

SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN PLANNING COMMISSION

CEDS 2010 UPDATE

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Glossary

Acronyms

- EDA – Economic Development Administration
- EDD – Economic Development District
- EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
- CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- MDOT – Michigan Department of Transportation
- SWMPC – Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Geography

Nine-County Workshed – Southwest Michigan and the six adjacent Michigan and Indiana counties: Allegan, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph in Michigan, and Elkhart, La Porte, and St. Joseph in Indiana.

Southwest Michigan – the southwest corner of the state of Michigan, comprising Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties and the 89 cities, villages and townships and tribal lands within them.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As one of the U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA's) regional Economic Development Districts, the SWMPC completes a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every three to five years. In southwest Michigan the CEDS process varies from year to year, but always includes:

Assessing local and regional strengths, weaknesses and opportunities relevant to economic development;
Identifying and attracting economic development funding sources;
Tracking and guiding the development of specific projects and initiatives;
Providing technical assistance to local efforts.

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission last prepared a three-year comprehensive economic development strategy in 2009. In the decade preceding, the decline of the automobile industry throughout Michigan and the country coupled with the a global financial crisis has directly affected current economic conditions in the region and the State of Michigan. Over the past year, the regional unemployment rate peaked at just over 15 percent at the beginning of 2010 and the statewide jobless rate remains nearly the nation's highest; at 13 percent in September 2010, only Nevada's was higher. These rates coincide with the highest number of large-scale layoffs in southwest Michigan in recent history: 1,620 manufacturing jobs reported lost in 2008, and 986 through the third quarter of 2009. Additionally, population growth in the region has been relatively flat over the last three decades: negative from 1980-90 (-2 percent), slightly positive from 1990-2000 (3 percent), and again negative (-1 percent) since 2000. Yet southwest Michigan's 12.1 percent unemployment rate in September of 2010 is lower than 2009's average of 12.4 percent, and it remains below the statewide rate (13 percent) and the nation's [9.6 percent].

The sectors addressed in the U.S. Economic Census comprise approximately 86,000 (76 percent) of the region's 110,000 jobs. Of these jobs, the number in manufacturing—the region's largest employment sector—decreased by a count of over 6,000, from 30 percent to 22 percent, during the last decade. MichiganWorks!, a regional workforce development entity sharing the SWMPC's boundaries, targets employers in the region's four largest industries—advanced manufacturing, hospitality, health care, and energy/skilled trade industries—as top candidates for retaining employees, influencing workforce development, and working on economic adjustment programs. Meanwhile, the statewide economic development entity currently focuses its resources on economic adjustment in sectors that coincide only loosely with regional priorities.

Workforce development and training targets to meet regional employer's needs often face challenges in the character of the region's workforce. Residents and experts suggest that inconsistent educational quality throughout the region, along with a statewide inability to retain recent graduates, leaves southwest Michigan's workforce incapable of competing strongly with the rest of the state and the nation. As of 2008, 20.8% of the region's workforce had achieved a bachelor's or graduate degree, compared to a statewide rate of 24.7% and nationwide rate of 27.4%.

These economic indicators leave area residents and leaders frustrated with institutionalized regional and statewide approaches to economic development. Interest has risen regarding:

- Regional collaboration (i.e. collaboration between municipalities and economic development entities competing for the same jobs);
- A holistic approach to economic development and quality of life;
- More creative types of collaboration between workforce developers and educators;
- A system that encourages and supports entrepreneurial efforts;
- A fresh approach to utilizing the region's natural resources, particularly those that support agricultural production.

The 2009 strategy committee's work reflects these sentiments through a set of goals, objectives and performance measures grounded in five categories:

- Collaboration Within Southwest Michigan
- Land Use: The Natural and Built Environments
- Social, Physical and Cultural Health
- Education and Workforce Development
- The Regional Economy: Industrial Retention, Sustainability, Development, and Diversification

Each category addresses the future of the region's economy from a different perspective. Together, they create a holistic approach to regional economic development that seeks to build on the strengths of the region's residents, workforce, employers, and the natural and built environments to improve the quality of life for southwest Michigan's residents. The Action Plan (Chapter 2) of this comprehensive economic development strategy outlines a series of goals, objectives and performance measures for each of these categories with the aim of actively working to improve the regional economy with a transparent framework. For the next three years, the SWMPC and municipalities, non-profits, businesses and residents throughout Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties will be able to use the 2009 CEDS and its annual updates to guide projects, initiatives, and collaborative efforts toward the common goal of improving the region's economy.

