

## Strategic Growth Action Plan

### The Southwest Michigan Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy & the Michigan Prosperity Initiative July 19<sup>th</sup> 360 Group meeting - Handout

#### Overview

Through its relationship with the Michigan Association of Regions and the Land Policy Institute (LPI) at Michigan State University, the SWMPC is participating in an effort called the Michigan Prosperity Initiative (MPI). The vision of MPI is to:

- Return Michigan to prosperity by aggressively joining the global New Economy guided by regional and state Strategic Growth Plans that focus on place-making and place-based strategies; and
- Prepare Michigan communities to seize emerging federal funding opportunities rooted in place-based strategies.

As a partner, the SWMPC is currently working on Phase 2 of this process, which dovetails well with our 2010 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)'s Annual Update. Through the combination of these processes, the SWMPC is identifying a set of key action steps for improving the region's economic health. The 2009-2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS, [www.swmpc.org/ceds.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/ceds.asp)) for Southwest Michigan provides a framework for this process. SWMPC staff have determined that the CEDS objectives serve as an ideal framework for the 360 Group to have a discussion about regional strategic growth priorities. Input from both the 360 Group and the SWMPC's full commission will help prioritize a tangible set of steps that will guide the SWMPC, its partners, and other entities throughout the region in joining with the rest of Michigan's regions to produce a statewide draft strategic growth plan.

The SWMPC will use information gleaned from this process to complete some/all of the following and more:

- Guide its economic development activities through 2011 and 2012
- Frame the project prioritization process for the Economic Development Administration (EDA)'s required project prioritization in the 2010 CEDS Annual Update;
- Begin conversations with surrounding regions about how respective strategic action plans are complementary and may encourage partnerships outside regional boundaries;
- Provide a basis for an annual "state of the region" report founded on 5-10 data indicators that – combined – accurately reflect southwest Michigan's economic health and allow the SWMPC to track it; and
- Understand and cultivate interest in forming committees with focuses on action plans that meet the highest regional priority.

## Goals & Objectives

The below goals and objectives are from the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS, <http://www.swmpc.org/ceds.asp>), which the Commission adopted in late 2009. As part of the Michigan Prosperity Initiative and the 2010 CEDS Annual Update, we'd like you to help prioritize the **26 objectives** in the table below and on the following pages.

To prepare for the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>, please consider and be prepared to discuss the following:

- Which of the following goals and objectives most interests the organization/entity I represent?
- Which of the following goals and objectives is most relevant to the region's economic health & quality of life?
- Are there other goals or objectives *not included on this list* that might contribute better to the region's economic health?
- Which entities/individuals in the region are already working on these objectives
- Are there any objectives that no (or very few) entities are working on?

Goals	Objectives	Priority?
<b>Land Use: The Natural and Built Environments: recognition that in southwest Michigan economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and municipal efficiency can and should be mutually inclusive goals.</b>		
1. Encourage planning to guide residential, commercial and industrial development that takes advantage of existing infrastructure, stressing compact and efficient reuse and growth.	Promote smart growth, complete streets, and planning education.	
	Support the redevelopment of vacant industrial facilities (including brownfields, see Chapter 2, Section 3) into recreational and other use.	
2. Foster the business/industry growth that complements the balance between economic growth and regional environmental assets.	Focus economic development efforts on projects that incorporate and elevate the region's agricultural sector.	
	Implement an efficient method of local distribution of locally grown produce.	
	Encourage entrepreneurial efforts to align with environmental sustainability and municipal efficiency.	
3. Cultivate a shared recognition of Southwest Michigan's valuable natural landscape.	Identify regional green infrastructure, preserve and augment it, in part, through a regional recreational land use strategy.	
	Place a high priority throughout the region on improved water quality and sustainable water quantity use.	

Goals	Objectives	Priority?
<b>Social, Cultural and Physical Health: Improve residents' quality of life by cultivating communities that foster healthy families, healthy minds, and healthy bodies</b>		
4. Encourage projects and initiatives that support physically healthy lifestyles.	Increase the number and quality of food and healthcare options throughout the region.	
	Improve access to and promotion of recreational activities along the Lake Michigan shoreline, inland lakes and rivers, and throughout regional parkland.	
5. Encourage projects and initiatives that support artistic and cultural endeavors.	Improve access to activities that stimulate creative minds and appreciation for cultural differences.	
	Encourage initiatives that provide opportunities for those with creative professions to live and work in southwest Michigan.	
6. Promote the diversity of the region's cultures and heritages.	Encourage initiatives that treat racial and ethnic diversity as an asset.	
<b>Education and Workforce Development: Work with current and potential employers, workforce developers, and educators to cultivate a workforce with higher levels of job preparedness.</b>		
7. Strengthen the link between industry needs and technical education initiatives in both K-12 and post-secondary education.	Support business initiatives that recognize this link, i.e. by those who incorporate on-location educational opportunities or support continuing adult education.	
	Introduce entrepreneurial efforts at multiple stages (8th grade, community college, adult education)	
8. Cultivate a workforce in the top quartile of Michigan regions.	Unite workforce developers and educators to establish complementary strategies to improve workforce competence across all metrics.	
	Develop a strategy that attracts "millennials" (see Chapter 2, Section 2) to the region to work and live.	

Goals	Objectives	Priority?
<b>Collaboration within Southwest Michigan:</b> Substantive collaboration across and among public and private entities to drive efficiencies in service delivery and the development of shared regional goals for growth and development.		
9. Strengthen interaction amongst local units of government and economic development agencies to achieve and sustain a collective regional economic vision.	Develop a group whose purpose is the stewardship and promotion of a regional vision for economic development.	
	Encourage the development of coordinated regulatory processes to streamline development and development and responsibly provide for regional needs.	
	Create a communications tool to share regional goals, needs, and opportunities.	
10. Collaborate on regional economic development beyond the three-county regional boundary.	Enumerate and inventory the plans, goals, and objectives of organizations within the regions whose initiatives may overlap with the CEDS.	
	Encourage projects and initiatives that align with both regional, super-regional, and statewide economic development goals.	
<b>The Regional Economy: Retention, Sustainability, Development, and Diversification:</b> A regional economy that builds on our historical strengths and supports existing business while diversifying into emerging market segments by leveraging local, state, and national resources.		
11. Provide a supportive environment for entrepreneurs to begin, grow, or improve their businesses.	Implement an incubator to cultivate businesses involved in sustainable, local energy generation, green enterprises, and/or value-added agricultural products.	
	Support collaborative efforts to offer assistance to small businesses, start-ups and owner-operated businesses.	
12. Focus on the development of agriculture and tourism as strong regional industries.	Support the development of a marketing plan with regional scope to promote the region's natural environment and amenities.	
	Develop "agri-business" and agritourism initiatives linking (1) wine, (2) tourism, (3) other value-added agriculture.	