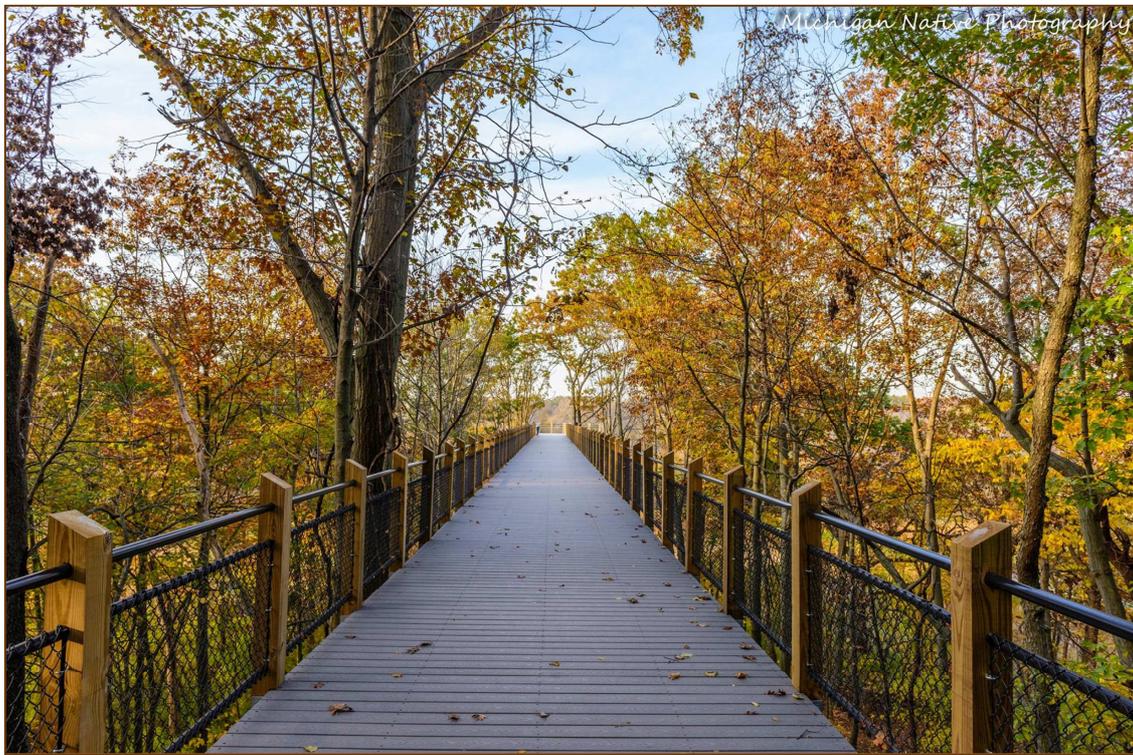


Berrien County Michigan



Tree Canopy Walkway, Autumn, Galien River County Park, New Buffalo
Photo by Clyde Brazie Jr., used with permission.

2016

COMMUNITY PROFILE

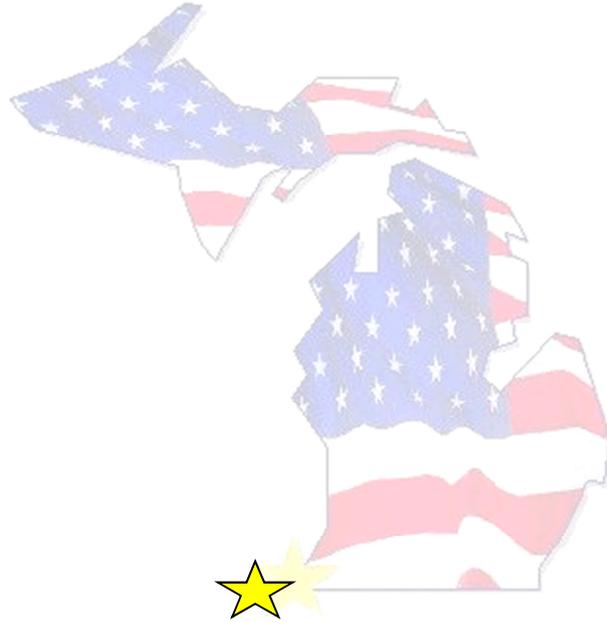


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Mission Statement

It is the mission of Berrien County Government to provide:

- Leadership
- Cooperation with all units of government
- Sound fiscal management and planning

Thereby promoting public safety, health, well-being and prosperity in order to improve the quality of life for present and future generations.

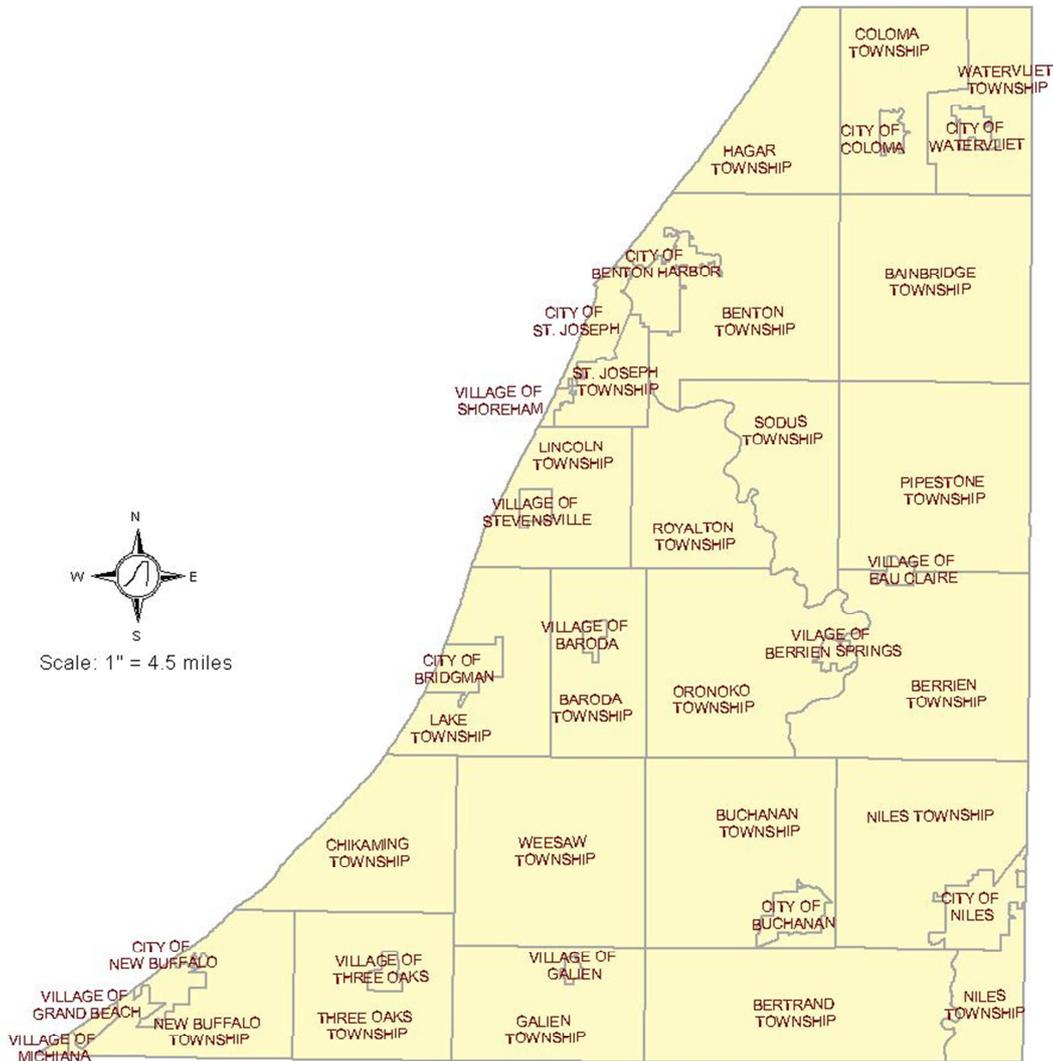


St. Joseph River, north of Buchanan.
Photo courtesy of "Michigan in Pictures"
via michpics.wordpress.com.

MAPS OF BERRIEN COUNTY



Local Municipalities



Source: Berrien County GIS, 2002.

MAP 2

Detailed maps are available through the Berrien County GIS Department. Contact them at 269-983-7111 ext. 8300.

HISTORY

1

Berrien County has received a wide range of accolades. According to American novelist James Fenimore Cooper, Berrien lies in "a region that almost merits the lofty appellation of the Garden of America." A 1718 French official reported, "Tis a spot, the best adopted of any to be seen, for the purpose of living." And John Harner, one of the county's first settlers, wrote in 1834, "it looks pretty good to me; and others are sure to follow." Harner was right. Many did follow, and basing its development on a trinity of fruit, tourism and industry, Berrien County has become one of the state's wealthiest and most populated counties.

Located on Lake Michigan in the southwest corner of the state, and bisected by the St. Joseph River, Berrien County has a long history that begins with the earliest explorers of the Great Lakes. Jacques Marquette was the first white man to visit the region. But it was Rene' Robert Cavalier Sieur de la Salle who had the first real impact. Arriving in 1679, La Salle built Fort Miami at the mouth of the St. Joseph River. Located at the present site of St. Joseph, Fort Miami became the base for several explorations into the Mississippi River Valley. Near the end of the seventeenth century other French explorers built Fort St. Joseph up the river at the present site of Niles. They also established a Jesuit mission at the Niles fort.

