



# KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT



In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

January 2018

We Are Kalamazoo County Government!



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## COUNTY COMMUNICATOR

From the Office of Administrator

### Kalamazoo County Receives Silver Status As A “Veteran Friendly Employer”

Kalamazoo County Government has been named a Veteran Friendly Employer – Silver Level by the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA), formally recognizing the County’s commitment to employing veterans throughout their organization. The program promotes best practices by awarding Gold, Silver, or Bronze level status to institutions that offer veteran-specific services and programs. Kalamazoo County is the only county in Michigan receiving the Silver-Level status.

MVAA is a state government agency housed within Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. It connects U.S. Armed Forces veterans and their families to services and benefits throughout the state.

“ Kalamazoo County is proud to be the first County-Level Government organization to become a Silver-Level Veteran Friendly Employer. We look forward to working with MVAA to actively recruit and welcome veterans into our organization. ”

Tracie Moored  
County Administrator/Controller



Director James Redford of the MVAA Agency with Commissioner Moore, County Administrator Moored and Commissioner Seals in Rochester MI on December 12, 2017 receiving the Veteran Friendly Employer Silver Level Award.

Kalamazoo County Human Resources Director, Kristine Cunningham, said that “we encourage veterans to apply for positions within our organization and we are here to assist them in any way we can. We provide veterans preference in hiring, continued healthcare through deployment, differential pay during deployment, onsite wellness programming, and an excellent benefit and leave package. Whether you want to apply your skills in an office setting, law enforcement, or another position within the County, you can find jobs within Kalamazoo County Government that align with your knowledge and skillset.”



Gryphon Place [Help for Hard Times Guide](#). If you find yourself in need of assistance checkout this comprehensive guide to local health and human services resources and information in our area.

Your Kalamazoo County Board Of Commissioners

Your Kalamazoo County Elected Officials:



Contact your District Commissioner

[Stephanie Moore](#), Vice Chair  
[District 1](#)

[Kevin Wordelman](#)  
[District 2](#)

[Tracy Hall](#)  
[District 3](#)

[Michael Seals](#)  
[District 4](#)

[Julie Rogers](#)  
[District 5](#)

[Ron Kendall](#)  
[District 6](#)

[Roger Tuinier](#)  
[District 7](#)

[John Gisler](#)  
[District 8](#)

[Dale Shugars](#), Chair  
[District 9](#)

[Mike Quinn](#)  
[District 10](#)

[Scott McGraw](#)  
[District 11](#)

County Clerk/ROD:  
Timothy Snow (269) 383-8840

Sheriff:  
Rick Fuller (269) 383-8821

Treasurer:  
Mary Balkema (269) 384-8124

Prosecuting Attorney:  
Jeff Getting (269) 383-8900

Drain Commissioner:  
Pat Crowley (269) 384-8117

**Board of Commissioners Meeting Dates:**

-  January 9, 2018
-  January 16, 2018
-  February 6, 2018
-  February 20, 2018



Not sure what district you're in?  
Click on the District links above  
for a detailed map.

Kalamazoo County Government, City of Kalamazoo, Portage, Township and Public School meetings can be viewed on demand at: [Public Media Network](#)

[Kalamazoo County Courts/County Office closings for the Holidays](#)



- New Year's Eve Friday, December 29 - **Courts Only Closed**
- New Year's Holiday Monday, January 1, 2018 – **All Offices Closed**
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, January 15, 2018 – **Courts Only Closed**



[Employment Opportunities at Kalamazoo County Government](#)

The most recent listing of open positions available within the County can be found at <http://www.kalcounty.com/hrd>.

- Apply separately for each listed position as indicated.
- Please do not send your resume via E-mail.
- Pre-employment criminal background checks and drug tests are required for ALL positions.
- Credit background checks may be required for certain positions.
- Veterans Wanted - Veterans Encouraged to Apply



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## Getting to Know the Kalamazoo County Planning & Development Department



The Kalamazoo County Planning & Development Department has a new office location. They previously were housed on the first floor with the Drain Office in the County Administration Building at 201 W. Kalamazoo Avenue. Their new location is on the second floor at 201 W Kalamazoo Avenue, Suite 207. Office hours remain 8:00am – 5:00pm (closed noon – 1 pm), Monday thru Friday. Due to limited staff it is best to contact the office in advance if you intend to drop in. Their phone is: (269) 384-8112.

