



CITY OF BUCHANAN

Strategic Marketing Plan

2022-2023

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City of Buchanan

302 N. Redbud Trail

Buchanan, MI 49107

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Overview

The City of Buchanan was founded in 1842. Formerly known as McCoy's Creek, Buchanan has boasted many nicknames that speak to its identity and town pride. Both McCoy's Creek" and "Redbud City" boast of Buchanan's natural resources including a downtown with a winding creek running through it and streetscapes and neighborhoods dotted with blossoming redbud trees. "Bucktown" speaks to the pride residents take in their community schools where the buck represents sports teams, community groups, and anyone who claims to be from Buchanan. A nickname now retired, "Clarktown," had its bearing when Clark Equipment Company was responsible for the majority of industry and occupancy in this small town before its departure in the 1990s. Since then, Buchanan has been building a new name for itself as a town of makers, a destination for entrepreneurs and a haven of small town life. While the nicknames have changed over the years, Buchanan's earliest known slogan of, "A fine place to live," has been nearly immune to change as it's only grown in confidence to its current state of, "life is better here." Recently distinguished as Reader's Digest's, "Nicest Place in America," Buchanan's town pride extends beyond our natural and cultural assets, to the residents, neighbors and families that all agree on one name for Buchanan, "home."

Marketing Goals

1. Promote the City of Buchanan's services, community activities, events and other economic opportunities to current and potential community members, visitors, the business community and investors with the objective of motivating them to:
 - a. Live in the City of Buchanan
 - b. Invest in the City of Buchanan through development, redevelopment and job creation
 - c. Drive more traffic and sales/support to Buchanan businesses and organizations
 - d. Support and improve existing community assets through increased awareness, funding and exposure
2. Improve lines of communication with residents, community partners and potential investors through:
 - a. [Improved website](#) appearance, usability, credibility and awareness
 - b. Active social media channels ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)) that reach both existing and potential stakeholders with relevant and compelling media

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- c. Increased visibility through print collateral, signage, and community engagement
 - d. Inspiring residents, businesses and visitors to become City of Buchanan brand advocates by creating and promoting a clear and compelling brand identity
 - e. Increased tourism through regional partnerships, promoting local attractions and increasing local offerings including increased attractions

Market Analysis

I. Community Partners

Regional Stakeholders

Local Chambers of Commerce

Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce

Greater Niles Chamber of Commerce

Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce

Southwestern Michigan Regional Chamber of Commerce

Tourist Centers

Southwest Michigan Tourism Industry

West Michigan Tourist Association

Regional Employment and Housing Agencies

Media Outlets

WBEZ

South Shore Train Cars

Local Stakeholders

Local Businesses/Organizations

Community Leaders

Schools

II. Community Assets

The City of Buchanan’s community assets can be reasonably categorized into natural resources, family-friendliness, inclusive economic development, pedestrian-oriented design, placemaking and historic preservation. The assets listed below define the character of Buchanan and residents that call it home.

Natural Resources	Family-Friendly	Inclusive Economic Development	Pedestrian-Oriented Design	Placemaking	Historic Preservation
St. Joseph River	Safe	Manufacturing and Industry	Downtown	The Common	Historic Downtown
McCoy Creek	Parks	Incentives	Sidewalks	“The Herd”	Charm
Redbud Trees	Walkability	Agriculture & Farmers Market	Bike Buchanan	“Bucktown”	Pears Mill
Tree City USA	Family Groups and Activities	Small Business/Entrepreneurs	McCoy Creek Trail	Parades	Antique Shops
Fishing	Dog Park	Affordable	Parks	Annual Events	Veterans
Hunting	Parades	Diverse Businesses	Dog Park	River Access	Historic Archives
Duck “Pond”	School Pride	Central Location	Downtown Neighborhoods	Volunteer Opportunities	Berrien County Record
Clear Lake	Proximity	“Try New Things”	Regional Trails	Citizen Involvement	Preservation Society
Agricultural Lands	Small Town	Space Rentals	Trail Extension Project	“Nicest Place in America”	Historic Sign Collection
Gardens	“Nicest Place in America”	Commercial Zoning District	Mill Alley	“Redbud City”	Historic-Based Design
McCoy Creek Trail	Festivals	Investing in the Underutilized	Creek Passage Alley	Arts & Culture Programs	“Americana” Small Town

III. Identity

Buchanan’s identity, according to its citizens, is based around the shared community that makes it feel like “home.” Home is where you have the opportunity to live a better life. Buchanan exemplifies this through its family-friendliness, business/work opportunities and cultural/recreational activities.



