



# Buchanan City News

"A Fine Place To Live"

[www.cityofbuchanan.com](http://www.cityofbuchanan.com)

## City Directory

City Hall	695-3844
Bldg. Dept.	695-0007
Cemetery	695-3971
Police	695-5120
D.P.W.	695-3232
Water	695-3846
Wastewater	695-5291
Code Enfor.	695-0006

## Commissioners

Joe Scanlon, Mayor  
David Hagey, Mayor Pro Tem  
Flo King  
Lon McGuire  
Patricia A. Moore

## Frequent Numbers

Courthouse	695-3887
Landfill	695-2500
Animal Control	471-7531
Sec. of St.	684-3531
Chamber	695-3291
Reliable	(800)677-1083
Library	695-3681
PostOffice	(800)275-8777
School	695-8400

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302 N. Redbud Trail  
Buchanan, MI 49107

## Working Together to Preserve and Enhance Downtown Properties

Over the past year, the City Commission, Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the Plan Commission worked together to establish a process for reviewing exterior construction projects in the Central Business District. As recommended by the Blueprint Plan, the DDA took on the task of developing design standards to preserve and enhance the historical integrity of buildings. The reality is that exterior improvements that are contrary to appropriate construction methods or contradict historic values diminish the uniqueness of the downtown. The design standards are not as stringent as historical district regulations, but allow flexibility and common sense with the goal of facilitating exterior improvements that compliment surrounding buildings. In order to prevent projects that negatively impact property values, a Design Review Committee was also established to provide guidance and advice on general historic preservation approaches. The Design Review Committee is comprised of a member from the DDA, Plan Commission and a citizen at-large with technical expertise in construction practices.

How will the process work? Upon receiving a building permit for exterior work in the Central Business District, the zoning administrator will require a building design plan to be submitted for review by the Plan Commission. At the same time, the Design Review Committee will review the building design plan and make a recommendation to the Plan Commission as part of the site plan review process. The Plan Commission meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. For more information on the design standards or the Design Review Committee, please call me at 695-3844.

I would like to extend a special thank you to the DDA and Plan Commission for their work on this important initiative.

Sincerely,  
Michael L. Hughes  
City Manager

## Dog Licenses

Dog Licenses are no longer available at City Hall. If you have a dog that is over 4 months old and does not have a license, please contact the Berrien County Animal Control Office at 269-471-7531.

## Property Tax Payments

March 1st was the last day the City of Buchanan could collect winter tax payments. If you have not paid your taxes, please contact the County Treasurer's office at 695-3887 (ext. 8569) to make payment arrangements.

## Have you signed up to pay your Utility Bills Electronically?

The City offers two convenient ways to pay your bills electronically, free of charge!!

Please go to [www.cityofbuchanan.com](http://www.cityofbuchanan.com), click on the maroon "Pay your utility bills electronically" button for all the details. If you have any questions, please call City Hall at 695-3846.

## Last day to register for May 3, 2005 School Election

Persons need to be registered by Monday, April 4, 2005 in order to be eligible to vote in the Buchanan School Election scheduled for May 3, 2005.

## Toiletology: The Science of Decreasing Your Water Bill

Leaking toilets are the most common cause of high water bills. Some sources report that nine out of ten complaints about high water bills can be traced to leaking toilets. People tend to repair drippy faucets because the drips are visible and annoying, whereas, it's easier to overlook a leaking toilet.

There are a number of signs that a toilet needs some repairs, but many toilets leak without conspicuous indications of trouble. Here are some of the obvious signs of a leaking toilet:

- If you have to jiggle the handle to make a toilet stop running
- Any sounds coming from a toilet that is not being used are sure signs of leaks
- If you have to hold the handle down to allow the tank to empty
- If you see water running over the top of the overflow, you definitely have a leaking refill valve. If you are unsure whether or not water is running over the top of the overflow pipe; sprinkle talcum powder on top of the water in the tank
- If you can see water trickling down the sides of the toilet bowl long after it's been flushed
- If water drips out of the refill tube into the overflow pipe
- If a toilet turns the water on for 15 seconds or so without you touching the handle, this is otherwise known as the phantom flusher

## DDA Reintroduces Façade Improvement Program

The Buchanan Downtown Development Authority reintroduces its Façade Improvement Program. Façade money is available for buildings within the downtown development district and is earmarked for permanent or lasting improvements to street-side façades only. Funding assistance of up to 50% of the total project cost is available, not to exceed \$5,000.

When any change of the exterior is being considered, an architect or designer must be consulted. The Program can grant up to \$500 (up to 50%) for design work when a professional architect/designer is consulted. There is a strict selection process for projects as funding is limited. All funds are granted in a reimbursement manner.

If you are interested in applying for the DDA's Façade Improvement Program, please contact Michelle Klarich, DDA Director, for an application. Phone 695-3291 or email [mklarich@cityofbuchanan.com](mailto:mklarich@cityofbuchanan.com).

## School Election

Notice is hereby given that there will be a School Election on Tuesday, May 3, 2005 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. to vote for one (1) position on the Buchanan School Board and a Millage Renewal.

Precinct Locations:

Precinct 1: City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trl.

Precinct 2: Senior Center, 131 S. Oak

Precinct 3: Buchanan Twp. Hall, 15235 Main St.

You will be receiving a new Voter Identification Card in the mail prior to the May election that will list your voting location. For all City Residents: if you normally vote at City Hall, you will vote at City Hall for the School Election; if you normally vote at the Senior Center, you will vote at the Senior Center for the School Election.

The following person has filed petitions and qualified as a candidate for the Buchanan School Board and will be on the ballot:

KAY WELSH

## Buchanan Community School District Millage Proposal, Building and Site Sinking Fund Tax Levy

This proposal renews building and site sinking fund millage that expired with the 2004 tax levy and restores millage lost as a result of "Headlee".

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property in Buchanan Community Schools, Berrien County, Michigan, be increased by and the board of education be authorized to levy .8 mill (\$.80 on each \$1,000.00 of taxable valuation) for a period of 5 years, 2005 to 2009, inclusive, for sinking fund purposes to be used for the purchase of real estate for sites for, and the construction or repair of, school buildings and all other purposes authorized by law (.77 mill of the above is a renewal of millage for building and site sinking fund purposes which expired with the 2004 tax levy and .03 mill is a restoration of millage for the same purpose lost as a result of the reduction required by the State Constitution of 1963); the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2005 is approximately \$172,800?

## Absent Voter Ballots

Absent Voter Ballots will be available from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Saturday, April 30th at Buchanan City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail. Buchanan residents may obtain an absent voter ballot for the following reasons:

1. 60 years of age or older
2. Expect to be absent from the City Election
3. Physically unable to come to the polls
4. Confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial

Questions regarding absent voting may be directed to the Buchanan City Hall, 695-3844.