

MUSKEGON MICHIGAN



LIVE-WORK-PLAY

Hello,

We invite you to consider the Muskegon Riviera as a place to call home. The Muskegon lakeshore was first called the “Riviera of the Midwest” around 1910. How exciting that today the brand has resurfaced to describe our coastline city that is popular with travelers, artists, recreation enthusiasts, fishermen and more! It is the unique combination of world-class art and world-class fishing and boating that defines us today as it did over 100 years ago. Those who have traveled extensively appreciate the vast natural resources situated on the dunes of Lake Michigan near Muskegon’s lakes, rivers, cities and towns.

Sincerely,
Cindy Larsen, *President*



380 W. Western Avenue, Suite 202 • Muskegon, MI 49440
PH (231) 722-3751 • FX (231) 728-7251
mlcc@muskegon.org • www.muskegon.org



Here to There » Driving Time

- Chicago 3 hours, 21 min.
- Cleveland 5 hours, 28 min.
- Detroit..... 3 hours, 11 min.
- Indianapolis 4 hours, 48 min.
- Milwaukee (by ferry) ... 2.5 hours.
- Toledo..... 3 hours, 32 min.
- Windsor 3 hours, 15 min.





Lakeshore Art Festival

LIVE

The lakeshore lifestyle is about balancing live-work-play, inspired by the region's 27 lakes, 27 miles of Lake Michigan beach, and over 400 miles of rivers. The liquid assets in Muskegon County attract visitors alongside new and long-time residents.

WORK

Being on the big lake means being part of the blue-water economy. Muskegon's freshwater resources, deepwater port, and growing economy create an environment for business that is exceptionally attractive.

PLAY

Take time to discover Muskegon's natural assets, like extensive trail systems for biking and hiking on signature sandy beaches/dunes. Lounge on a towel, paddleboard through waves, or cast a line out for world-class fishing. Plus, open-lake sailing, kiteboarding and beach volleyball round out leisure choices for business retreats or staycations.

LIVE



Liquid Assets

From its prime location along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, Muskegon County's water-based economy is built on advanced freshwater education and research, an innovative and dynamic business community, and destination appeal.

Education and Research – Muskegon is the seat of one of the Great Lakes foremost freshwater education and research institutions, the Robert B. Annis Water Resources Institute (AWRI), an extension of Grand Valley State University. AWRI integrates research, education and outreach to enhance and preserve the regions freshwater resources.



Muskegon Channel - Photo Courtesy of Torresen Marine



Agriculture and Industry – West Michigan’s market value for agriculture, supported by an abundance of fresh water, can exceed \$750 billion annually, supporting food processors, warehouses, packers, stockyards, food retailers, and associated businesses. Water resources from four systems welcome industries in need of a freshwater supply, while five commercial dock facilities help manufacturers get their products delivered nationally and internationally.

Lakeshore Lifestyle – A live-work-play lifestyle is inspired by the region’s 27 lakes, 27 miles of Lake Michigan beach, and 400 miles of rivers. Plus, annual festivals and events continue to be a staple including music, art, culture and food. A complete list of festivals and events can be found at www.visitmuskegon.org.

Active Made Easy



There are so many ways to be active along the Muskegon lakeshore. Enjoy kayaking, yoga on the beach, hiking or biking miles of regional trails, or learning to paddleboard and kitesurf.

The townships and countryside green spaces host vast forests, open spaces for golf, horse ranches, and connections to nature.

- **Muskegon** – Bike the paved Lakeshore Trail, with access to historic and maritime attractions, as well as shopping, dining and seasonal favorites.
- **Lakeside District** – Take a beginner-to-intermediate sailing class or private lesson.
- **North Muskegon** – Head to the Muskegon Winter Sports Complex and enjoy 12 miles of groomed lighted cross-country trails. The park has skating rinks, snowshoe trails, and a 850' luge track.
- **Norton Shores** – Enjoy miles of dunes and trails leading to Lake Michigan. Area beaches are part of Michigan's beach towns and the Gold Coast.
- **Mona Lake Park** – Home to 34 acres along Mona Lake with a boat launch, fishing pier, bike trails and more.
- **White Lake** – The small towns of Whitehall and Montague offer a great walkable, bikeable and water playground.