Pictured Above: WordCloud Based on Citizen Responses to the Question, "What is the best thing about Buchanan?"

SWOT Analysis

Buchanan, like many of America's small towns, has experienced both times of plenty and times of want. Near to its founding, the economy was based on milling for which Buchanan was uniquely positioned due to its access to McCoy Creek. As technology changed and milling fell out of favor, Buchanan's economy, once home to 12 different mills, had to adjust. Similarly, from the 1920s-1990s, Buchanan, a town now home to just over 4,000 residents, hosted Clark's over 5,000 employees. When Clark left, Buchanan was left again to redefine their economy and their identity. While Buchanan's economy has been steadily increasing since its latest hit, they are still left with the scars and residual sense of lost opportunities shared among many of America's rust belt towns.

Buchanan is uniquely positioned, however, with the impact of its location. Buchanan boasts the economic opportunities that a competitive cost of living can afford to new and burgeoning businesses. Additionally, the major cities of Chicago, Indianapolis and Detroit are all located within 3 hours of Buchanan's borders. Finally, the lifestyle afforded to residents through their proximity to Michigan's Wine Country, Lake Michigan's beaches and Indiana's world class universities and increased access to remote working opportunities allows citizens the freedom to live the lifestyle they want without sacrificing education or work opportunities.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Town Feel Charming Downtown Local Destinations Central Location Engaged Community Historic Preservation Access to Natural Resources Proximity to Attractions Buchanan Promise/School System Agriculture/Farm to Table Involved Civil Servants Established Community Events Low Cost of Living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited Commercial Real Estate Limited Residents Real Estate Lack of Billboards to Attract Visitors Limited Hours for Existing Restaurants/Retail Limited Options for Restaurants/Retail Lack of In-Town Accommodations Lack of Meeting Spaces Buildings in Poor Condition Roads in Poor Condition Lack of Sidewalks Unclear Vision for Brand/Future of Buchanan Limited Diversity in Leadership Roles No System for Capturing Prospects
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piggy-Back on Pure Michigan Campaign Leverage Natural Resources Investment Boom Downtown Events Accommodation/Event Space Demand Underutilized Downtown Real Estate Improved Website Resources and Communication Nicest Place in America Distinction Redevelopment Programs (RRC & MI Main St) Parks & Recreation Investment Andrews University "A Vision for Buchanan" Guide Work-From-Home Allows for Relocation Tourism - The Common, Historical, Arts & Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition with Other SW Michigan Towns Being Singularly Known for Cannabis Retail Lack of Community Buy-In Supply not Meeting Demand Lose "Small Town" Feel Perceived Loss of Safety Price Out Current Residents Focus on Downtown May Alienate Others "Flood Zone" May Deter Investors Inadequate Resources to Achieve Green Agenda Redistricting/Tax Diversion Political Unrest Redevelopment Business Cost

Target Audiences

- Community Members/Residents
 - **Young Professionals/Young Families**
 - General Community
 - Business Community
 - Community Organizations
 - Community Leaders
- Potential Investors
 - Business Investors
 - **Young Professionals/Young Families**
 - Potential Homesteaders
- Regional Leaders
- Regional Partners & Stakeholders
- News Media
- Visitors
 - Regional, National and International

Messaging

Core Message

“Being in Buchanan improves your quality of life.” #lifeisbetterhere

Lifestyle

Buchanan offers the classic American idyllic lifestyle where neighbors look out for each other, individuals can find personal and economic prosperity and where families can be raised.