The Planning & Community Development Department was created in March of 1961. Its primary purpose was to provide staff assistance to the County Planning Commission, which was created on March 19, 1960 by the County Board of Supervisors under P.A. 282 of 1945, as amended. The department has since served in various capacities through its existence. In the fall of 2017, the name was changed to Planning and Development Department as part of the new branding for the County.

The staff includes Director, Lotta Jarnfelt; Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Coordinator, Chris Bessert; and Resource Development Coordinator, Rachael Grover. The mission of the department is to enhance intra-county and intergovernmental coordination and cooperation in the county. Today, the department fulfills this mission in County government in the following ways:

- Provides necessary staff support for various community development related citizen advisory boards of the County;
- Manages the countywide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) program and mapping;
- Manages the [public County GIS mapping website](#) and [Tax Maps webpage](#) in addition to the Pictometry Connect-Explorer website, which is available to governmental users in the county;
- Maintains the Kalamazoo County Street Directory;
- Oversees resource development by providing strategic planning support, grants management and staff support for Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority/Economic Development Corporation;
- Oversees fulfillment of County's contract with Southwest Michigan First regarding County's economic development strategy and allocation of annual County funds;
- Provides staff planning and technical support to other County departments in areas of County-wide community development plans/projects and/or related services;
- Provides a forum for discussion of plans and community development activities affecting neighboring counties;
- Acts as liaison between County and other levels of government, public and quasi-public agencies in matters related to community development;
- Monitors socio-economic trends within the County (i.e. Planner's Profile compiled from Census data, County Dashboard).

The department collaborates with several entities and is open to expanding collaborations:

- GIS staff assists 911-Integrated Dispatch with upgrades and updates of street and address point data
- GIS applications are being developed for various departments to improve access to data needed for work processes
- Staff keeps apprised of the activities of the Southcentral Michigan Planning Council (SMPC), which is the State regional planning organization that comprises the counties of Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo and St Joseph.
- As staff for the Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, the Planning Department is working with the County Land Bank to combine development tools to improve tax foreclosed, blighted and brownfield properties and bring them back to productive use.
- Planning department staff oversees the Pictometry aerial photography project, a combined effort by the County and the municipalities to acquire high resolution imagery of the County to aid in planning, assessing, public safety and various other applications.
- Works with the Kalamazoo Metropolitan County Planning Commission to produce a Master Plan for the County, which is in the process of being finalized in 2018.

**For more information, check out the Planning & Development website at: <http://www.kalcounty.com/planning/>**

# CRADLE KALAMAZOO ANNUAL MEETING

Cradle Kalamazoo, formerly known as the Kalamazoo Infant Mortality Community Action Initiative (KIMCAI), is a multi-agency community program led by YWCA Kalamazoo. This initiative is based on the work of many community members and organizations who brought attention to, and began working on, the racial disparities in infant mortality in 1992.

The Kalamazoo County infant mortality rate is one of the highest in the State of Michigan. While the overall infant mortality rate has decreased in the last 30 years, the disparity among babies of color and white babies has increased. In Kalamazoo, babies of color are four times more likely to die before their first birthday than their white neighbors. Cradle Kalamazoo's mission is to get the support to those who need it the most. We work with women and families that are at high risk due to economic factors, previous adverse birth outcomes, and/or race.



“ We are all about one goal. We are all about One Kalamazoo where every baby flourishes. ”

Grace Lubwama  
YWCA Kalamazoo CEO

At its annual meeting in November, Founder and President of the National Birth Equity Collaborative Joia Crear-Perry, the featured speaker at the meeting, said the reasons for racial disparity in infant mortality are deeply ingrained. In order to decrease infant mortality, the community must address the reasons behind it, examining racism, power and bias, identifying social determinants, dissecting policies that impact health and discussing equity.