Though Fort Miami fell into disuse, Fort St. Joseph was occupied until the French left the area in 1763. The British held the fort until captured by the Spanish in 1781. Though the Spaniards stayed only a few days, their presence provided Niles with the unique distinction of being a "Town of four flags"; the only Michigan community able to make such a claim.

With the exception of a few traders, Berrien remained unsettled until Squire Isaac Thompson, the county's first settler, arrived at Niles in 1823. Organized in 1831 and named after U.S. Attorney General John M. Berrien, the county was populated by settlers who poured into Berrien during the 1830s and endured a multitude of hardships. One problem, the "ague," a form of malaria that came on as attacks of violent chills, high fever, and copious sweating, plagued the newcomers throughout the 1830s. But the settlers resolved their problems with ingenuity. One Buchanan housewife rigged up a harness so her husband could churn the butter and rock the baby each time he was afflicted with the "shakes."

During this period, Michigan's Indians and settlers maintained a cordial relationship. But in one instance, that cordiality temporarily ended. At the James M. Sorter cabin it was common for Indians to spend severe winter nights before the cabin's fire. But one morning when the Sorters awoke they discovered that their nocturnal guests had stolen part of their precious winter food supply. Disappointed that their trust had been violated, a week later, the Sorters were pleased to find a freshly killed deer on their table as repayment for the missing food.

Pioneers continued to immigrate to Berrien and by the outbreak of the Civil War the county's population stood well over 20,000. Answering their country's call-to-arms, Berrien sent over 3,000 men and a few women to war. With the advent of war, Hannah Carlisle of Buchanan accompanied the 2nd Michigan Cavalry to St. Louis, was assigned as a nurse, and served in that capacity for the duration. Women at home received less publicity but also 'served.' After the war, D. W. Gaugler of Berrien Springs was able to sell his farm and enter the furniture business because, while he was off to war, his wife had managed the farm so efficiently that she greatly increased its value.

Following the war, Berrien experienced impressive growth. As early as 1670, a member of La Salle's expedition wrote that the area's warm winters and sandy loam soil provided a good place for growing all kinds of fruit. The French were mainly trappers, not farmers, and did not exploit this opportunity, but it foretold of things to come. As early as 1834, peaches were being harvested and in 1839 the first shipment of peaches was transported and sold in Chicago. From these small beginnings, Berrien County's fruit production has grown to enormous proportions.

Today, Berrien is the heart of Michigan's 'fruit belt,' and its fruit production is awesome. The county leads all Michigan counties in the production of peaches, pears and grapes, is second in apples, plums and prunes, and a respectable fourth in tart cherries. Berrien is also the home of Michigan's wine production. Benton Harbor has long been the home of the world's largest outdoor retail fruit market, and every spring a century old "blessing of the

¹ The history of Berrien County has been provided by the Southwest Michigan Directory, which is available to view in its entirety at www.swmiDirectory.org.

blossoms" ceremony begins a weeklong celebration, which is culminated by a parade viewed by crowds in excess of 250,000. This celebration began in 1906.

The second aspect of Berrien's trinity of growth is tourism. As with the fruit industry, Lake Michigan and the proximity to Chicago greatly aided the county's tourist trade. In 1873 Stanley Morton, one of Benton Harbor's earliest residents, ran his small ship, the Lake Breeze, to Chicago and transported tourists to southwestern Michigan. By the summer months of the early twentieth century, numerous ships made the short voyage and brought thousands of Chicagoans to Berrien.

Up and down Berrien's fifty-mile coastline, as well as among its eighty-six inland lakes, were resorts, which catered to the tourists' demands. Places like the Whitcomb, Golfmore, Planks Tavern, Paw Paw Lake, and Tabors Farm, were only a few of the many resorts that were jammed every summer. Tourism today is a flourishing industry.

Industry is the trinity's final element. In 1911 Fred and Louis Upton moved to St. Joseph, obtained a patent for an electric clothes washer, and began the Upton Machine Company. The company almost failed, but after a decade of problems the Uptons enjoyed success. They changed the company's name in 1950 and the Upton Machine Co., now known as the Whirlpool Corporation, has become a leading manufacturer of home appliances and one of the nation's largest corporations.

About the time the Uptons moved to St. Joseph, a small Chicago tool company relocated in Buchanan. The Clark Equipment Company was internationally famous as a leader in the manufacture of a variety of items, particularly heavy-duty machinery. Other men of industry and commerce, who at least began their careers in Berrien, include John and Horace Dodge, and Montgomery Ward. The Dodge Brothers were born in Niles and owned a bicycle manufacturing business before moving to Detroit and establishing Dodge Brothers, Inc., producer of automobiles. Montgomery Ward moved to Niles as a young boy and lived in Berrien until 1865 when he moved to Chicago and founded the mail order department store chain that still bears his name.

As with fruit and tourism, the list of industrial contributions is long and impressive. But Berrien has produced more than industrialists, farmers and hotel managers. The county's greatest literary figure was Ring Lardner. Born in Niles in 1885, Lardner was one of the best-known American authors in the 1920s. He began his career writing sketches of sporting events for a local paper, and later worked for papers in Chicago and New York, where he wrote a popular syndicated column. Beginning in 1914 the Saturday Evening Post began publication of a series of articles that were to become Lardner's best-known works. Later entitled "You Know Me Al", the articles were letters from an ignorant bush league baseball player to his friend, and were among the first literary uses of American common speech. Lardner died in 1933 and his achievements were favorably compared to those of Mark Twain.

Though not a native, Carl Sandburg lived in Harbert for fifteen years, and during that period worked on the biography of Abraham Lincoln that won him the Pulitzer Prize.

And finally, the residents of the sleepy village of Three Oaks, who challenged the nation and won. As a result of a contest to raise money for a memorial to the men of the Maine, sunk in Havana harbor in 1898, Three Oaks raised the largest contribution, per capita, of any U.S. community. As victors they received a cannon captured by Admiral George Dewey at the battle of Manila. President William McKinley dedicated the cannon memorial on October 17, 1899, which still stands in Dewey Cannon Park as a proud reminder of the campaign labeled by locals as "Three Oaks Against the World."

As you might imagine, President McKinley's historic visit caused quite a stir in Berrien County and as a result, obscured another historic event that was of even more importance. Just six days prior to the President's cannon dedication ceremony, Augustus Herring flew the first known man-supporting, heavier-than-air, motorized, controllable, "flying machine" along the shores of Silver Beach in St. Joseph, Michigan.

On October 22, 1899, just five days after the President's visit, Herring again flew in his machine but this time had a newspaper reporter present to record the event. If only the news coverage of the day hadn't been distracted by a presidential visit, Mr. Herring's accomplishments might have received the "First in Flight" designation given the Wright brothers -- whose flight, by the way, was four years after Herring's.

Nineteenth century Berrien poet Ben King wrote,

*How oft on its banks I have sunk in a dream,
Where the willows bent over kissing the stream,
My boat with its nose sort of resting on shore,
While the cat-tails stood guarding a runaway oar;
Oh give me the spot that I once used to know,
By the side of the placid old River St. Joe!*

Today the French explorers and early settlers would hardly recognize the county, but Berrien's development has not destroyed the beauty and tranquility that Ben King so loved.

Berrien County preserves its rich heritage in two excellent museums, Fort St. Joseph² in Niles, and the Old Courthouse Complex in Berrien Springs.

At the corner of Bond and Fort Street in Niles is the huge boulder that marks the site of the old Fort St. Joseph. The seven ton boulder was moved in 1912 from a nearby farm largely financed by nickels from school children. A historical marker recounts the history of the fort from 1691 to 1781. Fort St. Joseph was important in the early fur trade, and settlement of the surrounding area.

Fort St. Joseph was a vibrant center of social, political, economic, and religious activity during the colonial period in southwest Michigan. Nestled along the St. Joseph River in what is now the city of Niles, the fort was founded by the French in 1691 and served as a mission, garrison, and trading post for nearly a century. By the 1730's, Fort St. Joseph had become one of the most important colonial outposts in the western Great Lakes, frequently visited by local Potawatomi and Miami Indian trading partners who lived nearby. It was a vital link in the communications network of New France and played a major commercial role, accounting for a significant volume of furs acquired from Native Americans in exchange for European commodities like glass beads, textiles, iron knives, and brass kettles.

Despite the significance of the fort in the history of early European settlement in the region, Fort St. Joseph remains understudied by professionals and is relatively unknown to the public. For example, there are no detailed maps or drawings that show the size and configuration of the palisade, nor is it known how many structures were built at the site, how they were distributed, or what they looked like. Even the exact location of the fort had eluded archaeologists until recently.

In 2002, excavations by Western Michigan University archaeologists, in partnership with Support the Fort and the City of Niles, identified intact evidence of the Fort St. Joseph community. The evidence consists of structural remains (e.g., a fireplace and a hearth) and other landscape features including a pit filled with carbonized corncobs and a gunsmith's repair kit. These activity areas are associated with 18th century artifacts, animal bones from colonial meals, and architectural remains such as hand wrought nails that were recovered from throughout the excavations.

The archaeology will continue well into the future as there is much to learn from the material remains of Fort St. Joseph.

