



Grand Rapids, Michigan



Grand Rapids, Michigan, the second-largest city in the state, is situated on both sides of the Grand River. Grand Rapids was the home of Gerald R. Ford, the 38th president of the United States.

Grand Rapids has several museums, including the Grand Rapids Art Museum; Grand Rapids Children’s Museum; Grand Rapids Public Museum, which offers exhibits on history, nature, cultural heritage, and the Roger B. Chaffee Planetarium; and the Gerald R. Ford Museum. The Meyer May House, designed in the Prairie style, is one of the most complete restorations of a Frank Lloyd Wright house in existence.

Grand Rapids offers theater productions at the Actors’ Theatre Grand Rapids (Spectrum Theater), Broadway Grand Rapids, Circle Theatre at the Aquinas College Performing Arts Center; Grand Rapids Civic Theater, and the Master Arts Theater. Other cultural opportunities include the Grand Rapids Ballet, Grand Rapids Symphony, and Opera Grand Rapids. The Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park Amphitheatre offers outdoor concerts with nationally known artists. The Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts presents programs in visual arts, performance art, literature, film, music, and dance.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Downtown offers a variety of housing opportunities, from luxury condominiums to affordable apartments in new and converted or rehabilitated buildings. Heritage Hill is a large historic district with a concentration of 19th- and early 20th-century homes in styles ranging from Greek Revival to Prairie. Single-family homes and apartments are available in this neighborhood, which is conveniently located near the hospitals. Also conveniently located near the hospitals, the Belknap-Lookout neighborhood consists of single-family and multifamily houses; this neighborhood is situated on a cliff overlooking the downtown and the Grand River. Newberry Place is a new cohousing townhouse development in which residents share meals and other activities. Featuring apartments and condominiums in converted furniture factories, the North Monroe area is located along the Grand River’s boardwalk, which extends from downtown to Riverside Park. Two-story, single-family homes built primarily in the 1920s through the 1940s comprise the Midtown neighborhood. The northeast and northwest contain newer single-family homes built during the 1990s and early 2000s.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Grand Rapids has municipal and county parks. Calder Plaza is the home of Alexander Calder’s sculpture La Grande Vitesse (The Grand Rapids) and two other sculptures; this plaza is the site of many festivals and special events. In addition, the city has a dog park at Hillcrest Park, the Rosa Parks Circle Ice Rink, and three outdoor swimming pools. County parks include Millennium Park, which offers a sandy swimming beach; beach house; picnic facilities; play areas; and paved trails for cycling, walking, running, and in-line skating. The Donald Lamoreaux Park has baseball diamonds, cross-country skiing, fishing, and nature trails.

More than 160 works comprise the permanent collection of the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, which features indoor and outdoor gardens, a tropical conservatory, nature trails, a guided tram, and a children’s garden. The John Ball Zoo, with over 1,000 animals, has an aquarium, children’s zoo, African area, and chimpanzee exhibit.

The Grand Rapids Griffins are a professional hockey team in Grand Rapids. The West Michigan Whitecaps baseball team plays in nearby Comstock Park.

EDUCATION

Grand Rapids Public Schools educate approximately 19,000 students in 28 elementary schools, 15 middle schools, and 7 high schools. Some of these schools are theme schools, such as Montessori, environmental sciences, or creative arts, and may serve only students in one grade; others are centers of innovation, such as engineering and health sciences. In addition, the school district offers 5 alternative education programs, 8 programs for juvenile justice, and 18 special education programs. Grand Rapids Public Schools has four year-round schools.

Many opportunities for higher education are available in Grand Rapids. Davenport University offers associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees in business, health (including nursing), and technology. Grand Valley State University’s Pew Campus provides opportunities at the undergraduate and graduate level in business, criminal justice, education, engineering, legal studies, nursing, public administration, and social work. Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees in art and art education. Calvin College is a Christian liberal arts college with a theological seminary. Aquinas College is a Catholic Dominican liberal arts college that also offers master’s degree programs in business and education. Cornerstone University is a Christ-centered university that offers associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees in business and ministry. Kuyper College is a Christian college that offers bachelor’s degrees in ministry, business, communication, information technology, education, and nursing. Grace Bible College has two-year, four-year, and five-year programs. Grand Rapids Community College provides associate’s degrees and certificate programs in the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Workforce Development. Thomas M. Cooley Law School is an independent graduate college of law that has full-time and part-time programs.

HEALTH CARE

Two health systems serve Grand Rapids with more than 1,500 adult and pediatric acute-care beds. In addition, the city has a rehabilitation hospital for neurologic and orthopedic care, a long-term acute-care hospital, a behavioral health care facility, and a mental health and substance abuse facility.

CITY STATS

2008

City Population	193,159
Metropolitan Statistical Area Population	776,505
Per Capita Personal Income, Grand Rapids–Wyoming, MI	\$33,582