Young professionals, in particular millennials, are looking for an authentic lifestyle where they can be afforded the opportunity to find economic prosperity and seek personal fulfillment. From running a farm, working in manufacturing, or starting your own businesses, Buchanan has an opportunity for everyone to find personal success.

<u>Recreation</u>	<u>Arts/Culture</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>Opportunity</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● McCoy Creek Trail ● Hiking ● BikeBuchanan ● Fishing ● Kayaking ● Water Sports ● Paddle Boarding ● Gardening ● School Sports ● Golfing ● Camping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roti Roti Art Center ● Pears Mill ● Buchanan District Library ● Tin Shop Theatre ● The Common ● Music Culture ● Redbud MX ● Sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parades ● Annual Events ● Good Schools ● Multiple Parks ● Safe ● Year-Round Free Family Programming ● Buchanan Promise ● Involvement Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investment Incentives ● Motivated Government ● Affordable Commercial Real Estate ● Education Incentives ● Redevelopment ● Cost-of-Living

Brand

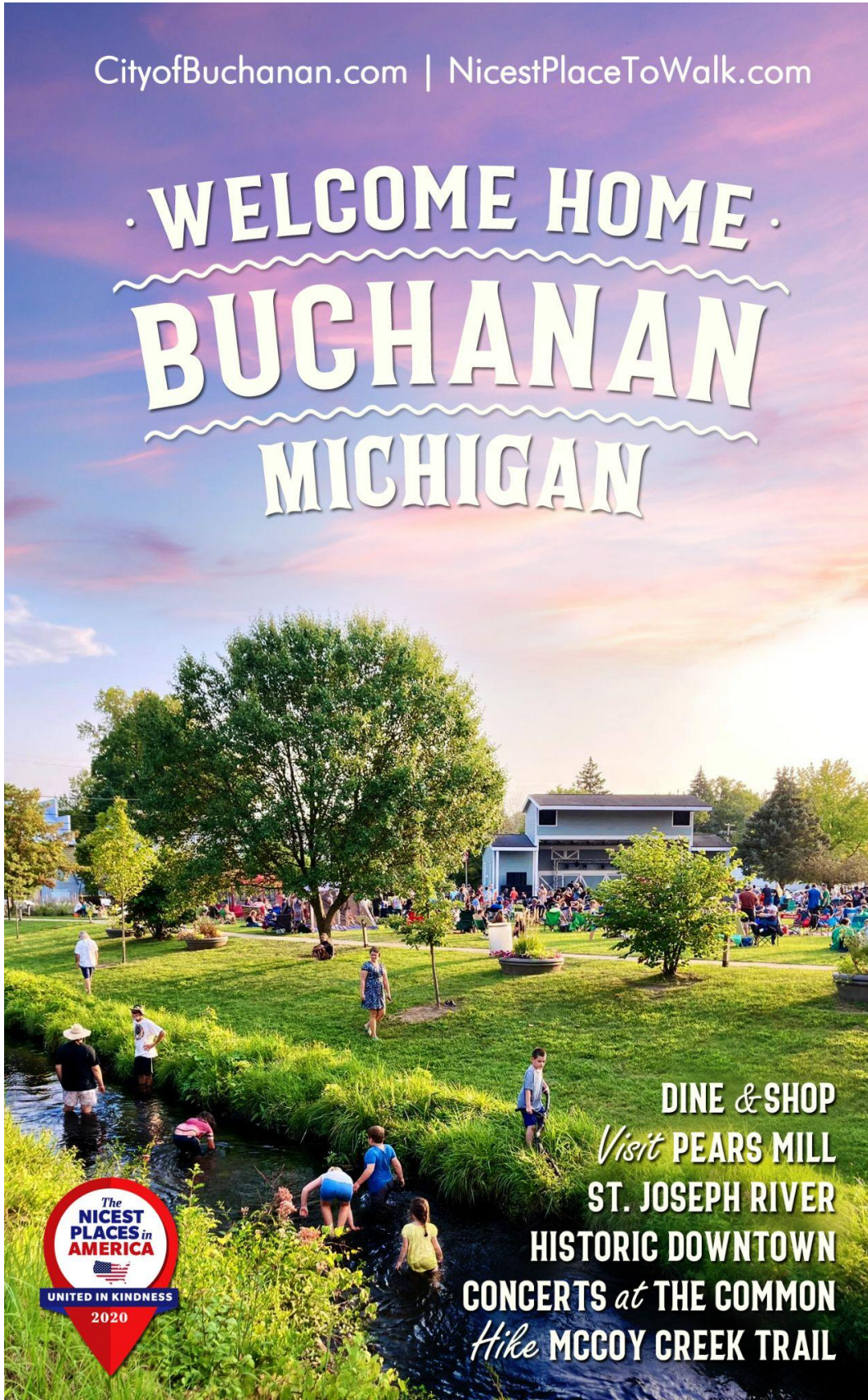
“Welcome Home” the City of Buchanan seeks to implement the feeling of “arrival” or “the end of searching.” Once you visit Buchanan, you feel welcomed into its sense of place and feel as if you can belong and make a better life for yourself here.



