDA operates as a 501(c)(6), public/ private partnership funded by Bay County, our cities, private businesses and community partners who share our mission and are committed and invested in growing and diversifying our local economy. Using an experienced and professional team of economic developers, Bay EDA presents the positive points of Bay County to businesses, industry, and professional leaders nationally and internationally who bring jobs to the community.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

FY2025 has been an exceptional year for the Bay Economic Development Alliance (Bay EDA). Our team worked diligently on numerous projects, culminating in the successful recruitment of four new companies to Bay County.

**Project Spinner – IAG Aero Group**  
500 jobs | \$107 million capital investment

**Project Amadeus – Oxford Technologies**  
40 jobs | \$7.5 million capital investment

**Project Clear – Global Impact Products**  
150 jobs | \$14.5 million capital investment

**Project Rainforest – Amazon Last Mile Distribution Center**  
60 jobs | \$9 million capital investment

Together, these announcements represent 750 new direct jobs and \$138 million in capital investment. The broader economic impact is even more impressive: 2,048 direct and indirect jobs, \$120 million in annual wages, and \$233 million in combined value added for Bay County.

To support these transformative projects, Bay EDA secured \$28.75 million in Triumph Gulf Coast grant funding, providing critical infrastructure and workforce resources to ensure successful implementation.

At the same time, Bay EDA continued to support previously recruited industries such as Suzuki Marine, FedEx Ground, Central Moloney Inc., Southern Sky Aviation, and Premier Aviation, helping them expand and thrive in Bay County’s growing business ecosystem.

## Recruitment, Marketing, and Outreach

Throughout FY2025, Bay EDA maintained its role as the “tip of the spear” for companies considering expansion or relocation. Our team provided data, resources, and introductions to key community partners to ensure every prospect exploring Bay County had the tools needed to succeed.

We successfully executed 13 targeted recruitment and marketing missions across the United States and abroad, representing Bay County in Paris, France; Barcelona, Spain; Ottawa, Canada; Pontiac, Michigan; Chicago; Atlanta; Miami; and other strategic markets. During these missions, we engaged directly with company executives, site selectors, and industry colleagues to cultivate relationships, generate leads, and highlight Bay County’s competitive advantages on a global stage.

Bay EDA also:

- > Responded to 27 Requests for Information (RFIs) from companies and consultants
- > Developed 85+ customized proposal packages for targeted projects
- > Hosted 26 company and site consultant visits to Bay County
- > Provided support to previously recruited companies and companies looking to expand

These efforts strengthened Bay County’s reputation as a business-friendly, globally connected, and opportunity-rich location for advanced manufacturing, aviation, and logistics operations.

## CONTACT US:

(850) 215-9965 | 5230 West Highway 98, Panama City, Florida 32401  
www.bayeda.com

# mexico beach community development council

## WHO WE ARE

The Mexico Beach Community Development Council (MBCDC) is dedicated to promoting the Mexico Beach area, highlighting its accommodations and attractions to inspire visitors to enjoy a memorable beach vacation here. Funded by a 5-percent tourist development tax on short-term accommodations in Mexico Beach, the organization not only leads marketing efforts but also supports beach nourishment, festivals and events, and community stewardship.

Though Mexico Beach is Bay County's smallest city, spanning less than five miles, it offers a rich variety of activities through its unique tourism offerings. As a distinctive beach destination, Mexico Beach provides visitors with year-round adventures that embrace a relaxed, easy-going vibe.

For more information on Mexico Beach tourism, visit [www.MexicoBeach.com](http://www.MexicoBeach.com).

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

The MBCDC celebrated a successful year with businesses thriving thanks to new and returning tourists. Visitor impact reached record-breaking levels, with lodging revenues surpassing 2024. Mexico Beach continues to be a relaxing, inviting destination for those seeking a break from the hustle and bustle, offering beautiful beaches and a serene atmosphere.