The Fort St. Joseph Museum is located in the former carriage house of the beautiful Victorian period Chapin Mansion. The museum tells the story of Niles from its colonial start in 1691 to the present. Featured exhibits portray the history of Fort St. Joseph, built by the French in 1691, the story of the Underground Railroad in southern Michigan, and the importance of the railroad and classification yards in Niles' history. Another unique and truly outstanding exhibit features the museum's Lakota Indian collection including twelve pictographs drawn by Chief Sitting Bull. Together the museum's exhibits tell the story of Niles and the contributions its businesses and citizens have made to the world.

One of Berrien County's most impressive historical accomplishments is the preservation of its first courthouse. Built in 1839, the stately little Greek Revival temple was designed by Gilbert Avery, a local master builder. For fifty-six years the courthouse was the center of Berrien County activity; court sessions, governmental activities, weddings, political rallies, lectures, Civil War meetings, musicals, funerals, religious meetings and parties were held there.

2 The history of Fort St. Joseph was written by Dr. Michael Nassaney and provided by Carol Bainbridge, Museum Director.

In 1894 the county moved its governmental seat to St. Joseph and the courthouse passed into private hands and became a community social center, a militia hall, and finally for nearly half a century, a house of worship for the Berrien Springs Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

In 1967, representatives of local history groups throughout Berrien County organized to save the courthouse and restore it as a county museum. They formed the Berrien County Historical Association (BCHA) as a private nonprofit corporation to care for the buildings on the square and to interpret county history.

Today, the BCHA shares ownership of the square and its buildings with Berrien County. As a county-owned building, the 1839 Courthouse is registered as an officially active Michigan courthouse, although now used mostly for ceremonial functions.

The BCHA completed its first restoration of the courthouse in the 1970s. Unfortunately, in 1989, lightning struck the building and fire severely damaged the northwest corner. The removal of debris after the fire revealed construction details in the courtroom hidden for more than a century. They provided the basis for a much improved restoration of the space. Today the courtroom appears much as it did in 1839.

Berrien County holds some of the most varied archaeological remains of the State of Michigan. The county's rivers, prairies, and lakeshores have drawn people to settle there since the end of the last ice age. The campsites of the county's first inhabitants, the Paleo-Indians, can be found along the high ridges that were once the shores of lakes and streams filled with runoff from the melting glacier.

As the climate changed and the deer and elk replaced the mastodon and caribou, people altered their ways of life. The varying styles of spear and lance points (which we commonly call "arrowheads") are clues to some of these changes, as new weapons and different hunting techniques developed. Burial of the dead became more elaborate. The use of red ochre in the graves as a part of burial ritual, and the placement of items such as gorgets (tablets of slate or shell with holes drilled in them, perhaps used as ornaments), projectile point "blanks" (partially completed stone tools), and stone pipes with the dead, bespeak the care and concern of the bereaved relatives.

In the first few centuries of what we now call the Christian era, the inhabitants of Berrien County were living in small temporary villages, constructing mounds of earth over the graves of the dead, and participating in a trade network that linked most of eastern North America from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. We refer to these people today at the Hopewellians, but like the early Paleo-Indians, they were the ancestors of present day Native Americans. Agriculture may have been introduced from Ohio and Illinois about this time.

By about AD 1000, the cultivation of corn, beans, and squash had become an important part of the economy for those in Berrien County. The people in the southwestern part of the state at that time were more closely related to those in northern Illinois than to those elsewhere in Michigan. Circular stockades reinforced by earthen embankments enclosed some of their villages. Most hunting was done with the bow and arrow, and well-made pottery was produced. The men and women in these villages were related to the Miami and Potawatomi who greeted the first Europeans to enter Berrien County.

We know the first 10,000 years of Berrien County's human history only from the oral traditions of Native American peoples and the knowledge gleaned from the material remains of the camps and settlements of their ancestors. One of Berrien County's archaeological sites, the Moccasin Bluff site, is among the most significant in the state and has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Unfortunately, highways, subdivisions, and sand mining have destroyed many of the hundreds of archaeological sites in the county, and their stories will never be told.

The Master Plan establishes planning goals that, if strived for, will help shape and direct the future of Berrien County. The goals and objectives offered in this Master Plan are the combined result of input from citizens and government officials – elected and appointed throughout Berrien County. The historical information, statistics, and current trends presented in the Master Plan are the result of observation, research, and analysis performed by the Berrien County Planning Commission with assistance of staff. The Berrien County Planning Commission is responsible for overall compilation and content of the County Master Plan. It is typically updated every 5 years.

Based on the observation, research, and analysis the principal themes have evolved into a series of goals and objectives based on the following:

- Landscapes
- Green Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Agriculture
- Housing
- Transportation
- Infrastructure

Landscapes

Goal

Promote an efficient pattern of development that maintains our sense of place, preserves our natural resources, and reduces the effects of sprawl.

Objectives

1. Promote higher density infill development and redevelopment within existing cities, suburban areas, and smaller cities and villages and areas surrounding them.
2. Preserve the unique identity of each of our communities by establishing clear boundaries between them.
3. Maintain our rural sense of place through land use techniques, economic viability agriculture and alternatives that provide rural tax base for local governments.
4. Develop a system of open spaces throughout the county to help delineate communities, maintain our sense of place and preserve our natural lands.

Green Infrastructure

Goal

Protect, preserve and restore the natural resources of Berrien County by creating a connected network of open spaces, recreational areas, and natural habitats.

Objectives

1. Protect and improve the quality of our water resources with a comprehensive program of planning, maintenance, and best management practices.
2. Preserve wetlands, woodlands, floodplains, critical dunes and other natural features through resource assessments, model regulations and leveraging open space and trail programs.
3. Empower local governments and other agencies to preserve and protect the natural resources and open spaces.
4. Promote a multi-jurisdictional approach to green infrastructure planning.

Economic Development

Goal

Create a common vision with strategies to foster coordination among economic and community development agencies and between these groups and governments.

3 This information is from the Berrien County Master Plan 2009. The complete Master Plan can be viewed at www.berriencounty.org.

Objectives

1. Eliminate duplicative community development processes.
2. Focus efforts of community development groups on the economic drivers in the community.
3. Create an economic and community development focus by region.
4. Integrate transportation systems with community development
5. Improve infrastructure information.

Agriculture**Goal**

To create an environment where a variety of agricultural operations can continue to thrive in the County, and where agricultural lands can be preserved for generations.

Objectives

1. Enable and empower local governments to preserve agricultural lands.
2. Use County leverage over public services to promote preservation of rural areas and agricultural lands.
3. Create a supportive environment for agricultural support and related businesses.
4. Support agri-tourism.
5. Encourage and support programs that will maintain the viability of agriculture through new and expanding markets for locally grown products.

Housing**Goal**

To provide safe, decent and affordable housing for Berrien County residents of all ages, abilities and incomes in Berrien County and within individual communities.

Objectives

1. Maintain existing housing stock and neighborhoods.
2. Ensure housing for seniors.
3. Ensure housing for residents of all abilities.
4. Ensure housing for residents of all incomes.
5. End homelessness in Berrien County.
6. Improve communication and coordination between governmental agencies and practitioners in the housing field.

Transportation**Goal**

Use transportation investments to advance economic opportunities and equity in Berrien County.

Objectives

1. Improve the industrial base of the County's economy by targeting investments that improve efficiency and modal links in core urban areas.
2. Provide equal access to the transportation system.
3. Maintain and provide efficiencies in the current system.

Infrastructure**Goal**

Coordinate development to infill around existing infrastructure capacity and rehabilitate systems prior to establishing new service.

Objectives

1. Maximize capacity of existing infrastructure.
2. Maximize returns on future infrastructure investments.
3. Provide enhanced solid waste services.

DEMOGRAPHICS

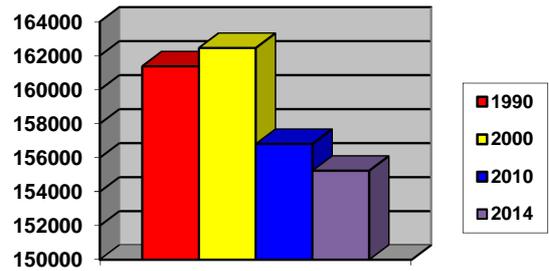
4

Municipality	Population Growth Estimate	Census Estimate 2014	Population Census 2010
Bainbridge Township	-0.98%	2,822	2,850
Baroda Township	-1.96%	2,746	2,801
Baroda Village	-1.95%	856	873
Benton Charter Township	-1.51%	14,527	14,749
Benton Harbor City	-0.20%	10,018	10,038
Berrien Springs Village	-1.33%	1,776	1,800
Berrien Township	-0.96%	5,035	5,084
Bertrand Township	-0.94%	2,632	2,657
Bridgman City	-1.31%	2,261	2,291
Buchanan City	-1.48%	4,390	4,456
Buchanan Township	-0.54%	3,504	3,523
Chikaming Township	-0.26%	3,092	3,100
Coloma Charter Township	-0.96%	4,972	5,020
Coloma City	-1.35%	1,463	1,483
Eau Claire Village	-0.64%	621	625
Galien Township	-1.79%	1,426	1,452
Galien Village	-2.37%	536	549
Grand Beach Village	0.00%	272	272
Hagar Township	-1.09%	3,631	3,671
Lake Charter Township	-1.04%	2,941	2,972
Lincoln Charter Township	-0.90%	14,559	14,691
Michiana Village	0.55%	183	182
New Buffalo City	-0.27%	1,878	1,883
New Buffalo Township	0.75%	2,404	2,386
Niles Charter Township	-1.46%	13,957	14,164
Niles City	-1.72%	11,400	11,600
Oronoko Charter Township	-0.60%	9,138	9,193
Pipestone Township	-1.51%	2,277	2,312
Royalton Township	-0.02%	4,765	4,766
St. Joseph City	-0.48%	8,325	8,365
St. Joseph Charter Township	-1.09%	9,919	10,028
Shoreham Village	-0.93%	854	862
Sodus Township	0.26%	1,937	1,932
Stevensville Village	-1.75%	1,122	1,142
Three Oaks Township	-1.83%	2,527	2,574
Three Oaks Village	-2.03%	1,589	1,622
Watervliet Charter Township	-0.87%	3,075	3,102
Watervliet City	-1.84%	1,703	1,735
Weesaw Township	-1.39%	1,909	1,936

4 All demographic information obtained from www.census.gov 2010 census. Only the population estimates are available for 2014.