[See here for a tour of Historic Buchanan photos and references](#)

CityofBuchanan.com | NicestPlaceToWalk.com

· WELCOME HOME ·
BUCHANAN
MICHIGAN



DINE & SHOP
Visit PEARS MILL
ST. JOSEPH RIVER
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN
CONCERTS *at* THE COMMON
Hike MCCOY CREEK TRAIL



Branding Guide

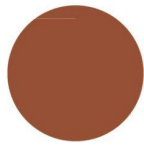
Logo and Variations



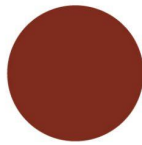
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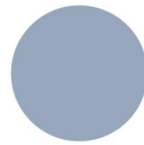
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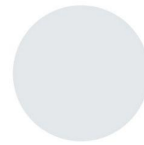
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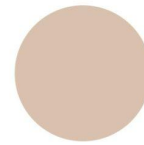
132, 48, 29
30, 88, 96, 33
#84301D



137, 163, 188
30, 10, 0, 25
#89A3BC



219, 225, 230
13, 6, 6, 0
#D8E1E6



211, 186, 173
16, 25, 28, 0
#D3BAAD



Fonts

MAIN LOGO FONT

BONARD

SCRIPT

Black Jack Script

BODY TEXT

Baskerville Old Face

Marketing Channels

Digital	Physical
Website	Signage
Social Media	Print Collateral
Events Calendar	Special Events
Videos	Merchandise

Priority Sites (Market Analysis Continued)

The City of Buchanan owns many properties that have the redevelopment potential to address issues Buchanan faces including lack of housing, vacant properties not on tax roll, and population growth. See pages 10-11 and 38-39 of [A Vision for Buchanan](#) for our Developer's Toolkit with more information on Buchanan's priority development sites.

IV. [Historic Downtown](#)

Public Amenities

- The Common & City Center | City-Owned

City Owned Properties

- 123 Days Avenue | City-Owned
- 115 S Oak Street | City-Owned
- 121 S Oak Street | City-Owned

V. [Northside Neighborhood](#)

Redevelopment Opportunities

- 907 Victory Street | City-Owned
- 1106 Victory Street | City-Owned
- 1104 Victory Street | City-Owned
- 404 Elizabeth Street | City Owned
- 405 Elizabeth Street | City-Owned
- 411 Elizabeth Street | City-Owned

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- 314 Arctic Street | City-Owned
 - 106 Fulton Street | City-Owned
 - 400 Michigan Street | City-Owned