Marketing efforts played a vital role in 2025's success. Fresh creative assets and captivating imagery were gathered and shared with both past and potential visitors, encouraging them to explore Mexico Beach. Collaborations with partners expanded marketing reach through additional publications and engaging video storytelling. With a continued focus on brand recognition and showcasing the essence of "The Unforgettable Coast" continues to welcome both new and returning visitors to its shores

### Events, Tournaments, and More

The year began with the Welcome Center hosting Donuts and Coffee for our winter residents. Visitors were treated to complimentary coffee and donuts while getting to know others in the destination for the winter as well as upcoming events and activities. The annual Gumbo Cook-Off served spicy goodness in February with live music, free beads, and plenty of gumbo to go around. Hosted by the Special Events for Mexico Beach, Inc., this popular event continues to be the largest fundraiser for the July 4th fireworks show. In May, the Welcome Center hosted the annual "Punch on the Porch" event, celebrating hospitality and tourism appreciation month. Spring brought back both the GollyWhopper Classic and the Mexico Beach Artificial Reef Association's Kingfish Tournament each having an overwhelming participation and success. The annual "Best Blast on the Beach" fireworks show and the 5K Fun Run drew large crowds for the Independence Day celebration. September saw the return of the beloved "Music in the Park" concert series, attracting large audiences to every show. November delivered cooler weather and the annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot, with participants enthusiastically running, walking, and waddling across the finish line. Rounding out the year of festivities, the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony delighted the community with a festive golfcart parade and a memorable visit from Santa himself. Discover Mexico Beach, FL proudly continues to support events through volunteer efforts as well as in-kind and paid marketing contributions.

### Beach Restoration

The MBCDC completed its first full-scale beach restoration project. The \$27 million, fully-funded grant project was designed to distribute sand along the entire coastline in Mexico Beach. The project was vital to provide storm protection and to protecting Mexico Beach's shoreline. The MBCDC began working on this project prior to the devastation caused by Hurricane Michael. Commencement began on February 5th and concluded on April 15, 2025. The project consists of both a dry sandy beach berm and dune construction. Bay County Board of Commissioner awarded Weeks Marine the project.

The project delivered 1,031,071 cubic yards of sand placed along the more than three miles of shoreline and 618,000 types of beach vegetation were planted along the dune lines for berm strength. There was more than 10,000 cubic yards of shell collected that was used for city infrastructure improvements and more than 7,000 feet of post and rope was installed along the public beach access locations. These additional measures provide extra protection for the dunes and beach vegetation.

The MBCDC continues to partner in the "Stay it Forward" campaign, created by Visit Panama City Beach. Collectively, visitors, students and residents have planted more than 10,000 sea oats and other beach vegetation along the dunes in Mexico Beach.

## CONTACT US:

(850) 648-8196 | 102 Canal Parkway, Mexico Beach, FL 32456

[www.mexicobeach.com](http://www.mexicobeach.com)



# panama city community development council



## WHO WE ARE

Located along the serene St. Andrews Bay in Northwest Florida, Panama City brings together a unique mix of culinary, outdoor, and cultural experiences, all within a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere. This combination continues to attract a wide range of visitors, including individuals, couples, and families. As Bay County's largest city and the county seat, Panama City encompasses multiple historic districts and vibrant neighborhoods, including its renowned oyster trail. Since its establishment as a tourist development taxing district in 2014, Destination Panama City (officially Panama City Community Development Council, Inc.) has led the charge in promoting the area's tourism. The 5-percent tourist development tax, collected from short-term accommodations, supports Destination Panama City's initiatives to showcase the city's distinct charm and broaden its appeal. In recent years, the city's resilience and diverse appeal, spanning ecotourism, history, culinary delights, and cultural enrichment, have empowered Panama City's tourism industry to overcome challenges and flourish.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

In 2025, Destination Panama City (Panama City Community Development Council, Inc.) celebrated a major milestone, its 10-year anniversary as the official marketing organization for the Panama City Tourist Development Taxing District. Over the past decade, Destination Panama City has continuously demonstrated its commitment to strategic marketing, responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, and elevating Panama City as a vibrant bayside destination. This year's accomplishments continued that legacy.

### St. Andrews School – Drews Hall Restoration Progress

In 2025, significant progress was made in the restoration of the historic St. Andrews School. A new roof was completed, ensuring the long-term preservation of this National Historic Registry landmark. Destination Panama City looks forward to collaboratively working with Bay County in planning for subsequent phases of the renovation, working closely with community partners and preservation experts to transform the facility into a cultural arts and community venue.

### LovePC Living Shoreline Project

Destination Panama City continued work toward the implementation of the LovePC Living Shoreline, advancing environmental permitting and design in partnership with the University of Florida. Once complete, the project will install reef structures along the western seawall of the downtown marina to support seagrass recovery and enhance habitat health, part of Destination Panama City's commitment to long-term environmental sustainability and responsible waterfront stewardship.