CHAPTER 1. REPORT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT ACTIVITIES, 2010

Call for Projects (See Chapter 3 for REPORT OF THOSE)
Southwest Michigan 360 Group

The Michigan Prosperity Initiative (MSU's Land Policy Institute), and the Prioritization of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Objectives Responses to Regional Information Requests Asset Inventory | Survey of organizations involved in economic development in southwest Michigan HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Economic Development Administration | Webinars, November Conference (St. Louis), and New Submission Process

Call for Projects

In June 2010, the SWMPC put out a call-for-projects to all local governments in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties. The materials included in the "call for projects" mailing packet (sent to local governments, economic developers, and 360 Group members via mail and/or email) asked recipients to complete the following two tasks:

Review and update project-related information that they may have submitted for prior Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) "call for projects" inventories; and

Fill out a form (online or paper) for any new near-term and long-term projects affecting the region's economic health that they may be working on in 2010 or beyond.

While the focus of collecting an inventory of projects health (see Chapter 3 for results) is on those that might qualify for funding from the EDA, the SWMPC sought to inventory *all* projects, programs and activities with the potential to affect the region's economic health. Solicitation materials stressed that this could include projects that could be eligible for other funding programs, such as USDA-Rural Development, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), etc.

Materials related to this process are on the SWMPC's website (<http://www.swmpc.org/edcfp.asp>). Full results are in Chapter 3.

Southwest Michigan 360 Group

The 360 Group is a regional organization that serves as a forum for sharing projects, initiatives, and ideas affecting the region's economic health. Between mid-2008 and the end of 2010, the People and Land (PAL, <http://www.peopleandland.org/>) organization provided funding for the development of the 360 Group. The Michigan Association of Planning (MAP, <http://www.planningmi.org/>) and the Land Information Access Association (LIAA, <http://www.liaa.org/>) provided technical assistance to the SWMPC staff throughout 2010. The group's mailing list goes out to over 130 regional partners, over 90 of whom have participated in 2010 activities.

Meeting Overviews

By the end of 2010, the 360 Group will have met six times at various locations around the region discuss topics and strategies relevant to the region's economic health. The topics for 2010 360 Group meetings were:

- March 1, 2010 | Michigan's critical assets
- April 19, 2010 | 360 Group survey results, CEDS overview, and regional initiatives
- May 24, 2010 | Agricultural Entrepreneurialism
- July 19, 2010 | CEDS and Michigan Prosperity Initiative strategies/prioritization
- September 27, 2010 | Entrepreneurial Support Systems & the Regional Economy
- December 20, 2010 | Developing & Implementing Regional Strategies in 2011.

Group Surveys

Between the first and second meetings in 2010, SWMPC and LIAA staff designed a survey to distribute to group members via email. The survey's purpose was to better understand the group's interest in meeting as a regional entity focused on economic development. SWMPC staff used the CEDS's action plan (see Chapter 3) to frame 360 Group members' economic development-related organizational and personal focuses. SWMPC staff found very high levels of support for all elements of the CEDS that might be incorporated into the 360 group work; Response rates for the survey were very high as well. Some highlights:

Respondents see the 360 Group as a forum for regional collaboration (wherein participants pool

resources, and make collective decisions on projects/initiatives affecting the region's economic health) and/or a forum for ideas, data collection and compilation, report generation, and making recommendations.

Respondents feel all CEDS categories were relevant to the regional quality of life, ranking "K-12 and Workforce Education" as the most important.

A comprehensive summary of survey results is available online (http://swmpc.org/downloads%5C0420_360group_surveyresultssummary.pdf).