Photo Courtesy of Jeremy Church



Culinary Institute of Michigan

Education

Community leaders are improving opportunities for students of all ages and their families. The Muskegon Area Promise is the commitment of a two-year scholarship for resident Muskegon Area high school graduates earning a 3.5 GPA or higher. Hard work is rewarded with acceptance and full scholarships to either Muskegon Community College or Baker College. This program is available countywide (starting in 2017) thanks to private contributions.



Preschool - high school options: www.muskegonisd.org

Living in Muskegon County brings you closer to your dreams by offering this unique higher education benefit, coupled with access to premier higher educational opportunities.

Both Baker College and Muskegon Community College continue to invest and expand. Baker College recently opened a new Health Sciences Center with hands-on practical labs and equipment. Muskegon Community College is expanding with a multimillion-dollar plan for a Downtown Campus to include a new Applied Technology Entrepreneur Center. On the waterfront, Muskegon Community College is transforming an old building into a modern Lakeshore Fitness Center.

Baker College's Culinary Institute of Michigan (CIM) is a world-class learning environment nestled in the heart of Downtown Muskegon. Here, students learn both the art and the business of the foodservice industry from award-winning instructors, hands-on training, small class sizes, and real-world experience.

Muskegon Community College's Stevenson Center for Higher Education partners with Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, and Western Michigan University to offer unique programs in Muskegon, allowing occupational students to transfer to a high-quality baccalaureate program. Thirty minutes away is the main campus of Grand Valley State University, a growing institution with over 25,000 students enrolled from 82 countries offering 122 different degrees! Students can live on campus or commute to any of these prestigious institutions.



MUSKEGON COUNTY (MSA)	
Population	170,182
Home Ownership Rate.....	75%
Average Home Price	\$120K
Median Household Income	\$40,670
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau</i>	
Mean Hourly Wage.....	\$18.16
<i>Source: Bureau Labor Statistics</i>	

Lakeshore Lifestyle & Housing

From beach cottages to luxury homes, country estates to downtown lofts, you’ll find it in Muskegon on the lakeshore. West Michigan housing ranks among the top ten healthiest in the U.S. based on a 2015 report. Economic recovery is generating a flurry of home upgrades and renovations. Downtown and suburban housing continues to expand with new townhomes, market-rate condos, waterfront housing, and new subdivisions.

Downtown Muskegon is situated on Muskegon Lake and is one of the area’s entertainment hubs. The Century Club provides a venue where retailers set up shop in one unique place. Enjoy craft coffee, beer, and just down the street, gourmet cheese, organic pizza and more. The Frauenthal Theater and L.C. Walker Arena are home to music, sports and entertainers of all types year round. Downtown also hosts the newly constructed Farmers Market (one of the largest in the state). Stroll the historic area taking note of public art at nearly every turn.

The northern part of Muskegon County is home to the picturesque small towns of Whitehall and Montague on White Lake. Here, art, shopping, dining and recreation collide in a quaint atmosphere.

The Lakeside District offers an eclectic and fun place to browse, shop, or stop to or from Pere Marquette Beach. The business district features artist studios, galleries, gift and specialty shops, taverns, eateries and marinas. Hop on the Beach-Towne Trolley for a ride from downtown Muskegon through the Lakeside District to Pere Marquette Beach. www.lakesidedistrict.com.

The southern part of the county is where you will find The Lakes Mall and a grouping of national retailers that create a family shopping destination.

For more information on retail and housing, visit www.muskegon.org.

WORK



Blue Water Economy

Having fresh water for manufacturing is just the beginning of Muskegon County's blue economy. The Port of Muskegon connects businesses with the ability to ship goods and raw materials into or out of the area. As the largest deepwater port on Michigan's west coast, it's an important link to a global transportation system where 90 percent of all goods are moved by ship.

For businesses moving goods or people between Muskegon and Wisconsin, the Lake Express takes time off traveling. The high-speed ferry takes passengers and cargo across Lake Michigan to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in two hours—spring through fall.