Population

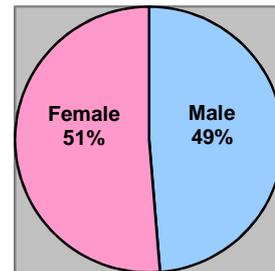
1990 Census	161,378	+0.6 %
2000 Census	162,453	+0.2 %
2010 Census	156,813	-3.5 %
2014 Census Estimate	155,233	-1.0 %



Residents - By Gender

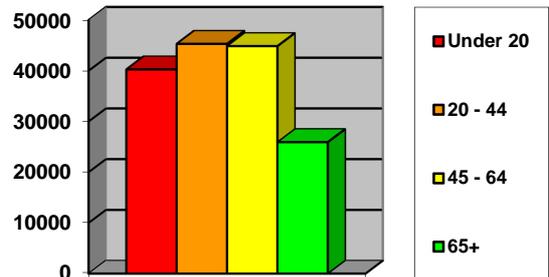
(based on 2010 Census)

Male population	76,373	48.7 %
Female population	80,440	51.3 %
Total	156,813	



Age Distribution

Under 20	40,243	25.7 %
20 - 44	45,287	29.1 %
45 - 64	44,841	28.6 %
65 +	25,919	16.6 %
Median Age	41.2	

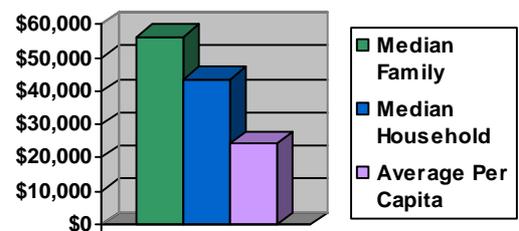


Households

Total Number of Households:	60,414
Average Size of Household:	2.51

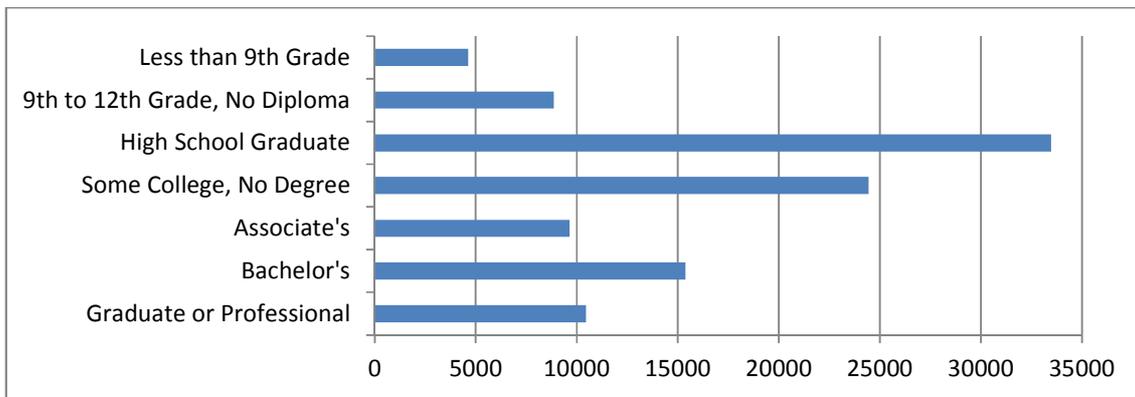
Personal Income

Median Family	\$56,324.00
Median Household	\$43,633.00
Average per Capita	\$24,013.00
Persons Below Poverty:	17.5 %



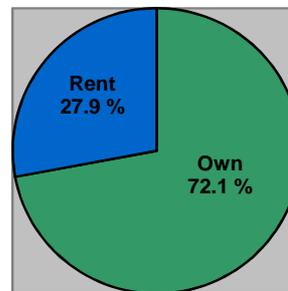
Educational Distribution

Population 25 Years and Over	106,889	
Less than 9 th Grade	4,625	4.3 %
9 th to 12 th Grade, No Diploma	8,852	8.3 %
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	33,482	31.3 %
Some College, No Degree	24,446	22.9 %
Associates Degree	9,650	9.0 %
Bachelor's Degree	15,386	14.4 %
Graduate or Professional Degree	10,448	9.8 %
High School Graduate or Higher		87.4 %
Bachelor's Degree or Higher		24.2 %



Housing

Number of Dwellings	76,769
Owner Occupied	43,554
Renter Occupied	16,860
Median Rent	\$649.00
Median Home Value	\$129,300



Labor Force

Total work force (2013 Census Estimate): 76,199

Unemployment Rates:

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year Avg
2009	11.3	12.0	12.4	11.3	12.2	12.8	13.2	12.5	12.6	12.4	12.6	13.5	12.4
2010	14.5	14.2	14.2	12.7	12.5	12.6	13.1	11.7	11.4	10.7	10.9	11.3	12.5
2011	11.9	11.6	11.3	10.0	10.1	10.6	10.8	9.8	9.4	8.5	8.5	9.3	10.2
2012	10.1	9.9	9.3	8.2	8.6	9.5	10.1	8.8	7.8	7.3	7.2	8.8	8.8
2013	9.7	9.7	8.8	8.2	8.9	9.4	9.8	8.7	8.2	8.6	8.1	8.3	8.9
2014	8.2	8.8	8.3	6.8	7.2	7.4	7.9	6.1	6.0	5.4	5.2	5.2	6.9
2015	6.5	5.9	5.6	4.8	5.6	5.3	5.7	4.6	4.1	3.8	3.8	4.0	5.0

Principal Economic Base Employers

Top Employers with 150+ Employees

COMPANY	EMPLOYEES
Whirlpool Corporation	4000
Lakeland Regional Health System	3826
Andrew's University	2104
Four Winds Casino	1800
Indiana Michigan Power / Cook Nuclear Plant (Generation)	1200
Leco Corporation	650
Berrien County Government	635
Lake Michigan College	472
Modineer Company	455
Benton Harbor Area Schools	375
Chassis Inc. (Benton Harbor & Stevensville)	432
Meijer Inc.	332
Gast Manufacturing	320
Wal-Mart (Benton Harbor & Niles)	317
Martin's Super Markets (Niles, St. Joseph & Stevensville)	304
Berrien Springs Public Schools	298
St. Joseph Public Schools	295
Lowe's Companies (Benton Harbor & Niles)	295
Watervliet Community Hospital	292
United Federal Credit Union	289
Bosch Braking Systems (Buchanan & St. Joseph)	288
Berrien Regional Education Service Agency	285
Lakeshore Public Schools	280
Michigan Pizza Hut Inc.	257
Coloma Community Schools	255
Niles Community Schools	250
YMCA Family Center (Niles & St. Joseph)	246
Premier Tool & Die Cast Corporation	245
Pilkington North America	245
JVIS (formerly Atlantic Automotive)	220
AACOA	220
Walsworth (formerly IPC Print Services)	215
Lane Automotive (Motorstate)	200
Fapco	190
AluTech	180
Niles Precision Company	175
Buchanan Community Schools	174
Hoffman Die Cast Corporation	170
Brandywine Community Schools	162
Hanson International Companies	161
Vickers Engineering	160
Riverwood Center	156
Wolverine Metal Stamping	154
Watervliet Public Schools	153
Michigan Dept. of Human Services	151

Occupation

Management & Professional Service	21,760	32.5 %
Sales & Office	13,481	20.1 %
Natural Resources, Construction & Maintenance	15,811	23.6 %
Production, Transportation & Material Moving	5,361	8.0 %
	10,510	15.7 %

Industry

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining	1,223	1.8 %
Construction	3,401	5.1 %
Manufacturing	12,556	18.8 %
Wholesale Trade	1,335	2.0 %
Retail Trade	6,955	10.4 %
Transportation & Warehousing, Utilities	4,271	6.4 %
Information	871	1.3 %
Finance & Insurance, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	2,617	3.9 %
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Mgmt.	5,019	7.5 %
Educational, Health & Social Services	16,668	24.9 %
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	6,721	10.0 %
Other Services (except public administration)	3,505	5.2 %
Public Administration	1,781	2.7 %

Climate

	<u>January</u>	<u>July</u>
Average Maximum Temperature	32F / 0C	82F / 28C
Average Minimum Temperature	18F / -8C	61F / 16C
Days over 90F or 32C	11	
Days below 0F or 18C	4	
Days of Growing Season	162	
Average Annual Rainfall	37" / 94cm	
Average Annual Snowfall	70" / 178cm	