Public Amenities

- 904 & 906 Victory Street | Victory Park

VI. [Riverfront \(p. 41-45\)](#)

Redevelopment Opportunities

- 1207 N Redbud Trail | 4.07 Acre Privately-Owned Property

Public Amenities

- 401 River Street | 9.49 Acre City-Owned Property

Implementation

Marketing Goal 1

Promote the City of Buchanan’s services, community activities, events and other economic opportunities to current and potential community members, visitors, the business community and investors with the objective of motivating them to:

Objectives	Action Steps	Measurement
Live in the City of Buchanan	Promote Buchanan as a lifestyle brand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media • Website • Print 	Increased activity, engagement and higher school enrollment
	Market and Distribute City-Issued Financial Relocation and Upper Story Residential Downtown Incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media • Website • Door-to-Door 	Number of Applications and Actual Movers
Invest in the City of Buchanan through development, redevelopment and job creation	Market and Distribute City-Issued Financial Business Incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media • Website • Door-to-Door 	10+ Issued Incentives in 1 Year Since Roll-Out (December 2022)
	Developer Video Series <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YouTube Channel • Targeted Facebook Advertising 	Increased developer communication in 2022 in direct relation to video launch
	Distribution of “A Vision for Buchanan” to stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and Regional 	Increased calls to Community Development Director

	<p>Innovative Redevelopment Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MMS and MCGF Downtown Development Endowment 	<p>Applications to granting from Downtown Development Endowment fund</p>
<p>Drive more traffic and sales/support to Buchanan businesses and organizations</p>	<p>Promote area businesses and organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media • Press Releases • Collaborations 	<p>Reported increases in demand and sales</p>
	<p>Annual Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thrill on the Hill • Xmas Event 	<p>Annual Festivals and Events are well attended and drive sales and visibility</p>
<p>Support and improve existing community assets through increased awareness, funding and exposure</p>	<p>Riverfront Improvement Master Plan</p>	<p>Increased usage of river frontage by non-owning parties</p>
	<p>Increased Programming and Attention to The Common</p>	<p>Increased attendance and inquires for events at The Common</p>

Marketing Goal 2

Improve lines of communication with residents, community partners and potential investors through:

Objectives	Action Steps	Measurement
Improved website appearance, usability, credibility and awareness	Promote and Utilize Improved Website	Web Analytics, Less Calls
Active social media channels that reach both existing and potential stakeholders with relevant and compelling media	Increased posting, targeted posts, diverse content creation and curation Lifestyle Video Campaign	Increased followers and post engagement
Inspiring residents, businesses and visitors to become City of Buchanan brand advocates by creating and promoting a clear and compelling brand identity	Providing content and merchandise in line with branding	Increased positive engagement via sharing, tagging and posting, merchandise visibility
Increased tourism through regional partnerships, promoting local attractions and increasing local offerings	Pursue and develop lasting relationships with local tourism boards, create content around attractions and target content appropriately	Increased utilization of recreation, arts and culture opportunities

2022 Marketing Plan

Month	Action Steps	Method
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Tourism Attraction Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attractions Map 4 Seasons Pamphlets Thrill on the Hill Audience Capture US 12 Sign
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence in Tourism Centers and Websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWMI Tourism Council, Regional Chambers, Berrien County, Etc.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seasonal Collateral Schedule
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buchanan Merchandise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and Obtain Sweatshirts and Mugs Distribution Plan
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Winter in Buchanan" Campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Town Big Christmas Merchandise Sale Photography/Videography: STBC, Winter, Etc.
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize Marketing Schedule for 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Planned Posts, Collateral, Messaging, Etc.

2023 Marketing Goals

Action Steps	Method
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Social Media Presence into Pinterest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blog-Style Social Media Videos Tourism Photography and Blogs Partner with Buchanan MMS Promotion Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Recreational Activities for Summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camping, Fishing, Golf, "Plan Your Trip to Buchanan" Develop Package Incentive "Buchanan Pass" - Collaboration with Chamber
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Festivals - Redbud Riverfest (May), Thrill on the Hill (August), Small Town Big Christmas (November) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for New Annual Festival - Brew & River Festival
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US 12 Sign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install US 12 Directional Signage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install and Use Communication Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

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