As water shortages loom over the planet, the region's potential for developing water-based economics has never been better. Muskegon's freshwater resources, sustainable wastewater treatment system, and deepwater port create a package which today's environmentally-sensitive manufacturers highly desire. From food processors and biotech companies to craft beer brewers and manufacturers, Muskegon's blue assets and growing economy are exceptionally attractive.

- **Rail** – Michigan Shoreline Railroad connects to CSX, which offers connections to 70 ports and nationwide transloading and warehousing services.
- **Roads** – The area's divided highways and interstates include U.S. 31, I-96 and I-94.
- **Air** – Muskegon County Airport (MKG) provides air cargo, general aviation, and commercial passenger services to Chicago O'Hare International Airport.
- **Water** – As a blue economy hub and deepwater port, the Port of Muskegon offers passenger and cargo transportation. Ships can go anywhere through the Great Lakes Navigational System, which extends into the St. Lawrence Seaway and its European connections.



Photo Courtesy of Port City Group

World-Class Environment

Muskegon’s economy is as diverse as its recreational opportunities. Roughly 50% of the workforce is employed in manufacturing, healthcare and retail. The community is hiring and there are currently more than 1,000 highly skilled positions available throughout the county.

The manufacturing community is diverse, including a high concentration of aerospace, food processing, marine recreation, automotive manufacturing, and others. Rich in meeting and employee development facilities, the county is known as an ideal place to bring boards and staff members. In addition to creating master plans in comfortable settings, the area’s natural surroundings attract talent from around the world.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN MUSKEGON COUNTY

	# of employees
Mercy Health (Hospital System)	4,114
Alcoa Howmet (Aerospace)	2,200
County of Muskegon (Local Government)	1,200
ADAC Automotive (Plastics, Automotive)	970
Chassix (Diversified Machine, Inc.) (Casting & Machining Solutions)	760
Meijer Inc. (Department Store).....	900
Hines Corporation (Springs, Floor Care).....	690
Port City Group (Aluminum Die Castings)	667
G.E. Aviation (Aerospace).....	660
Walmart (Department Store)	500
Knoll Inc. (Office Furniture Manufacturer)	470
Structural Concepts (Display Cases Manufacturer)	440
Wesco (Gasoline & Convenience Stores).....	432
KL Outdoor (Kayak Manufacturer)	400
L-3 Combat Propulsion Systems (Defense Vehicle Systems)	350
SAF Holland (Truck Suspensions & Brakes).....	345
Eagle Alloy (Primary Metal Manufacturer)	316
Kautex-CWC Textron (Camshafts Automotive)	310
Betten Auto Group (Auto Sales & Service)	232

For a full list of local employers, go to www.muskegon.org.



Photo Courtesy of Mercy Health

Workforce Development (Healthcare and Manufacturing)

The local business community partners with area educational institutions to offer in-demand training preparing the next generation of workers and training today's employees.

High school juniors and seniors from throughout Muskegon County enjoy tuition-free, hands-on learning in sixteen different career areas at the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center. Muskegon Community College offers an Advanced Manufacturing Institute where area manufacturers send current employees and new hires for eight weeks of classes ensuring success in several manufacturing fields.

Mercy Health is the area's largest employer. Healthcare careers are also on the rise as area providers continuously seek all types of candidates for the medical field. West Michigan Works! offers an extensive array of services and programs to help employers attract and recruit the best qualified candidates and maximize their existing workforce. Their services are offered free of charge to eligible job seekers and employers. Their new service center in downtown Muskegon hosts regular trainings and job fairs. They also assist employers by helping them access training funds for customized learning, on-the-job training, skilled training, and more.

PLAY



Lounging on a towel, paddleboarding along the shore, or playing in crystal-clear freshwater are just a few ways beach lovers can enjoy Muskegon's 27 miles of pristine sandy beaches and naturally-deposited dunes. Muskegon's Pere Marquette Park has been certified as a national-clean beach. Boaters appreciate the lake effect as well. In 2012, Muskegon was ranked No. 23 in the country on the list of best yachting towns by *Yachting* magazine. The region's water sports include open-lake sailing, high-powered yachting, powerboating, windsurfing and channel kayaking. For more information on boating in Muskegon and water-based events, go to www.lakeeffectboating.com.