Building Permits – 2015

Municipality	Total	
	#	\$
Bainbridge Township	42	1,865,854.00
Baroda Township	29	980,908.00
Baroda Village	12	866,500.00
Benton Charter Twp	153	44,875,277.00
Benton Harbor City	350	25,936,614.00
Berrien Springs Village	62	1,052,657.00
Berrien Township	61	1,159,022.00
Bertrand Township	0	0.00
Bridgman City	39	3,166,166.00
Buchanan City	42	1,769,057.00
Buchanan Township	73	3,567,934.00
Chikaming Township	25	16,585,572.00
Coloma Charter Twp	101	3,713,507.00
Coloma City	28	125,475.00
Eau Claire Village	15	395,447.74
Galien Township	14	895,397.00
Galien Village	3	246,800.00
Grand Beach Village	53	3,033,919.00
Hagar Township	52	3,130,617.00
Lake Charter Township	73	3,302,669.00
Lincoln Charter Township & Village of Stevensville	402	16,933,969.00
Michiana Village	38	973,345.00
New Buffalo City	168	3,935,912.40
New Buffalo Township	8	3,736,484.00
Niles Charter Township	117	10,188,235.00
Niles City	238	2,959,158.00
Oronoko Township	100	7,675,611.30
Pipestone Township	19	492,602.00
Royalton Township	117	6,747,732.00
Shoreham Village	75	933,070.00
Sodus Township	21	2,526,880.00
St. Joseph Charter Twp	363	7,190,615.00
St. Joseph City	411	22,529,268.00
Stevensville Village (included in Lincoln Township)	0	0.00
Three Oaks Township	30	879,647.00
Three Oaks Village	50	2,812,733.00
Watervliet Charter Twp	45	9,724,591.00
Watervliet City	17	103,459.00
Weesaw Township	0	0.00
Total	3,446	217,012,704.44

*Information not available from municipality as of the date of printing.

GOVERNMENT

County Government

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Chickering, Bill
(District 5)
380 Ridgeway St.
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 985-3765
bchicker@berriencounty.org

Hinkelman, Jon
(District 2)
2201 M-140
Watervliet, MI 49098
Phone: (269) 463-3385
jhinkelm@berriencounty.org

Seats, Marletta
(District 3)
1644 Stanley Drive
Benton Harbor MI 49022
Phone: (269) 983-7111 x8095
mseats@berriencounty.org

Curran, Jim
(District 11)
1347 LaSalle Avenue
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 684-7084
jcurran@berriencounty.org

Klimek, John
(District 12)
1 Parkway
Niles MI 49120
Phone: (269) 684-6290
jklimek@berriencounty.org

Smith, William
(District 1)
153 Elvern Drive
Coloma MI 49038
Phone: (269) 468-6481
wsmith@berriencounty.org

Elliott, R. McKinley
(District 10)
1 Park Court
Buchanan MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-9312
melliott@berriencounty.org

Leahey, Jeanette
(District 6)
2985 E. Bluffwood Terrace
St. Joseph MI 49085
Phone: (269) 429-6349
jleahey@berriencounty.org

Vavra, Andrew R.
(District 9)
7120 W. Elm Valley Road
Three Oaks MI 49128
Phone: (269) 756-7162
avavra@berriencounty.org

Freehling, Teri Sue
(District 8)
11573 Cleveland Avenue
Baroda, MI 49101
Phone: (269) 422-2670
tfreehling@berriencounty.org

Panozzo, Debra
(District 7)
1614 Barbara Ann Drive
Stevensville MI 49127
Phone: (269) 429-2131
dpanozzo@berriencounty.org

Yarbrough, Mamie L.
(District 4)
1086 Monroe Street
Benton Harbor MI 49022
Phone: (269) 925-2669
myarbrou@berriencounty.org

Chair.....Jon Hinkelman
Vice-Chair Mamie Yarbrough
Parliamentarian R. McKinley Elliott
Chaplain..... Marletta Seats
Sergeant At Arms..... Jim Curran
Clerk..... Sharon Tyler
Corporate Counsel James McGovern

Municipalities

Cities

Benton Harbor City
200 Wall Street
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: (269) 927-8400

Bridgman City
9765 Maple Street
P.O. Box 366
Bridgman, MI 49106
Phone: (269) 465-5144

Buchanan City
302 North Red Bud Trail
Buchanan, MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-3844

Coloma City
119 N. Paw Paw St.
P.O. Box 329
Coloma, MI 49038
Phone: (269) 468-6606

New Buffalo City
224 West Buffalo Street
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-1500

Niles City
333 N. 2nd Street
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 683-4700

St. Joseph City
700 Broad Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 983-5541

Watervliet City
158 W. Pleasant St.
P.O. Box 86
Watervliet, MI 49098
Phone: (269) 463-6769

Townships

Bainbridge Township
7315 Territorial Road
Watervliet, MI 49098
Phone: (269) 468-8040

Baroda Township
9091 First Street
P.O. Box 215
Baroda, MI 49101
Phone: (269) 422-2300

Benton Charter Township
1725 Territorial Road
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: (269) 925-0616

Berrien Township
8916 M-140
Berrien Center, MI 49102
Phone: (269) 461-6925

Bertrand Township
3835 Buffalo Road
Buchanan, MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-5001

Buchanan Township
15235 Main Street
Buchanan, MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-6442

Chikaming Township
P.O. Box 40
13535 Red Arrow Highway
Harbert, MI 49115
Phone: (269) 469-1676

Coloma Charter Township
4919 Paw Paw Lake Road
Coloma, MI 49038
Phone: (269) 468-7212

Galien Township
P.O. Box 246
Galien, MI 49113
Phone: (269) 545-8143

Hagar Township
3900 Riverside Road
P.O. Box 135
Riverside, MI 49084
Phone: (269) 849-0455

Lake Charter Township
3220 Shawnee Road
P.O. Box 818
Bridgman, MI 49106
Phone: (269) 465-6601

Lincoln Charter Township
2055 W. John Beers Road
P.O. Box 279
Stevensville, MI 49127
Phone: (269) 429-1589

New Buffalo Township
17425 Red Arrow Highway
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-1011

Niles Township
320 Bell Road
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 684-0870

Oronoko Charter Township
4583 E. Snow Road
P.O. Box 214
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Phone: (269) 471-2824

Pipestone Township
P.O. Box 291
7185 N. Elm Street
Eau Claire, MI 49111
Phone: (269) 944-1063

Royalton Township
980 Miners Road
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 429-2501

St. Joseph Charter Township
3000 Washington Ave
P.O. Box 147
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 429-7703

Sodus Township
Sodus Township Hall
Sodus, MI 49126
Phone: (269) 926-6285

Three Oaks Township
8 E. Linden
P.O. Box 55
Three Oaks, MI 49128
Phone: (269) 756-9801

Villages

Baroda Village
9091 First Street
P.O. Box 54
Baroda, MI 49101
Phone: (269) 422-1779

Berrien Springs Village
112 N. Cass Street
P.O. Box 182
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Phone: (269) 473-6921

Eau Claire Village
6625 East Main St.
P.O. Box 338
Eau Claire, MI 49111
Phone: (269) 461-6173

Watervliet Township
4959 M-140
Watervliet, MI 49098
Phone: (269) 463-5113

Galien Village
121 S. Cleveland
P.O. Box 296
Galien, MI 49113
Phone: (269) 545-3647

Grand Beach Village
48200 Perkins Boulevard
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-3141

Michiana Village
4000 Cherokee Street
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-4600

Weesaw Township
13518 State Street
P.O. Box 38
New Troy, MI 49119
Phone: (269) 426-3002

Shoreham Village
Brown School Road
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 429-8560

Stevensville Village
5768 St. Joseph Avenue
Stevensville, MI 49127
Phone: (269) 429-1802

Three Oaks Village
P.O. Box 335
Three Oaks, MI 49128
Phone: (269) 756-9221

State and Federal Government Officials

State Governor

Rick Snyder (R)
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: (517) 373-3400
Fax: (517) 335-6863
Rick.Snyder@michigan.gov

State Senator

John Proos (R), District 21
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536
Phone: (517) 373-6960
Fax: (517) 373-0897
SenJProos@senate.michigan.gov

State Representatives

Dave Pagel (R), District 78
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514
Phone: (517) 373-1796
Fax: (517) 373-5918
DavePagel@house.mi.gov

Al Pscholka (R), District 79
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514
Phone: (517) 373-1403
Fax: (517) 373-3652
AlPscholka@house.mi.gov

U.S. Senators

Debbie Stabenow (D)
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-4822
stabenow.senate.gov/email.htm

Carl Levin (D)
269 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-6221
levin.senate.gov/contact/index.cfm

U. S. Representative

Fred Upton (R)
6th Congressional District
2183 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone: (202) 225-3761
Fax: (202) 225-4986
tellupton@mail.house.gov

District Office:

800 Centre
Suite 106
800 Ship Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 982-1986

PUBLIC SERVICES

Departments of Berrien County

Berrien County Administration
701 Main Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 983-7111

Berrien County Courthouse
811 Port Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 983-7111

South County Building
1205 North Front Street
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 684-5274

- Administration
- Animal Control
- Building Authority
- Building & Grounds
- Community Development
- Concealed Weapons Board
- Corporate Counsel
- County Clerk
- County Election Commission
- Courts
- Drain Commission
- Election Canvassers

- Emergency Management
- Equalization
- Financial Services
- Friend of the Court
- GIS Mapping & Land Desc.
- Health Department
- Information Systems
- Legal Services
- Motor Pool
- MSU Extension
- Parks & Recreation
- Personnel

- Platting Board & Committee
- Printing/Microfilming
- Prosecuting Attorney
- Public Works
- Purchasing
- Register of Deeds
- Road Commission
- Sheriff's Department
- Treasurer
- Trial Court
- Tri-Court Services
- Veterans

Post Offices

For further information on services provided, please call toll free (800) 275-8777 or visit the United States Postal Service website at www.usps.com.