### Destination Panama City Visitor's Center and New Visitors Guide

Open six days a week, the bayfront Visitor's Center continued to serve as a welcoming hub for travelers seeking recommendations, information, and local insight. In 2025, Destination Panama City also launched a new Visitors Guide, showcasing the city's culinary attractions, creative culture, historic districts, and outdoor experiences. This publication reinforces Panama City's position as a dynamic and evolving destination for visitors nationwide.

### Historic Trails – Otocast Expansion

Building on the successful launch of the Glenwood Historical Marker Trail (17 markers), Destination Panama City expanded its storytelling reach in 2025 by developing additional Otocast audio trails for the Downtown Panama City and Historic St. Andrews neighborhoods. These interactive, self-guided tours connect residents and visitors to the community's deep cultural roots and diverse historic assets.

### Public Relations and Media Exposure

Destination Panama City's public relations strategy delivered exceptional results in 2025. National and regional media coverage included successful placements in Southern Living, StyleBlueprint, and other publications. These articles showcased Panama City's coastal experiences, artistic culture, food scene, and historic charm. All 2025 press coverage can be found at [www.DestinationPanamaCity.com/in-the-news](http://www.DestinationPanamaCity.com/in-the-news)

### Events

Destination Panama City supported more than 33 events across sports, culture, history, arts, and eco-tourism, continuing to drive year-round visitation and economic impact.



## CONTACT US:

(850) 215-1700 | 101 W. Beach Drive, Panama City, Florida 32401  
[www.destinationpanamacity.com](http://www.destinationpanamacity.com)

# panama city beach tourist development council

## WHO WE ARE

The Bay County Tourist Development Council (TDC) and Panama City Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) are responsible for marketing Panama City Beach as a year-round tourist destination, funded through a 5-percent tourist development tax applied to short-term, overnight accommodation rentals in Panama City Beach, which equates to about 20 million visitor days/nights each year. The tax also pays for beach renourishment, cleaning, and maintenance efforts.

The TDC owns and operates the 12-field Publix Sports Park and is working to develop an Indoor Events Center to further expand and support the sports tourism market and serve as an asset to aid in the county's response and recovery efforts following an emergency event. By 2026, three grass fields (10-12) will be converted to multi-purpose turf.

The TDC funds the lifeguard programs for Bay County and the City of Panama City Beach, equipment for first responders, and overtime during times of peak visitation for the Sheriff's Office and Beach Police.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

In 2025, Visit Panama City Beach adopted a strategic plan as a framework to articulate its priorities, focus its efforts, and guide its decision-making. The plan is organized around four strategic pillars of destination stewardship: Economic Vitality, Environmental Sustainability and Resiliency, Community Vibrance, and Industry Leadership.

Marketing Panama City Beach, Florida, as a visitor destination is the primary activity of the TDC, accounting for 40-percent of the entire budget. The annual plan was executed with a creative approach focusing on and expanding new and fresh executions of MAKE IT YOUR REAL. FUN. BEACH. Media and creative strategies supported all Visit Panama City Beach departments.

In addition to the marketing and media plan, Visit Panama City Beach launched:

- > A new microsite to promote accessible travel
- > Double Red Flags and Beach Safety Campaigns utilizing Carvertise to deliver over 2.5 million impressions
- > A new campaign supporting the New York direct flight titled "Get to the Real Fun Beach Real Fast!"
- > Color Your Summer Snapper Red campaign to support Snapper Season
- > Marketing plans and creative for Visit PCB's special events as well as holiday pulse campaigns

### Sales

The Sales department traveled across the nation, attending 20 tradeshows covering a variety of markets. The CVB, through direct and/or assisted means, generated more than 38,000 group room nights across the destination, totaling \$264 million in economic impact.

### Sports

PCB venues hosted 103 events, featuring 4,204 teams, with an economic impact of \$154.9 million. Publix Sports Park hosted 62 tournaments, bringing in 107,484 visitors. PCB Sports grew in economic impact by one-percent in FY2025.