Cradle Kalamazoo, partnering with United Way of Battle Creek/Kalamazoo, Gryphon Place and Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine (WMed), launched a community hotline to connect families with health services and resources as part of its efforts to reduce infant death. Callers to the hotline will be connected to a family support specialist at Gryphon Place. The specialist will help connect them to resources and Cradle Kalamazoo partners who can offer support to families both inside and outside the home. **The hotline is 269-888-KIDS (269-888-5437).**



## Child Safety Seat Inspections

Motor vehicle injuries are a leading cause of death among children in the United States. But many of these deaths can be prevented. Buckling children in age- and size-appropriate car seats, booster seats, and seat belts reduces serious and fatal injuries by more than half. Safe Kids Kalamazoo County is offering two locations in January for Child Safety Seat Inspections. Members of the Police and Fire division, certified by SafeKids Worldwide, serve as child safety seat technicians.

Portage Fire Station #1 – 7830 Shaver Road

**1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month from noon to 4:00pm**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month from 8:00am – noon**

Call for an appointment and bring your child.

Comstock Fire Department – 1960 River Street

**January 27, 2018 from 10:00am – 2:00pm**

No appointment required. First come, first served.

If you will be purchasing a car seat in the near future, please review the helpful [Ultimate Car Seat Guide](#) for basic tips and safety information! To make sure your child is restrained in an age and size appropriate seat, [check here](#).

# Family Fun In Kalamazoo County

## [Prairie View County Park](#)

899 East U Avenue  
Vicksburg, MI 49097  
Phone: (269) 649-4737



[Kalamazoo County Parks](#) are beautiful and full of fun and adventure even in the middle of winter. Prairie View Park, located on the shores of Gourdneck and Hogsett Lakes is a pristine setting for sledding, ice fishing, cross-country skiing, and hiking. It comes with a warming shelter too! Kalamazoo County Annual Park Passes for 2018 are on sale now at all of the parks or in the Parks Office for \$25. A one-time daily vehicle pass is \$5. Call 269-383-8778 for more information! Kalamazoo County Parks are open 7am-Sunset, 7 days a week.



## [Echo Valley Winter Sports Park](#)

8495 East "H" Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI, 49048  
269-349-3291

Tobogganing, tubing, skating and more. Food and beverages are available in the warming lodge. Warm yourself by the circular fireplace while watching the tubers and tobogganers, or enjoy the view from the deck. There are no height or age restrictions for of their attractions.



It's the kids, the friends, the cold and the thrills.  
The laughter, the smiles, the screams and the hills.  
The climb to the top for another run...  
most of all it's all about the fun!

## [Ice Rink At Millennium Park](#)

280 Romence Rd, Portage, MI 49024 – In its 18th Season!  
Information Hotline: (269) 324-9200

For Open Skate Hours Of Operation contact the Information Hotline.

Portage Parks & Recreation is also offering learning to skate with the members of the WMU Synchronized Skating Team. *Intro to Skating I* covers basic skating skills to get any beginner up and moving on skates. *Intro Skating II* will build on those skills to improve your comfort level on the ice. Open to anyone who wants to learn to skate. Fees include skate rental (\$4) and one instruction session (\$12). For more information and to register, visit [City of Portage website](#).



## List of Favorite Sledding Sights in Kalamazoo

- Milham Park Golf Course, 4200 Lovers Lane, Kalamazoo
- Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts, 922 W. Maple St., Kalamazoo
- Kindleberger Park, Parchment, MI
- Hillside Middle School, 1941 Alamo Avenue, Kalamazoo
- Oakland Drive Park, 7650 Oakland Drive, Portage
- Woods Lake Elementary School, 3215 Oakland Drive, Kalamazoo



**\*\*Important Dates \*\***

*January is:*

**National Radon Action Month**

*January 1<sup>st</sup>*

**New Year's Day**

First celebrated about 4000 years ago in ancient Babylon this holiday heralded in the beginning of the new year.