Baroda
1368 South Street
Baroda, MI 49101

Coloma
201 North West Street
Coloma, MI 49038

New Troy
13377 California Road
New Troy, MI 49119

Stevensville
5888 Cleveland Avenue
Stevensville, MI 49127

Benton Harbor
525 Riverview Drive
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Eau Claire
6537 East Main Street
Eau Claire, MI 49111

Niles
741 Broadway Street
Niles, MI 49120

Three Oaks
201 North Elm Street
Three Oaks, MI 49128

Berrien Center
7493 Deans Hill Road
Berrien Center, MI 49102

Galien
114 Cleveland Avenue
Galien, MI 49113

Riverside
3889 Riverside Road
Riverside, MI 49084

Union Pier
16201 Red Arrow Highway
Union Pier, MI 49129

Berrien Springs
115 North Main Street
Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Harbert
13785 Red Arrow Highway
Harbert, MI 49115

St. Joseph
205 Main Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085

Watervliet
342 West Pleasant Street
Watervliet, MI 49098

Bridgman
9655 Maplewood Street
Bridgman, MI 49106

Lakeside
14943 Lakeside Road
Lakeside, MI 49116

Sawyer
5835 Sawyer Road
Sawyer, MI 49125

Buchanan
112 West Front Street
Buchanan, MI 49107

New Buffalo
325 West Buffalo Street
New Buffalo, MI 49117

Sodus
3568 Naomi Road
Sodus, MI 49126

Sheriff's Department

919 Port Street
St. Joseph MI 49085
Emergency Calls: (269) 983-3911
Administrative Calls: (269) 983-7141

The Sheriff is the chief executive charged with law enforcement and the preservation of peace within the County. He has custody of the jail and of the prisoners lodged within. He must promote domestic tranquility in the County, is the court officer of the Circuit Court and must serve all writs, processes and warrants and make proper return thereof.

L. Paul Bailey Sheriff
Chuck Heit Undersheriff
Mike Bradley Chief Deputy

Toll Free Helplines

Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center(800) 438-4380
American Dietetic Association(800) 366-1655
American Institute for Cancer Research(800) 843-8114
American Kidney Fund(800) 638-8299
American SIDS Institute(800) 232-7437
Child Find Hotline(800) 426-5678
Child Help USA Hotline(800) 422-4453
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation(800) 344-4823
Down Syndrome Hotline(800) 221-4602
Drug Abuse Referral Hotline(800) 662-4357
Epilepsy Foundation of America(800) 332-1000
Helen Keller National Center(800) 255-0411
Medicare / Medicaid Assistance Program(800) 803-7174
Multiple Sclerosis Foundation(800) 441-7055
National Adoption Center(800) 862-3678
National AIDS Hotline(800) 342-2437
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children(800) 843-5678
National Council on Child Abuse & Family Violence(800) 222-2000
National Grief Recovery(800) 445-4808
National Health Information Center(800) 336-4797
National Literacy Hotline(800) 228-8813
National Lyme Disease Foundation(800) 886-5963
National Mental Health Association(800) 433-5959
National Parkinson's Foundation(800) 327-4545
National Reye's Syndrome(800) 233-7393
Organ Donor Hotline(800) 243-6667
Orton Dyslexia Society(800) 222-3123
Prostate Information(800) 543-9632
Runaway Hotline(800) 231-6946
Senior Info Line(800) 654-2810
SIDS Alliance(800) 638-7437
Youth Crisis Hotline(800) 262-2463

TRANSPORTATION

We're closer than you think! Miles are calculated from the County Seat (St. Joseph, Michigan).

Kalamazoo, MI	53 Miles	Indianapolis, IN	172 Miles
South Bend, IN	37 Miles	Detroit, MI.....	188 Miles
Grand Rapids, MI	82 Miles	Toledo, OH.....	194 Miles
Chicago, IL	97 Miles	Cleveland, OH.....	293 Miles
Lansing, MI.....	123 Miles		

Airports – Commercial

Michiana Regional Transportation Center	South Bend, Indiana.....	(574) 282-4590
Kalamazoo International	Kalamazoo, Michigan	(269) 388-3666

Airports – General Aviation

Andrews Airpark.....	Berrien Springs, Michigan.....	(269) 471-1455
*Southwest Michigan Regional.....	Benton Harbor, Michigan	(269) 927-3194
Tyler Memorial	Niles, Michigan.....	(269) 684-7030
Watervliet Airpark.....	Watervliet, Michigan	(269) 463-6769

*Southwest Michigan Regional Airport in Benton Harbor is designed to accommodate all types of air service, from sophisticated business jets to recreational aircraft. The airport offers three paved, lighted runways, aircraft hangars, aviation fuel and A & P service through AVSAT, Inc. (the onsite fixed base operator), car rental through Avis and Hertz, emergency response personnel and equipment, computerized weather service, and an Instrument Landing System. Further information may be obtained by calling Southwest Michigan Regional Airport directly at (269) 927-3194.

Bus Lines

Benton Harbor Bus Center
 Greyhound Bus Lines and Indian Trails Motorcoach
 Depot: Benton Charter Township
 Phone: (269) 925-1121

Berrien Bus
 Serves Berrien County
 Phone: (269) 471-1100

Dial-A-Ride (Benton Harbor)
 Serves Benton Harbor / St. Joseph Area
 Phone: (269) 927-4461

Dial-A-Ride (Buchanan)
 Serves Buchanan Area with Routes to Niles
 Phone: (269) 697-0600

Dial-A-Ride (Niles)
 Serves Buchanan / Niles Area
 Phone: (269) 684-5150

Tri-State Coach Lines
 Provides transportation to Michiana and Chicago Airports
 Phone: (800) 248-8747

Helicopter Service

Bolton Air via Tyler Memorial	Niles, Michigan.....	(269) 684-1793
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Highways

I-94, I-196, M-51, M-63, M-140, U.S. 12, U.S. 31, Red Arrow Highway

Ports

Benton Harbor / St. Joseph River Harbor Authority
701 Main Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Contact: John Gruchot
Phone: (269) 983-7111 Ext. 8350

Dock 63
220 N. Wayne Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Contact: Pete Berghoff
Phone: (269) 983-5556

Consumers International Terminal Company
P.O. Box 624
Benton Harbor, MI 49023
Contact: Jack Kinney
Phone: (269) 926-1111

LaFarge Cement Corp.
200 N. Upton Drive
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Contact: Rick Moore
Phone: (269) 983-6333

The St. Joseph / Benton Harbor commercial port is located on the St. Joseph River. In addition to accommodating deep draft freighters, approval was granted in the Spring of 1995 for river barge shipping via the Mississippi River.

Rail Lines

CSX Transportation
Jeff Wagoner, Regional Development Manager
Phone: (630) 904-1493

Amtrak offers passenger service in St. Joseph, New Buffalo and Niles. Please call (800) 872-7245 for information and / or reservations. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transit, commonly referred to as the "South Shore", also provides daily commuter service to Chicago from Michiana Regional Airport located in South Bend, Indiana. Please call (800) 356-2079 for further information.

Taxi Service

Advance Car Service
Phone: (269) 926-8628

Advanced Cab
Phone: (269) 925-2115

County Programs

Brownfield Redevelopment

A brownfield is an environmentally contaminated property. Through the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, a developer of contaminated property can be reimbursed for eligible environmental activities that they paid for as well as a 10% single business tax credit for the investment in building, demolition, renovation or improvements, machinery and equipment. In addition, cleanup costs are now 50% lower for industrial and commercial properties. Berrien County has a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority that is able to implement brownfield plans for properties on behalf of a municipality. Properties that are blighted or obsolete may also qualify for capture of these same taxes under the Core Communities Initiative. Contact Berrien County Community Development at (269) 983-7111, ext. 8617 for more information.

Obsolete Property Rehabilitation

Developers of commercial property and commercial housing property now have the ability to be exempt from ad valorem property taxes under the Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act. This act allows commercial properties to receive property rehabilitation exemption certificates if they reside within qualified local governmental units. Commercial rehabilitation projects must show an increase in the likelihood of commercial activity, creating employment or reducing its loss, or increasing residence within the building's community. To receive an exemption certificate, a developer must first apply to a qualified local governmental unit (QLGU). The QLGUs in Berrien County are Benton Harbor and Benton Charter Township.

Industrial Facilities Tax Abatement

Industrial facilities (including high-technology facilities), machinery and equipment are eligible to receive an exemption of real and personal property taxes for up to 12 years. This tax savings is realized when the company pays its Industrial Facilities Tax (IFT). Berrien County Economic Development administers tax abatements to industrial facilities in the county at no charge. For obsolete machinery or plants, a 100% property tax exemption is granted on the value of the improvement. For new plant and/or machinery and equipment, the tax is half the local property tax millage rate, plus the 6-mill statewide education tax, reducing the property tax by almost 50%. For a speculative building, the local government must declare a manufacturing facility as such. Then, costs are eligible for a property tax reduction by almost 50%. Contact Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance at (269) 683-1833.

