



Kalamazoo, MI



Kalamazoo, Michigan, is located along the Kalamazoo River in the southwestern portion of the state. Members of the Pottawatomie tribe inhabited the area when pioneers began making permanent settlements in the vicinity in the early 1800s. Titus Bronson purchased a large tract of land, and in 1831 the area became known as the Village of Bronson. Bronson became very unpopular among the settlers and as a result, the town's name was changed in 1836 to Kalamazoo, a word derived from the Algonquin language.

Kalamazoo has two museums. The Kalamazoo Institute of Arts exhibits its permanent collection in rotating shows and hosts traveling exhibitions. The museum also has an interactive gallery, an auditorium, and an art school. The Kalamazoo Valley Museum celebrates history, science, and technology in highly interactive, hands-on exhibits. The museum also features a Digistar planetarium.

In nearby Portage, the Air Zoo focuses on aviation and science and displays more than 50 historical and modern aircraft. An immersive journey into the lives of endangered Bengal Tigers is also available at Air Zoo.

Kalamazoo has many performing arts venues, including the historic Kalamazoo State Theatre and Judy K. Jolliffe Theatre. Several of the venues are connected to Western Michigan University: Miller Auditorium, which hosts Broadway shows, live concerts, comedy events, and family shows; the Laura V. Shaw Theatre, the D. Terry Williams Theatre, and the Zack L. York Theatre. Venues at Kalamazoo College include the Nelda K. Balch Playhouse and The Dungeon Theatre.

Plays produced at Farmers Alley Theatre and the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre range from musicals to dramas. Other local performing groups include the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, Kalamazoo Junior Symphony, Kalamazoo Singers, Bach Festival Chorus and orchestra, and Fontana Chamber Arts.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Downtown Kalamazoo is a growing residential area consisting primarily of apartments and condominiums in buildings of various sizes. Several buildings are mixed use, with commercial on the street level and residential above, while others are newly constructed or repurposed older buildings.

Kalamazoo has several historic residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown. The Stuart Area Historic District features homes built primarily between 1850 and 1890 in such architectural styles as Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Greek Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne. Houses in the Vine Area Historic District date from 1866 to 1900 and were built in Greek Revival, Italianate, and Late Victorian styles. The neighborhood is located near the Western Michigan University campus and has a mix of student and owner-occupied housing. The Henderson Park-West Main Hill Historic District neighborhood was platted by Frank Henderson, who favored curved, tree-lined streets and deep setbacks. Completed in 1895, his 25-room Queen Anne-style Henderson Castle is an ornate house situated on a hilltop. Other historic homes were built between 1840 and 1944 in Late Victorian, Bungalow/Craftsman, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival styles.

The Parkwyn Village in Kalamazoo's Winchell neighborhood was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright as a 40-acre cooperative community of affordable housing for middle-class families near Asylum Lake. Between 1948 and 1950, Wright used concrete masonry blocks to build 3 single-story homes and 1 two-story home in the style he named "Usonian." Although only these 4 homes are pure Wright designs, his concepts influenced most of the housing in the neighborhood. Other homes in the large Winchell neighborhood are mostly mid-century modern styles built in the 1950s.

Parkview Hills is a planned unit development designed by Dr. H. Lewis Batts Jr. and Burton H. Upjohn on 288 acres of rolling, glaciated land with lakes, streams, and a forest. They limited the development to 850 residential units, which they clustered in order to increase useable open space and set aside more than 100 acres for this purpose. Construction of the houses, condominiums, townhouses, and apartments began in the 1970s. The neighborhood offers many amenities, such as heated indoor/outdoor pools, rowboats/canoes, lighted tennis courts, a play area, a club house, and a fitness center.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Kalamazoo has 33 parks with amenities that include 3 golf courses, tennis and basketball courts, a skateboard park, baseball and soccer fields, and an outdoor pool.

The 3.5-acre Bronson Park, named for the city's founder, has been the social and political heart of Kalamazoo for nearly two centuries. The Park features fountains, sculptures, and memorials and is home to many downtown events, such as Lunchtime Live! every Friday in June through September, Safe Halloween, and the Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Portage Creek runs through the 49-acre Milham Park, which has 4 playgrounds offering different levels of play for children, a golf course, and opportunities for fishing.

Crane Park features beautiful gardens and 2 tennis courts.

Spring Valley Park is located around a lake that offers boating and fishing options. The park also has 3 playgrounds, including one that is handicap accessible; a baseball diamond; a soccer field; tennis courts; and paved paths for walking and running.

Kalamazoo Mayors' Riverfront Park has launches for canoes and kayaks. The Kalamazoo River Valley Trail offers opportunities for biking, rollerblading, walking, and running. The park also has a playground and 6 basketball hoops.

Upjohn Park is an 18-acre park that contains the 50-meter Kik Pool, a "Boundless Playground," a skateboard park, multiuse field, basketball courts, tennis courts, and paved walkways.

A fenced area for off-leash dogs, a watering hole, and a separate small dog area are available at Fairmont Dog Park.

The 1,100-acre Kalamazoo Nature Center features indoor and outdoor activities, an 11-acre arboretum, 11 nature trails for hiking and cross-country skiing, and the DeLano Pioneer homestead.

EDUCATION

Kalamazoo Public Schools educate approximately 13,000 students in 17 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and 3 high schools.

Higher education is available at Western Michigan University, which is a public research university. Available undergraduate and graduate programs include Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, Western Michigan University Department of Physician Assistant, and a nursing school. Kalamazoo College is a private liberal arts college offering undergraduate degrees with a historic link to the American Baptist Church. Kalamazoo Valley Community College offers associate's degrees and certificates..

HEALTH CARE

Kalamazoo is served by two hospitals.

Borgess Medical Center: 372 licensed beds.

Bronson Methodist Hospital: 434 licensed beds..

CITY STATS

2015

Kalamazoo City Population	76,041
Metropolitan Statistical Area Population	335,340
Per Capita Personal Income, Kalamazoo-Portage, MI, MSA	\$41,760