The Michigan Prosperity Initiative (MSU's Land Policy Institute and the Prioritization of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Objectives Through its relationship with the Michigan Associate of Regions and the Land Policy Institute (LPI) at Michigan State University, the SWMPC participated in an effort called the Michigan Prosperity Initiative (MPI). The MPI process took place throughout the state during 2010, engaging multiple partners (including all fourteen regional planning agencies, of which the SWMPC is one) through multiple phases. The MPI's vision includes "(1) returning Michigan to prosperity by aggressively joining the global New Economy guided by regional and state Strategic Growth Plans that focus on placemaking and place-based strategies and (2) preparing Michigan communities to seize emerging federal funding opportunities rooted in place-based strategies."

Through this process, LPI and SWMPC staff engaged residents, the SWMPC board, the 360 Group (see page 11), in prioritizing strategies for improving southwest Michigan's economic health within the context of the state as a whole.

The 2009-2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS, www.swmpc.org/ceds.asp) for Southwest Michigan provided a framework for this process; see Chapter 2 for more information about this process and its results.

Due to the turnover in state-level administration in 2010, the effect MPI's main deliverable – a statewide strategic growth strategy based on regional input – is

pending. The LPI may post this document and other updates online (www.landpolicy.msu.edu/MPI/). The appendix contains a late-2010 draft for strategic growth in southwest Michigan.

Responses to Regional Information Requests
The SWMPC collects, analyzes, and interprets large amounts of information about the region to inform its various planning activities. Part of its role as an economic development district (EDD) involves using this information to respond to requests from local governments, organizations, and individuals within Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties.

In 2010, examples of information requests to which the SWMPC responded included comprehensive memos/emails/meetings addressing:
The breakdown of residents' characteristics and housing characteristics in Benton Harbor's third ward;
Funding and other resources relevant to moving and restoring a one-room schoolhouse in Bloomingdale;
The most recent demographic data available for South Haven and Van Buren County; and
A market study for locating a grocery store/event center in Benton Township.

Past requests have also addressed geographic information systems (GIS/mapping) needs, workforce demographics, traffic counts, population projections, etc.

The SWMPC's website further addresses the process of submitting an information request here (www.swmpc.org/inforequests.asp).

Asset Inventory | Survey of organizations involved in economic development in southwest Michigan
In December 2011, the SWMPC distributed an online (and mail) survey to all municipalities, economic developers, downtown development authorities, corridor improvement authorities, chambers of commerce, and tourism councils within Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties. The purpose of the survey was to map out southwest Michigan's economic development assets, in the form of organizations and local governments that provide services related to community and economic development.

At the time of the CEDS Annual update's approval, the survey was still open and available online

(<http://www.swmpc.org/edsurvey.asp>). 2011 deliverables may include an online “map directory”, inclusion in the 2012 CEDS annual update, a template for future surveys, etc.

HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Between May and August of 2010, staff from the SWMPC and agencies throughout southwest Michigan engaged in the process of putting together and application for a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant (<http://tinyurl.com/HUD-scrpg>).

This grant opportunity was a unique, first-time partnership between the HUD, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Eligible applicants across the United States competed for \$98 million to fund long-term, multi-jurisdictional planning that integrates housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments.

The SWMPC has traditionally received funding from federal, state and local entities to plan for economic development, transportation, and water quality throughout the region; staff saw this planning grant opportunity as a clear opportunity to integrate these processes and others. “Others” included land use (i.e. the location of job centers, the location/affordability of housing, addressing smart growth principles, and preserving open space), energy use and its implications for the climate, and the health/functionality of the region’s foodshed (i.e. the area from which southwest Michigan’s residents get their food). Public health, green infrastructure, social equity, regional economic competitiveness, and energy use were also overarching themes throughout the process of putting together a grant application.