### Special Events

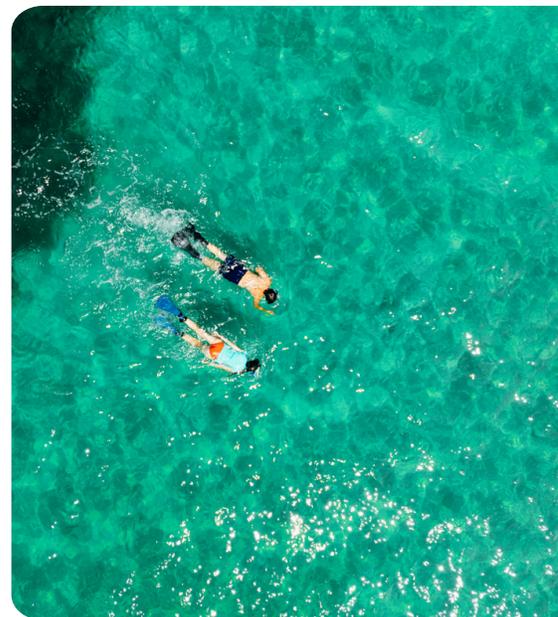
In 2025, the Special Events Department produced five signature events for Panama City Beach. They include the Mardi Gras and Music Festival, Pirates of the High Seas and Renaissance Fest, UNwined Presented by Publix, Beach Home for the Holidays, Visit PCB New Year's Eve Beach Ball Drop

### Shop the Shore

A fun experience designed to bring more visitors into Panama City Beach's boutiques and specialty shops. The goal is to showcase the unique businesses that set our destination apart, encourage guests to explore beyond the beach, and create memorable shopping moments along the way.

### Artificial Reef Program

The CVB recently took the helm of the Artificial Reef Program, employing a coordinator tasked with developing the program to permit and deploy reef material that will benefit area diving and fishing communities.



## CONTACT US:

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[www.visitpanamacitybeach.com](http://www.visitpanamacitybeach.com)



**WHO WE ARE**

Rebuild Bay is Bay County's Long Term Recovery Organization/Group (LTRO/G) providing critical resources for the Bay County community. We were established to assist residents in their recovery following Hurricane Michael. With the subsequent disasters, including COVID, Hurricane Sally and torrential rains, and the wrap-around services required to assist residents, we have expanded our operations towards a community resilience focus. We seek to provide access to critical resources, education and advocacy to build resilient communities able to withstand disasters of any kind.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?**

Rebuild Bay hosted multiple volunteer groups, including teams from Maryville Christian School (TN), Valparaiso University (Sigma Phi Epsilon), Sixth Avenue Baptist Church (AL), San Jacinto Christian Academy (TX), Alabama Disciples of Christ Church, and Central Lutheran Church (MN).

**Disaster Recovery**

- > **Lead Warming Center efforts in January** - Bay County experienced two non-consecutive weeks of extreme cold temperatures. In response, we opened the center at the A.D. Harris Learning Village. The first week, through 16-hour daily operations, we served 100 overnight guests for six nights and logged more than 600 volunteer hours. The second week, as Bay County experienced its first snow in 35 years, through 24-hr operations, we served 131 overnight guests and logged nearly 650 volunteer hours.
- > **Beat the Heat** - Rebuild Bay responded to the extreme hot temperatures with a cooling center at the A.D. Harris Learning Village. Volunteers served nearly 15 individuals daily for seven days. The county's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) assisted with manning the center!

**Community Resilience**

- > **Food Distributions** - We partnered with House of Hope Outreach Ministry on 12 food distributions, including a Thanksgiving Meal Box Distribution that served more than 1,000 households, addressing food insecurity for residents of Bay County and beyond. We continued support to Community Partnership School at Parker Elementary, providing monthly meal items for ten households. Kicked off Farm to Town effort bringing fresh meats and produce to Bay County, supporting communities in food deserts.
- > **Temporary Housing Program** - We partnered with Bay Habitat for Humanity to purchase houses to support families and individuals needing short-term housing while securing permanent homes or completing disaster repairs. This program provides a safe, stable space to help residents recover and rebuild their lives.
- > **Keeping it Cool Program** - Rebuild Bay continued its partnership with Family of God Men's Ministry to install 40 window air conditioning units for residents at risk of heat exhaustion.
- > **Community Resilience Innovations Grant Program** - We partnered with United Way of Northwest Florida, supported youth resilience projects, began the work to establish a Northwest Florida Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD), distributed more than 500 disaster preparedness kits, and hosted ten community resilience workshops to build a stronger, more connected region.
- > **Community Resilience Center (CRC)** - We continued efforts to establish Bay County's first CRC at the A.D. Harris Learning Village, partnering with multiple organizations and businesses to enhance facility and provide services and programming to benefit the community.

