

City of New Buffalo

History

The creation of the City of New Buffalo was the result of a violent October storm in 1834. During the storm Captain Wessell Whittaker's schooner, Post Boy, ran aground at State Creek near what is now the present Village of Grand Beach. The captain and crew survived, but had to walk 15 miles south to Michigan City to reach a settlement. Struck by the beauty of the wooded area and the advantages of the natural harbor created by the junction of Lake Michigan, the Galien River, and Potawatomi Lake, Whittaker quickly filed a land claim. He then laid out plans for a city that he named New Buffalo, after his hometown of Buffalo, New York. Whittaker convinced some of his close friends of the value of the property and persuaded them into a partnership. Certain that they would make fortunes in real estate speculation, they began the settlement of New Buffalo.

On March 28, 1836, a year before Michigan became a state, the Village of New Buffalo was formed and Alonzo Bennett became its first president. Land prices in the area increased rapidly until 1841, a year that was marked by a severe winter and the start of a brief economic decline as well as the death of Captain Whittaker. The faithful few that remained in New Buffalo during that year kept their spirits alive with hope for better days. Their faithfulness was rewarded. With the arrival of spring, many of the old settlers returned and the economy rebounded.

The Michigan Central Railroad came to New Buffalo in 1849, sparking an economic boom. In order to complete their journeys, people en route to Chicago had to get off at New Buffalo and either board lake ships or travel by land around the southern end of Lake Michigan. The boom collapsed in 1852 with the completion of the Michigan Central line to Chicago. The collapse of 1852 affected New Buffalo until the late 19th century. With arrival of the automobile in the early 1900's, New Buffalo became the Gateway of Michigan and revitalization began with the influx of tourists.

Observations

The City of New Buffalo has grown in popularity for Chicagoans as a tourist destination. Beautiful marinas, condos, beaches and a quaint downtown area provide an ideal atmosphere for all. New Buffalo is the proud owner of a beautiful harbor, perfect for recreational purposes. It has a number of sandy beaches that add to the beauty of the area.

Community Vision

- Maintain the status quo of an upper class resort area.
- Continue to focus on improving recreational facilities.
- Attract clean, light industry to sustain the community economically during the winter.

Chamber of Commerce

Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce
 530 S. Whittaker Street, Suite F
 New Buffalo, MI 49117
 Phone: (269) 469-5409
www.harborcountry.org

All Demographic Information is based upon the 2009 Census Estimate

Population

1980 Census	2,878	
1990 Census	2,317	19.49 % decrease
2000 Census	2,200	5.05 % decrease
2010 Census	2,438	10.82 % increase

Personal Income

Median Family	\$50,000
Average per Capita	\$25,844
Median Household	\$39,487

Labor Force

Total Work Force	815
Unemployment Rate	6.5 %

Principal Economic Base Employers

Harbor Grand Hotel	24 Employees
New Buffalo City	36 Employees
New Buffalo Savings Bank.....	29 Employees
New Buffalo School District.....	108 Employees
Oselka Marine	25 Employees

Housing

Number of Dwellings	1,401
Owner Occupied	651
Renter Occupied	138
Median Rent	\$628
Median Home Value	\$214,700

Building Permits – 2010

	Number Issued	Dollar Amount
Residential	5	\$1,199,355.00
Commercial	6	\$2,648,300.00
Other	134	\$1,459,910.00
Total	145	\$5,307,565.00



Government

Municipal Hall

New Buffalo City Hall
224 West Buffalo Street
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-1500
Fax: (269) 469-7917
Website: www.cityofnewbuffalo.org

Council Meetings

Third Tuesday of Each Month
Start: 6:30 p.m.

Mayor: William "Rusty" Geiser
Mayor Pro-Tem: Migs Murray
Councilmembers: Susan Moroko
Ray Lawson
Warren Peterson
City Manager: Michael "Mitch" Mitchell
City Clerk: Sandra White
City Treasurer: Dana Pinkert

County Commissioner

Andrew Vavra
(District 10)
7120 W. Elm Valley Road
Three Oaks MI 49128
Phone: (269) 756-7162
vavrafamily@qtm.net

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 Representative

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

U.S. Representative

Fred Upton, 6th Congressional District
2183 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-3761
Fax: (202) 225-4986
tellupton@mail.house.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 Access via
website Contact Center

Public Services

Police

Chief of Police: Larry Pitchford
Phone: (269) 469-1593
Sworn Officers: 5
Civilian Employees: 0
Number of Cars: 4

Fire

Fire Chief: Chris Huston
Phone: (269) 469-4993
Number of Stations: 1
Part-Time Paid: 21
Volunteers: 0
Insurance Rate Class: 6

Trash Collection

New Buffalo City Hall
Phone: (269) 469-1500
Type: Municipal
Pick Up Day: Tuesday

Recycling

Berrien County Community Development
Jill Adams, Environmental Specialist
(269) 983-7111 Ext. 8234
Program information available online at
www.berriencounty.org/recycle.

Water

City of New Buffalo Water System
Phone: (269) 469-0381
Source: Lake Michigan
Capacity: 2,000,000 GPD

Sewer

GRSD Sewer Authority
Phone: (269) 469-3434
Source: Activated Sludge
Capacity: 1,000,000 GPD

Telephone

AT&T
Residential: 1-800-288-2020

Gas

Semco Energy Company
Phone: (800) 624-2019

Electric

American Electric Power Company
(800) 311-6424
2425 Meadowbrook Road; Benton Harbor, MI

Taxes

In March 1994, Michigan voters approved a new tax structure (Proposal A). The following table provides a simplistic look at the taxes currently levied within this community. Property tax is based now upon taxable value, not state equalized value.

General Taxes

General County	4.7723
Law Enforcement/ Public Safety	0.3500
Special Voted 911	0.2500
Senior Citizens	0.3000
LMC College	1.7854
City	10.4823
Special Voted	0.4634
Subtotal	18.4034

School Taxes (Berrien RESA)

State Education Tax	6.0000
Non-Homestead (Business)	18.0000
Extra Voted Building & Site	0.0000
Debt Retirement	1.9300
Berrien RESA	0.1745
Special Education	2.1954

Subtotals

Homestead	10.2999
Non-Homestead (Business)	28.2999

New Buffalo

Education

The City of New Buffalo is served by the following school district:

New Buffalo Area Schools
1112 East Clay Street
New Buffalo, MI 49117
Phone: (269) 469-6010
Enrollment: 654



This Community Snapshot has been prepared by the Berrien County Community Development Department. For more detailed information on services available in Berrien County, please visit our website at www.berriencounty.org/CommunityDevelopment.

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.