The region is also well known for world-class fishing. In 2013, the Bassmaster Elite Series fishing tournament was held on White Lake and Muskegon Lake. Come and play in the freshwater surrounding the lakeshore community. For a complete list of area attractions, beaches, parks, trails and more, visit www.visitmuskegon.org and www.muskegon.org.



CHOOSE YOUR PATH

Take time to discover the extensive trail systems running over the rivers, through the woods, and along the lakeside. 14 miles of lakefront trails and more than 60 miles of trails in total connect hikers, bikers, outdoor enthusiasts, and commuters to businesses and attractions throughout the region.

MUSKEGON COUNTY TRAILS

Frederick Meijer Berry Junction Trail
(6.8 Miles)

Laketon Trail (4 Miles)

Muskegon Lakeshore Trail (12 Miles)

Muskegon State Park (12 Miles)

Musketawa Trail (26 Miles)

P.J. Hoffmaster State Park (10 Miles)

William Field Memorial Hart-
Montague Trail State Park (23 Miles)

Owasippe Outdoor Recreation
Center (3 loops of single track / 20+ Miles)

Visit www.visitmuskegon.org for maps and details.





Whether it's for a company retreat, a relaxing weekend or lakeshore wedding, more people are discovering the destination appeal of Muskegon County for conferences, meetings and special events. Trained event professionals, lakeshore hospitality, as well as unique venues from arena to theater, provide the foundation for successful tournaments, trade shows, reunions, corporate retreats, weddings and other special events.

Meeting and events facilities include:

- The historic Frauenthal Center for the Performing Arts, seating more than 1,700.
- L.C. Walker Arena seats between 5,000-6,000 depending on the sport or event.
- 197-seat Muskegon Museum of Art Auditorium.
- The lodge and yurt of Muskegon's Winter Sports Complex.
- An educational conference facility within the USS Silversides Submarine Museum.
- World War II amphibious landing ship, the USS LST 393, with plenty of deck space.
- The Port City Princess, a small cruise ship with capacity for 150 passengers.
- Shoreline Inn & Conference Center located on Muskegon Lake, downtown.
- Watermark 920, Muskegon's innovative urban venue.
- The Century Club Ballroom, Muskegon's newest urban-restored event center.
- The Block, part of the West Michigan Symphony, provides an intimate venue.
- YMCA Camp Pandalouan offers corporate adventure retreats and meeting space on Big Blue Lake.
- Fricano Event Center (attached pizzeria) offers event space for groups small and large.
- Holiday Inn & Conference Center Downtown Muskegon has 10,000 square feet of meeting space.
- Trillium Catering and Event Center is a full-service event center offering private dining rooms, ballrooms, and corporate meeting space.
- The Platinum Room, Noble Building, and Bella Maria's are great for small groups and meetings.



Photo Courtesy of Riversedge Photography



What Awesome Tastes Like

The epicurious will be delighted with the dining offerings in Muskegon featuring meals with a view, fresh-caught perch, or authentic ethnic cuisine. Downtown Muskegon alone has over 20 restaurants. The options are vast for every type of dining experience. There are more than 30 locally-owned dining options, eight of which are right on the water and four are boater accessible.

Many of our local restaurants offer farm-fresh produce from our downtown Farmer's Market, which is the second largest outdoor market in Michigan.



With every good meal, a beer, wine or cocktail pairing is a must. Craft businesses and brewing have made its mark in Muskegon with three taprooms. The area's first distillery will be opening downtown in 2016.



TO HELP DESIGN THE NEW MERCY HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER, WE BROUGHT IN SPECIALISTS.

OUR PATIENTS.

THE NEW MERCY HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER OPENS IN 2019 and will feature a new emergency department, state-of-the-art surgical and procedural areas and 261 large private patient rooms. Building on the strong legacies of Hackley, Mercy and Muskegon General campuses, now there'll be one hospital that does it all. The new center will offer the most advanced and comprehensive health care available all in one place, just the way our patients in West Michigan want it. What's the one thing we didn't change? The compassionate care we're known for.



Your voice. Our expertise.