Revolving Loan Fund

Berrien County Community Development has a revolving loan fund that is used to promote the growth of small, entrepreneurial companies. Typically, these loans are coordinated with a primary conventional lender and the Small Business Administration. The size of these loans and the interest rate are determined on a case-by-case basis. The interest rate is no less than prime rate and usually no higher than 2 points over prime. Companies that complete the application and are eligible to receive a loan can anticipate a turnaround time on the receipt of the loan monies of 30 days or more. Contact Berrien County Community Development at (269) 983-7111 ext. 8617 for more information.

Local Programs

North Berrien Community Development

North Berrien Community Development is a non-profit community-based corporation that represents the townships and cities of Coloma and Watervliet in their efforts to influence the development and changes within the Paw-Paw Lake area. North Berrien Community Development also provides services as requested to Bainbridge and Hagar Townships. North Berrien Community Development is the resource that the community looks to for the coordination of programs that are grant or loan eligible. It also serves as an information center for the area on projects and players that are influential in the changes within the community. Projects that are sponsored by the organization are varied, but do emphasize the job creation and job maintenance aspects of the community. For more information on the programs available, contact Chana Kniebes at (269) 468-4430.

Cornerstone Alliance

Cornerstone Alliance is a non-profit, investor driven community and economic development organization focusing on tax and job base creation, with an emphasis on socially and economically distressed areas, facilitating change through partnerships within the communities comprised of Benton Harbor, St. Joseph, Benton Charter Township, St. Joseph Charter Township, Lincoln Charter Township, and Royaltown Township. To support its mission, Cornerstone Alliance offers economic development tools, public relations services, business and education partnerships, employee recruitment and assimilation, and small business services. For more information, call Cornerstone Alliance at (269) 925-6100.

Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance

Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance (SMEGA), Inc. is a nonprofit economic development corporation promoting industrial retention and the creation of jobs in Bertrand Township, Buchanan City and Township, Galien Township and Village, Niles City and Township, and Three Oaks Township and Village, with its primary emphasis on the Greater Niles area. SMEGA is committed to being the primary economic development organization to ensure the retention and creation of jobs and tax base within the Greater Niles and Buchanan area. For information on incentives offered by SMEGA, contact Barkley Garrett at (269) 683-1833.

Other Incentives

A few local municipalities, Village of Baroda, City of Buchanan, City of Niles and Village of Stevensville, also offer revolving loan funds. Depending upon availability of funds, Berrien County and a municipality can both provide revolving loans for a specific project to further enhance the equity position of a company with a financial institution. Please check with each municipality for availability.

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Programs

Community Development Block Grants

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are state administered federal grants that typically involve public infrastructure projects for economic and community development and housing projects. One of the main goals of the program is to provide businesses with an incentive for location or expansion that will result in permanent job creation or expansion. At least 51% of the jobs must be held by persons with low to moderate income. To be considered for CDBG funding, a local government must prepare a submittal to MEDC. Contact MEDC at (888) 522-0103 or Berrien County Community Development at (269) 983-7111, ext. 8617 for more information.

Industrial Development Revenue Bonds

IDRBs are an attractive source of financial assistance that provides healthy, profitable firms locating or expanding in Michigan with capital cost savings stemming from the difference between taxable and tax-exempt interest rates. Public facilities which generate a revenue stream (parking structures, for instance) have traditionally been financed by municipalities through the mechanism of a tax-exempt "revenue bond". IDRBs apply this same tax-exempt finance mechanism to the "public purpose" of economic development. The governmental unit borrows money from private capital markets, secured only by the project's revenues (rather than the government's full faith and credit). Interest income earned on bonds issued by a governmental entity to finance a project for a private company which has demonstrated a good public purpose is exempt from federal and state income taxes, thereby reducing the cost of capital to an average 75%-85% of prime. Contact MEDC at (888) 522-0103 or Berrien County Community Development at (269) 983-7111, ext. 8617 for more information.

MEGA/Hi-Tech MEGA

Michigan Economic Growth Authority (MEGA) is the state's response to interstate competition for company expansions and relocations and the promotion of high-tech business in traditional and emerging industries (Hi-Tech MEGA) by providing a credit against the Single Business Tax. Companies engaged in manufacturing, R&D, wholesale trade or office operations are eligible to apply for the MEGA credit, while businesses in advanced computing, biotechnology, electronic device technology, engineering and laboratory testing related to product research and development, medical device technology, advanced vehicle technology, or technology that assists in the assessment or prevention of threats or damage to human health or the environment are eligible to apply for the High-Tech MEGA. Since MEGA's application process has steps that must be completed in a specific order, companies must contact MEDC at (888) 522-0103 before announcement or commencement of any project.

Venture Capital

Michigan's venture funding initiatives are designed to improve access to private venture capital for Michigan growth-oriented firms. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation has developed a comprehensive directory of Michigan resources involved with venture funding, including more detailed profiles of venture funds and their interests. For a listing of venture capital firms, visit MEDC at <http://medc.michigan.org/GreatLocation/Firm/>

Economic Development Job Training

The Economic Development Job Training (EDJT) program seeks to ensure that Michigan employers have the highly trained technical workers they need to compete in the global economy. All Michigan-based companies are eligible to compete for the specialized training funds, which are channeled through community colleges, intermediate school districts, licensed proprietary schools, and trade academies. The fund is the link between local training providers, employers, economic

development organizations, local Michigan Works! agencies, MDCD, and MEDC. Monies can be used to create jobs or upgrade skills for existing workers. Grants are awarded through an annual competition each November. Contact MEDC at (888) 522-0103 or Berrien County Community Development at (269) 983-7111, ext. 8617 for more information.

Michigan Technical Education Center

Michigan has recently established Michigan Technical Education Centers (M-TEC's), one of which is located at Lake Michigan College. These centers are focused on delivering training programs in high-wage, high-skill, high-demand occupations to increase the numbers of skilled employees in these fields. These centers are designed to promote the highest standard of partnership between business, industry and education skill-based, open-entry, individualized and self-paced training for students and businesses. For more information, contact MEDC at (888) 522-0103 or the Lake Michigan College M-TEC at (269) 926-6832.

Michigan Virtual University

Michigan Virtual University is the nation's first technical school without walls, bringing the campus to the workplace. It delivers high-quality, convenient, and cost-effective education and training to Michigan's current and future workforce. A skilled and up-to-date workforce can help Michigan:

- Preserve existing jobs and draw new companies and jobs to Michigan.
- Boost the ability of global competitiveness of Michigan companies.

MVU is a flexible, market-driven organization that contracts for the delivery of its programs and services through Michigan's public universities, community colleges, private colleges, and private sector training providers. For more information, visit MVU at www.mivu.org, or call (517) 336-7733.

Youth-Registered Apprenticeship Tax Credit

A Single Business Tax credit of up to \$2,000 per year is available to employers who train registered apprentices under age 20 who are enrolled in a high school or GED program. This credit covers up to 50% of wage-related costs of the apprentice, including salary and other payroll expenses, and up to 100% of course-related costs.

Under a formal agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training:

- Students are employed part-time with structured on-the-job training, combined with classroom work.
- Wages are paid on a graduated scale leading to journeyman status
- Continued employment with the firm is expected.

For more information, contact MEDC at (888) 522-0103.

Chambers Of Commerce

Bridgman Area
P.O. Box 871
Bridgman MI 49106
Phone: (269) 465-4413
www.bridgmanarea.org

Cornerstone Chamber
P.O. Box 428
Benton Harbor MI 49023
Phone: (269) 925-6100
www.cornerstonechamber.com

Lakeshore Chamber
P.O. Box 93
Stevensville MI 49127
Phone: (269) 429-1170
www.lakeshorechamber.org

Buchanan Area
103 W. Front Street
Buchanan MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-3291
www.buchanan.mi.us

Four Flags Area
321 E. Main Street
Niles MI 49120
Phone: (269) 683-3720
www.nilesmi.com

Coloma/Watervliet Area
P.O. Box 418
Coloma MI 49038
Phone: (269) 468-9160
www.coloma-watervliet.org

Harbor Country
15311 Three Oaks Road
Three Oaks, MI 49128
Phone: (269) 469-5409
www.harborcountry.org

Commercial & Industrial Sites

Available sites can be viewed at www.berriencounty.org.

For further information, contact:

Berrien County Community Development Department
Jennifer Arent, Community Development Technician
Administration Center, 4th Floor
701 Main Street
St. Joseph MI 49085
Phone: (269) 983-7111, Ext. 8788
Fax: (269) 982-8611

Cornerstone Alliance
Thad Rieder, Business Development
38 W. Wall Street
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: (269) 757-0292

North Berrien Community Development
Chana Kniebes, Community Development Coordinator
P.O. Box 1028
Coloma, MI 49038
Phone: (269) 468-4430
Fax: (269) 468-7088

Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance (SMEGA)
Barkley Garrett, Executive Director
333 N. 2nd Street
Suite 302
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 683-1833
Fax: (269) 683-7515

Economic Development Associations

Michigan Association of Counties

935 N. Washington Avenue
Lansing, Michigan 48906
Phone: (800) 258-1152 or (517) 372-5374
Fax: (517) 482-4599

The Michigan Association of Counties recognizes the need for a strong economic development climate at the state and local levels. We are aware of the strategic importance the agricultural industry has to the State of Michigan, and the vital need to protect our natural resources such as our forests and water. Sound land use policies relate intricately to the above issues. To enhance our business climate, we believe that the state and local governments must work with companies to help them attain high public health standards and safety performances to increase and to encourage economic development and retention.

