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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
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.

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

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.
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
- Small Town Feel
- Charming Downtown
- Local Destinations
- Central Location
- Engaged Community
- Historic Preservation
- Access to Natural Resources
- Proximity to Attractions
- Buchanan Promenade/School System
- Agriculture/Farm to Table
- Involved Civil Servants
- Established Community Events
- Low Cost of Living

#### Weaknesses
- Limited Commercial Real Estate
- Limited Residential 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
- 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 & W Main St)
- Parks & Recreation/Investment
- Andrews University: “A Vision for Buchanan” Guide
- Work-From-Home Allows for Relocation
- Tourism - The Common, Historical, Arts & Culture

#### Threats
- Competition with Other SW Michigan Towns
- Being Singly Known for Cannabis Retail
- Lack of Community Buy-In
- Supply Not Meeting Demand
- Loss “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
- Restricting/Tax Diversification
- 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Arts/Culture</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• McCoy Creek Trail</td>
<td>• Roti Roti Art Center</td>
<td>• Parades</td>
<td>• Investment Incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hiking</td>
<td>• Pears Mill</td>
<td>• Annual Events</td>
<td>• Motivated Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• BikeBuchanan</td>
<td>• Buchanan District</td>
<td>• Good Schools</td>
<td>• Affordable Commercial Real Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fishing</td>
<td>• Library</td>
<td>• Multiple Parks</td>
<td>• Education Incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Kayaking</td>
<td>• Tin Shop Theatre</td>
<td>• Safe</td>
<td>• Redevelopment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Water Sports</td>
<td>• The Common</td>
<td>• Year-Round</td>
<td>• Cost-of-Living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paddle Boarding</td>
<td>• Music Culture</td>
<td>Free Family Programming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gardening</td>
<td>• Redbud MX</td>
<td>Buchanan Promise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School Sports</td>
<td>• Sustainability</td>
<td>Involvement Opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Golfing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Camping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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
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

Colors

Fonts

MAIN LOGO FONT: Bonard
SCRIPT: Black Jack Script
BODY TEXT: Baskerville Old Face
Marketing Channels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Digital</th>
<th>Physical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Print Collateral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events Calendar</td>
<td>Special Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>Merchandise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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
• 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Live in the City of Buchanan | Promote Buchanan as a lifestyle brand  
- Social Media  
- Website  
- Print | Increased activity, engagement and higher school enrollment |
| | Market and Distribute City-Issued Financial Relocation and Upper Story Residential Downtown Incentives  
- 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  
- Social Media  
- Website  
- Door-to-Door | 10+ Issued Incentives in 1 Year Since Roll-Out (December 2022) |
| | Developer Video Series  
- YouTube Channel  
- Targeted Facebook Advertising | Increased developer communication in 2022 in direct relation to video launch |
| | Distribution of “A Vision for Buchanan” to stakeholders  
- Local and Regional | Increased calls to Community Development Director |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovative Redevelopment Solutions</th>
<th>Applications to granting from Downtown Development Endowment fund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MMS and MCGF Downtown Development Endowment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Drive more traffic and sales/support to Buchanan businesses and organizations**

  - Promote area businesses and organizations
    - Social Media
    - Press Releases
    - Collaborations

  - Reported increases in demand and sales

- **Support and improve existing community assets through increased awareness, funding and exposure**

  - Riverfront Improvement Master Plan

  - Increased usage of river frontage by non-owning parties

- **Annual Events**

  - Annual Events
    - Thrill on the Hill
    - Xmas Event

  - Annual Festivals and Events are well attended and drive sales and visibility

- **Increased Programming and Attention to The Common**

  - Increased attendance and inquiries for events at The Common
### Marketing Goal 2

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

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

### 2022 Marketing Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>● Develop Tourism Attraction Plan</td>
<td>● Attractions Map&lt;br&gt;● 4 Seasons Pamphlets&lt;br&gt;● Thrill on the Hill Audience Capture&lt;br&gt;● US 12 Sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>● Presence in Tourism Centers and Websites</td>
<td>● SWMI Tourism Council, Regional Chambers, Berrien County, Etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Seasonal Collateral Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>• Buchanan Merchandise</td>
<td>• Design and Obtain Sweatshirts and Mugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Distribution Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>• “Winter in Buchanan” Campaign</td>
<td>• Small Town Big Christmas Merchandise Sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Photography/Videography: STBC, Winter, Etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>• Finalize Marketing Schedule for 2023</td>
<td>• Develop Planned Posts, Collateral, Messaging, Etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2023 Marketing Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expand Social Media Presence into Pinterest</td>
<td>• Blog-Style Social Media Videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tourism Photography and Blogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Partner with Buchanan MMS Promotion Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote Recreational Activities for Summer</td>
<td>• Camping, Fishing, Golf, “Plan Your Trip to Buchanan”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop Package Incentive “Buchanan Pass” - Collaboration with Chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Annual Festivals - Redbud Riverfest (May), Thrill on the Hill (August), Small Town Big Christmas (November)</td>
<td>• Plan for New Annual Festival - Brew &amp; River Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• US 12 Sign</td>
<td>• Install US 12 Directional Signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication Board</td>
<td>• Install and Use Communication Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>