*#HappyNewYear!*

*January 15<sup>th</sup>*

**Martin Luther King Jr.**

**Day**

The King Holiday honors the life and contributions of America's greatest champion of racial justice and equality

*#IHaveADream*

The 2018 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community-wide Day of Service will take place on January 15th. Volunteers are the backbone of the Community-Wide Day of Service. Individuals and groups are needed to serve social service organizations throughout Kalamazoo County. Volunteer registration is being coordinated through [Volunteer Kalamazoo](#). They can be contacted at (269) 382-8350.



NATIONAL  
**RADON ACTION**  
MONTH

**January - Radon Action Month**



The Kalamazoo County Environmental Health Department reminds us that January is National Radon Action Month. Get your home tested. **Free test kits are available from the Environmental Health Department in January and February.** To get a kit you will need the address of the location being tested. Kits are limited to one per address. You can pick up a free kit at the Environmental Health Department at Nazareth, 3299 Gull Road, Office G11. For more information call 269-373-5210.

Radon, a Class A carcinogen, is known to cause cancer in humans and is estimated to cause over 21,000 lung cancer deaths per year. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. The Michigan Indoor Radon Program is a non-regulatory program that promotes awareness of the health risk associated with exposure to elevated indoor radon levels, encourages testing for radon, and also encourages citizens to take action to reduce their exposure once elevated radon levels are found.

Nearly 1 out of every 15 homes in the U.S. is estimated to have elevated radon levels. Elevated levels of radon gas have been found in homes in Kalamazoo County. While radon problems may be more common in some areas, any home may have a problem. The only way to know about your home is to test. Radon can also be a problem in schools and workplaces.

- Radon is a tasteless, odorless, colorless, radioactive gas that occurs naturally in soil and rock. It enters buildings through openings in the foundation floor or walls (sump openings; crawlspaces; floor/wall joints; cracks; space around plumbing, wiring, or ductwork; etc.).
- Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer for nonsmokers.
- Radon has no warning symptoms (it does not cause headaches, nausea, fatigue, etc.); the only known health effect is an increased risk of lung cancer!
- Any home could have a radon problem whether old or new; rural or urban; energy efficient or drafty; or built over a basement, over a crawlspace, or built slab-on-grade. **ALL homes should be tested.** The only way to know if your home has a radon problem is to test it!
- Radon testing kits can be purchased at Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services Department located at 3299 Gull Road, Kalamazoo, MI 49048 for \$10.00 (free in January and February 2018!). Kits can also be ordered on line: [Radon Kits](#).

Click to see a [map of Kalamazoo County with radon](#) results.

[Kalamazoo County Environmental Health Radon Page](#)

Other helpful links:

[Michigan Radon Information Page](#)

[US Environmental Protection Agency - A Citizens Guide to Radon](#)

[World Health Organization Fact Sheet](#)





Kalamazoo County Government provides equitable programs and excellent services to promote the health and safety of everyone in Kalamazoo County

## **Kalamazoo County Government implements an Outstanding Customer Service Award Program**

Kalamazoo County Government strives to recognize our employees and their efforts to provide stellar customer service inside and outside our organization. As a result, we have implemented the "Outstanding Customer Service Award".

This program will allow members of the public and co-workers to nominate an employee for their outstanding customer service. Then, each quarter, Human Resources will select a winner from the submitted nominees.

If you have received service or assistance from someone at the County that was above and beyond your expectation, please share your experience and nominate that individual for recognition.

If you would like to nominate someone for this award, please [click here and complete the online form.](#)

For detailed information on the award process, please go to: <http://www.kalcounty.com/award>.



### ***Kalamazoo County Communicator***

The purpose of the Kalamazoo County Communicator is to make you, the constituents, businesses, and community aware of the public services and programs Kalamazoo County provides. And to make you aware of how you can make help to make a difference by volunteering in your community.

Subscribe here! Tell us what you would like to see and what you think!



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