Regional partners envisioned a three-year planning process resulting in a 20-year regional sustainability plan for Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties. With the help of a formal consortium and formal/informal partnerships, the three-year planning process would involve regular meetings (likely quarterly, with topic or task forces meeting more regularly); extensive data collection & data sharing; and a series of public surveys, forums, charrettes, and other forms of

outreach with a specific focus on the inclusion of low-income and minority populations. Deliverables would include a set of goals and objectives that the SWMPC, formal/informal partners, local governments, and private organizations could leverage to seek funding for projects that fall within the following categories:

- A regional housing plan that incorporates equity and fair housing analysis;
 - The advancement of regional transportation planning in consort with land use and climate change;
 - A sustainable water infrastructure (drinking water, wastewater, and storm water systems) plan;
 - A regional land use plan that recognizes and incorporates the environmental impacts of land use decisions;
 - An advanced regional economic development plan that leverages existing assets; and
 - Recognition of future scenarios that address comprehensive climate change impacts;
- Despite encouraging collaborative efforts and enthusiastic support and commitment from a number of organizations throughout the region, there are two key reasons that the SWMPC and these supporting organizations did not submit a 2010 application:

Eligibility. Based on language in the Notice of Funding Availability restricting “regions” to Metropolitan Planning Organizations and/or Metropolitan Statistical Areas, our three-county regional boundaries did not immediately qualify as a region for this grant. We sought both legal and state-level support to create an argument for HUD to recognize our three-county area, but were unable to come up with one that guaranteed us HUD would consider our application as valid.

Regional consortium. Requirements for this grant application included a formal consortium representing various organizations and local governments comprising 50% of the region’s population. Time was short between the release of the grant notice and the application deadline. Within that narrow window, the challenge to fully explore the nuances of the application in due time simply was not possible for key local government officials. Their partnership during this process bodes well for the future possibilities in this area though.

Despite these setbacks, the SWMPC and regional partners fully intend to apply for a HUD Sustainable

Communities Regional Planning Grant in 2011 given three-county (or beyond!) eligibility. The 2010 experience illustrated the significant challenges in establishing a regional consortium and finding unanimity over a month's timeframe, the SWMPC will initiate the process of developing a consortium for a 2011 application early in the year. Southwest Michigan's ability to develop a unified consortium, collaborative planning process, and clear set of mutually beneficial deliverables will make us an excellent candidate group for funding in 2011. Additionally, a number of conversations have led us to believe that HUD may expand the boundaries for eligible applicants next year.

Economic Development Administration | Webinars, November Conference (St. Louis), and New Submission Process

The EDA has been active in its interactions with EDDs in 2010. Throughout the year both the Chicago- and Washington D.C.-based offices have hosted webinars and a conference, and have provided information about an updated grant-submission process. Webinars addressed online tools (EDA-funded www.knowyourregion.net and www.knowledgeeconomy.com in particular) that the SWMPC hopes to incorporate more fully into its economic development planning processes and regional economic development updates. The mid-November 2010 conference, which two SWMPC staff attended, engaged EDA and EDD staff and economic developers from both the Denver and Chicago planning regions on innovation in economic development policy and practice, and attempted to provide useful tools to regional EDDs. A full list of topics and contacts from the conference is available online (<http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=888161> adfs).

Updated Grant Submission Process

The EDA provides funding for public works projects, economic development planning, technical assistance, and economic adjustment planning at the local and regional levels. The EDA's updated grant submission process does not affect the types of funding available to potential applicants in 2011 and beyond; instead, it affects the timeframe of potential grant submissions. In the past, the SWMPC has worked with the EDA's

Chicago regional office to submit grant applications on a rolling basis. Going forward, applicants will work with SWMPC staff to submit grant applications based around a quarterly schedule. In 2011, the SWMPC will work with local applicants to submit EDA grants based on the following schedule:

December 15, 2010
March 10, 2011
June 10, 2011
September 15, 2010

Based around this schedule, the following apply:

Continuous technical assistance and customer service | Applicants may submit an application at any time during the quarter and receive formal feedback on its technical and competitive merits and/or deficiencies within **15 business days**.

Quarterly rounds of funding | EDA will set quarterly deadlines (above) for submission of applications in order to be considered for an award in that quarterly funding cycle.

Enhanced Responsiveness | Applicants who submit a complete application package prior to the quarterly deadline will be notified of EDA's selection decisions within **20 business days** of that deadline.