Michigan Economic Developers Association

John Avery, Executive Director
PO Box 15096
Lansing, MI 48901-5096
Phone: (517) 241-0011
Fax: (517) 241-0089
E-mail: avery.john@medaweb.org

The Michigan Economic Developers Association was founded in 1960 to advance economic development throughout Michigan, and increase the individual member's effectiveness in the economic development profession by providing a variety of services and programs.

Michigan Municipal League

1675 Green Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
George D. Goodman, Executive Director
Phone: (734) 669-6303
E-mail: ggoodman@mml.org

The Michigan Municipal League, organized in 1899, is the Michigan association of cities and villages that provides a variety of services to its member municipalities and their officials.

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

John Egelhaaf, Executive Director
185 E. Main Street, Suite 801
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: (269) 925-1137
Website: www.swmpc.org

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) serves Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties and is one of 14 regional planning and development organizations in the State of Michigan.

Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center - West (MMTC)

Michelle Cleveland, Vice President
The Right Place Program
111 Pearl Street
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Phone: (616) 771-0325
Fax: (616) 771-0329

As the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center West regional office, The Right Place Program of Grand Rapids links area manufacturers to a network of technical resources. By working in partnership with other economic development organizations, it helps to deliver these services to a 17-county region.

- **Performance Benchmarking**

To help small or mid-sized manufacturers get started, The Right Place Program offers free performance benchmarking. This service provides customized reports that can form the basis for comparison with manufacturers from the same industry, and lays the foundation for a learning plan designed to improve a company's skills and performance.

- **Inter-firm Learning**

Manufacturers fulfill their learning plans through either inter-firm learning programs or customized solutions. When firms learn from each other and an industry championed facilitator, each gains the experienced assistance they need to turn improvement goals into reality.

- **Types of inter-firm learning and customized assistance programs include:**

- Tours of best practice
- Industry conferences
- Workshops
- User groups
- Industry councils
- Benchmark studies
- Customized manufacturing assessment and consulting

Economic Development Organizations

Berrien County Community Development Department

Dan Fette, Director
Administration Center, 4th Floor
701 Main Street
St. Joseph MI 49085
Phone: (269) 983-7111, Ext. 8617
Fax: (269) 982-8611

The Berrien County Community Development Department oversees Economic Development, Planning, Waste Management, Transportation and Resource Recovery. The Department works closely with community leaders and governments to coordinate their activities that deal with attracting and maintaining businesses within Berrien County through pooling resources. It is also the focal point for many projects that are multi-governmental. The Berrien County Community Development Department is the resource that the community looks to for the coordination of programs that are grant or loan eligible.

Cornerstone Alliance

Rob Cleveland, Executive President
38 West Wall Street; P.O. Box 428
Benton Harbor, MI 49023
Phone: (269) 925-6100
Fax: (269) 925-4471

Cornerstone Alliance is a non-profit, investor-driven economic development organization focusing on tax and job base creation, with an emphasis on socially and economically distressed areas. Its vision is to "create individual opportunity in a world-class community through partnerships."

North Berrien Community Development

Chana Kniebes, Community Development Coordinator
P.O. Box 1028
Coloma MI 49038
Phone: (269) 468-4430

North Berrien Community Development is a non-profit community-based corporation that represents the townships and cities of Coloma and Watervliet in their efforts to influence the development and changes within the Paw-Paw Lake area. They also provide services as requested to Bainbridge and Hagar Townships. The Paw-Paw Lake area is located in northern Berrien County on I-94.

Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance (SMEGA)

Barkley Garrett, Executive Director
333 N. 2nd Street
Suite 302
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 683-1833
Fax: (269) 683-7515

Whether you're looking for a fully serviced expansion site to build a new facility, or you're seeking to move your regional manufacturing or distribution division into an existing facility, SMEGA is here to help you with all your business needs.

Tourism

Southwest Michigan Business & Tourism Directory
P.O. Box 465
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 428-7062
Website: www.swmiDirectory.org

Pure Michigan Travel
300 North Washington Square
Lansing, MI 48913
Phone: (800) 644-2489
Website: www.michigan.org

Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council
2300 Pipestone Road
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: (269) 925-6301
Website: www.swmichigan.org

West Michigan Tourist Association
741 Kenmoor Avenue, Suite E
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
Phone: (800) 442-2084
Website: www.wmta.org

St. Joseph Today
301 State Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 985-1111
Website: www.stjoetoday.org

Libraries

Benton Harbor Public Library
213 East Wall Street
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: (269) 926-6139

Coloma Public Library
151 West Center Street
Coloma, MI 49038
Phone: (269) 468-3431

Lincoln Township Public Library
2099 West John Beers Road
Stevensville, MI 49127
Phone: (269) 429-9575

Berrien Springs Community Library
215 West Union Street
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Phone: (269) 471-7074

Eau Claire District Library
6528 East Main Street
Eau Claire, MI 49111
Phone: (269) 461-6241

New Buffalo Public Library
33 North Thompson Street
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-2933

City of Bridgman Library
4460 Lake Street
Bridgman, MI 49106
Phone: (269) 465-3663

Galien Township Library
302 N. Cleveland Ave
Galien, MI 49113
Phone: (269) 545-8281

Niles District Library
620 East Main Street
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 683-8545

Buchanan District Library
128 East Front Street
Buchanan, MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-3681

Howard Branch Library
2341 Yankee Street
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 684-1680

Maud Preston Memorial Library
500 Market Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 983-7167

Three Oaks Public Library
3 North Elm Street
Three Oaks, MI 49128
Phone: (269) 756-5621

Newspapers

Berrien County Record
(Weekly)
P.O. Box 191
Buchanan, MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-3878

Journal Era
(Weekly)
P.O. Box 98
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
Phone: (269) 473-5421

South Bend Tribune
(Daily)
314 E. Main Street
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 684-6802

Harbor Country News
(Weekly)
112 N. Whittaker Street
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-1410

New Buffalo Times
(Weekly)
5 N. Eagle
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-1100

South County Gazette
(Weekly)
110 N. Elm Street
Three Oaks, MI 49128
Phone: (269) 756-2421

Herald-Palladium
(Daily)
P.O. Box 128
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 429-2400

Niles Daily Star
(Daily)
217 N. Fourth Street
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 683-2100

Tri-City Record
(Weekly)
P.O. Box 7
Watervliet, MI 49098
Phone: (269) 463-6397

Retail Areas

Benton Charter Township has major shopping facilities that include the Orchards Mall with J.C. Penney and Carson as anchor stores. Other areas include Target Plaza (Old Navy, TJ Maxx, Dunham's Sports, Pier One, Kohl's Department Store, Michael's Craft Store, Pet Smart, et al) and several major stand-alone retailers such as Wal-Mart, Meijer, Lowe's Home Improvement, Home Depot and Gordon's Food Service.

New Buffalo and the surrounding **Harbor Country** communities of **Harbert, Lakeside, Sawyer, Three Oaks** and **Union Pier** offer great places to shop for antiques. From roadside stands and estate sales to antique malls, Harbor Country has long been an antique shopper's destination of choice.

Beautiful downtown **St. Joseph** offers art galleries, antiques and museum stores alongside clothing and gift stores. Sidewalk cafés are plentiful, along with one-of-a-kind restaurants – some with a view of Lake Michigan.

Coloma and **Watervliet** invite you to experience quaint antique shops, fresh farm markets and beautiful wineries. Experience nationally renowned, one-of-a-kind handmade truffles and so much more at The Chocolate Garden.

Berrien Springs is home to Apple Valley Market - Michigan's largest natural food store offering the widest variety of vegetarian foods, vitamins and natural foods. With over 600 bulk items, fresh produce, a bakery, and a deli serving homemade vegetarian entrees every day, Apple Valley Market offers a convenient shopping experience.

In **Niles**, walk the streets of the historic downtown area while shopping for treasures in one of the many antique shops, specialty stores or picturesque downtown stores.

The smaller **communities throughout Berrien County** offer unique shopping opportunities, from eclectic to nautical and fancy to fun. New shopping experiences await you at every turn.

Senior Citizens Centers

Area Agency on Aging, Region IV
2900 Lakeview Avenue
St Joseph, Michigan 49085
Phone: (269) 983-0177 Fax: (269) 983-2483

Benton Harbor / Benton Township Senior Center
225 Colfax Avenue
Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022
Phone: (269) 927-2497 Fax: (269) 927-4055

Buchanan Senior Services
131 S. Oak Street
Buchanan, Michigan 49107
Phone: (269) 695-7119 Fax: (269) 695-7282

Central County Center for Senior Citizens Inc.
4083 E. Shawnee Road
Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103
Phone: (269) 471-2017 Fax: (269) 471-4147

North Berrien Senior Center, Inc.
6648 Ryno Road, P.O. Box 730
Coloma, Michigan 49038
Phone: (269) 468-5682 Fax: (269) 468-9534

River Valley Senior Center
13321 Red Arrow Highway
Sawyer, Michigan 49125
Phone: (269) 469-4556 Fax: (269) 469-3486

St Joseph / Lincoln Township Senior Center
3271 Lincoln Avenue
St Joseph, Michigan 49085
Phone: (269) 429-7768 Fax: (269) 429-7764

Senior Citizens Center Niles
1109 Bell Road
Niles, Michigan 49120
Phone: (269) 683-9380 Fax: (269) 683-5359

Senior Nutrition Services, Region IV
1708 Colfax Avenue
Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022
Phone: (269) 925-0137 Fax: (269) 925-0557

This Community Profile of
BERRIEN COUNTY

Has Been Prepared By:

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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information. However, as data is constantly changing, Berrien County will be held harmless for any omissions or errors contained herein.

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