**Awards**

- > We are proud to celebrate Executive Director Donna Pilson, who was honored at the Florida Housing Coalition's 2025 Annual Statewide Affordable Housing Conference for her outstanding leadership in housing recovery and stability. Since Hurricane Michael, Donna has guided Rebuild Bay in becoming a central force for coordinated recovery, uniting community partners to meet long-term housing needs. Her leadership recently led to the opening of our first temporary housing facility, offering transitional shelter for families rebuilding their lives. This recognition highlights her dedication to restoring hope and resilience across Bay County and beyond.

**CONTACT US:**

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[www.rebuildbaycounty.org](http://www.rebuildbaycounty.org)  
[Facebook.com/RebuildBayCountyInc](https://Facebook.com/RebuildBayCountyInc)  
**Text-2-Donate** : REBUILDBAY (to 41444)

**BAY COUNTY COMMISSION**

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
ADMINISTRATION	(850) 248-8140
ADDRESSING	(850) 248-8374
ANIMAL CONTROL	(850) 767-3333
BUDGET OFFICE	(850) 248-8240
BUILDING SAFETY	(850) 248-8350
CODE ENFORCEMENT	(850) 248-8290
COMMUNICATIONS	(850) 248-8170
CO-OP EXTENSION	(850) 784-6105
COUNTY ATTORNEY	(850) 248-8175
EMERGENCY SERVICES	(850) 248-6040
EMS	(850) 248-6070
ENGINEERING	(850) 248-8301
FACILITIES	(850) 248-8120
FIRE SERVICES	(850) 248-6040
GENERAL SERVICES	(850) 248-8732
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS	(850) 248-8071
HUMAN RESOURCES	(850) 248-8201
HOUSING	(850) 248-2465
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	(850) 248-8004
LIBRARY	(850) 522-2100
MEDICAL EXAMINER	(850) 747-5740
MOSQUITO CONTROL	(850) 248-8720
PARKS & RECREATION	(850) 248-8730
PLANNING	(850) 248-8250
PUBLIC WORKS	(850) 248-8302
PURCHASING	(850) 248-8270
RECORDS MANAGEMENT	(850) 248-8278
RISK MANAGEMENT	(850) 248-8230
ROADS AND BRIDGES	(850) 248-8810
SECURITY	(850) 248-8195
SOLID WASTE	(850) 236-2212
TRANSIT	(850) 248-8195
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING	(850) 248-8740
UTILITY SERVICES	(850) 248-5010
VETERANS SERVICES	(850) 248-8280

**CONSTITUTIONAL**

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT	(850) 747-5100
CLERK FINANCE	(850) 747-5219
PROPERTY APPRAISER	(850) 248-8401
SHERIFF	(850) 747-4700
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS	(850) 784-6100
TAX COLLECTOR	(850) 248-8501

**MUNICIPAL**

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
CALLAWAY	(850) 871-6000
LYNN HAVEN	(850) 265-2121
MEXICO BEACH	(850) 648-5700
PANAMA CITY BEACH	(850) 233-5100
PANAMA CITY	(850) 872-3000
PARKER	(850) 871-4104
SPRINGFIELD	(850) 872-7570

**OTHER**

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
<b>TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL</b>	<b>(850) 233-5070</b>
<b>FLORIDA STATE INFO CENTER</b>	<b>1-866-693-6748</b>
ONLINE	<a href="http://411.myflorida.com">http://411.myflorida.com</a>
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE</b>	<b>(850) 215-9965</b>

**EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
<b>FIRE / POLICE / AMBULANCE</b>	<b>9-1-1</b>
BAY COUNTY DISPATCH	(850) 784-4000
ANIMAL CONTROL DISPATCH	(850) 248-6034
POISON INFORMATION	1-800-222-1222



# stay prepared in an emergency.

When disaster strikes, how will you and your family be notified? *Protect yourself and your loved ones in Bay County by signing up for **AlertBay Emergency Notifications.***

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- › SEVERE WEATHER & EVACUATIONS
- › UNEXPECTED ROAD CLOSURES
- › POLICE & FIRE SITUATIONS
- › MISSING PERSONS
- › PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

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NOTIFICATIONS WILL  
BE SENT DURING AN  
EMERGENCY



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**BAY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER**  
840 WEST 11TH STREET  
PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA 32401  
**TELEPHONE:** (850) 248-8140