Competitive selection framework | All projects will be assessed against EDA's strategic priorities (see section x for an example of how to apply the EDA's strategic priorities to local projects going forward; an online strategic priorities worksheet is also helpful: <http://www.eda.gov/PDF/Strategic%20Priorities%20Worksheet.pdf>) and evaluated by an investment review committee where EDA professionals will analyze and recommend proposals to the EDA Regional Director for that quarter's available funding. The EDA's strategic priorities affect projects' grant eligibility based on the following breakdowns:

Technology-led Economic Development
Supports Small- and Medium-Sized Businesses
Global Competitiveness and Innovation
Economic Dislocation Due to Auto-Industry
Restructuring or Natural Disaster
Commercialization of Research
Environmentally Sustainable Development

The information above comes from the EDA's grant submission website (<http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/GrantProcess.xml>); also look for updates throughout 2011 on the SWMPC's economic development funding page (http://swmpc.org/funding_opps.asp)



INNOVATION.
REGIONAL COLLABORATION.
JOB CREATION.

A Commitment to Our Customers

There are four key elements to EDA's grant application process:

- Continuous technical assistance and customer service
- Quarterly rounds of funding
- Competitive selection framework
- Enhanced responsiveness

CHAPTER 2. 2009 ACTION PLAN PRIORITIZATION

In 2009, the CEDS Advisory Committee met over a number of months to review economic development issues facing the region - Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties, and their local units of government. This collaborative approach produced specific goals that address the needs of municipalities, counties, and the region as a whole. Through this process, the committee developed a set of five categories framing 12 goals and 26 objectives.

- Land Use: The Natural and Built Environments
- Social, Physical and Cultural Health
- Education and Workforce Development
- Collaboration Within Southwest Michigan
- The Regional Economy: Industrial Retention, Sustainability, Development, and Diversification

In 2010, SWMPC staff - with the help of the 360 Group (incorporating many members of the 2009 CEDS Strategy Committee), the SWMPC full board, and attendees of the MSU Land Policy Institute’s Michigan Prosperity Initiative Process – sought to further clarify and prioritize objectives within the 2009 CEDS Action Plan. The prioritized objectives on the following pages – along with the additional objectives noted in the grey sections – represent the outcome of this process.

In 2011, the 360 Group’s roll will be emphasized in the process of prioritization. As they continue to be a growing partner in the CEDS process in the region, a strong focus on their participation is a priority.

Per March Survey. “These categories are most important to:”			
	The Regional Economy	Regional Quality of Life	360 Group Members’ Organizations
Education/Workforce	1	1	1
Regional Econ. Devel.	2	3	3
Social/Phys/Cultural Health	3	2	2
Collaboration (Regional)	4	4	4
Land Use (Natural/Built)	5	3	5

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.

Goals	Objectives	360 Group	Board
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 brownfield properties) into recreational and other uses.	**	**
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. (Increase the number and quality of local food options throughout the region.)	*	**
	Encourage municipal efficiency aligning with entrepreneurial efforts and environmental sustainability.	***	***
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.	**	***
NEW in 2010 Note: Some of these objectives speak specifically to infrastructure more than land use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create pedestrian and bike-friendly infrastructure. • Maintain, improve, and coordinate urban and rural passenger transit throughout the region. • Encourage local ordinances that permit small-scale wind, solar, and geothermal energy generation. • Encourage improvement of broadband and cellular service. • Encourage new development within the region to incorporate energy efficiency through the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or other metrics. • Improve wayfinding, accessibility to, and marketing of culturally significant places. • Expand residential and commercial energy efficiency programs that incorporate outreach/education to residents about benefits of and incentives for reducing energy use and building energy efficiency into their housing and transportation choices. • Ensure indigenous building integrity especially of historic structures. • Improve entryway aesthetics and wayfinding. 		

Social, Cultural and Physical Health: Improve residents’ quality of life by cultivating communities that foster healthy families, healthy minds, and healthy bodies

Goals	Objectives	360 Group	Board
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.	**	**
NEW in 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and encourage public access and mixed use along the region’s waterfronts (Lake Michigan, rivers, and inland lakes). • Integrate and improve the connectivity of indigenous arts and culture with cities and small towns. • Pursue the further development of a recreation/tourism cluster (integrated geographic marketing—day trips, etc. and integrate with arts and culture). 		

Education and Workforce Development: Work with current and potential employers, workforce developers, and educators to cultivate a workforce with higher levels of job preparedness.

Goals	Objectives	360 Group	Board
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” to the region to work and live → this includes educating business owners and those in the workforce about “working w/ millennials.”	***	**
Additional objectives that came to light through the LPI’s work and 360 Group/SWMPC Board processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a strategy that attracts (in addition to millennials) retirees, seniors, immigrants, and other residents to the region to live and work. 		

Collaboration within Southwest Michigan: 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.

Goals	Objectives	360 Group	Board
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.	***	**
Additional objectives that came to light through the LPI’s work and 360 Group/SWMPC Board processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate outside the region for regulatory processes that streamline development responsibly provide for regional needs. Encourage a culture amongst the region’s foundations and other funders of investing in local entrepreneurship (and placemaking). Coordinate tourism and business efforts to uniformly promote the region through retail and service industries where employees interact directly with visitors. 		

The Regional Economy: Retention, Sustainability, Development, and Diversification: 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.

Goals	Objectives	360 Group	Board
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. (Bricks-and-mortar incubator).	*	***
	Support collaborative efforts to offer assistance to small businesses, start-ups and owner-operated businesses.	***	***
	A resource for small businesses and entrepreneurs (i.e. a virtual incubator) → resources, services, online for entrepreneurs and start-ups.	**	
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.	**	**
Additional objectives that came to light through the LPI’s work and 360 Group/SWMPC Board processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work toward creation of a shared regional database (for primary use by economic developers) to accelerate business growth to provide assistance to small businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs. • Identify businesses in need of economic gardening. • Provide a regular suite of business assistance services including but not limited to: responding to inquiries from people about business opportunities in the region, connecting existing businesses to a range of business services by many nonprofit providers. • Fill existing industrial sites (target industries that can be competitive). • Target the development (and retention/attraction) of industries with jobs that cater to a manufacturing-familiar workforce. 		

CHAPTER 3. PROJECTS

- Overview of Projects

CFP_ID	Project, Program or Activity Title	Applicant (municipality or other):	Project, Program or Activity Description
2010_CFP_01	FOOD CENTER	Village of Baroda	Construction of 30,000 sq. ft. building on land donated by the Village of Baroda to a nonprofit organization to house a locally grown fresh retail & wholesale accumulator/broker, commercial small batch commercial food processing kitchen, cold storage & warehouse distribution center and low-cost leasable production space for emerging value added food producers.
2010_CFP_02	INDUSTRIAL PARK INFRASTRUCTURE	Village of Baroda	Construction industrial park road with extension of water, sewer, stormwater management system for Downtown Business District to Hills Road and subdividing property in to 5 lots.
2010_CFP_03	FOOD CENTER	City of Bridgman	Study of the conversion of the former ICG Building for sale/donation to a nonprofit organization to house a locally grown fresh retail & wholesale accumulator/broker, commercial small batch commercial food processing kitchen, cold storage & warehouse distribution center and low-cost leasable production space for emerging value added food producers.
2010_CFP_04	I-94 Corridor Utility Extension Project	City of Hartford	The proposed project is for providing water and sewer to serve a portion of the I-94 corridor west of Hartford where 66th Street ends at I-94. A 12" water main would be extended from the existing 12" water main in S. Center Street near I-94 in a private easement on the north side of I-94. Another 12" water main would be extended from existing 8" water main in W. Main Street near 65th Street to the west in Red Arrow Highway to 66th Street and then south to provide a looped system. The extensions would include two crossings of Pine Creek and one beneath the CSX railroad. 6" hydrant would be provided along the extension approximately every 500', as well as water services for existing parcels along the route. Sanitary sewer would be extended from existing sewer in S. Center Street near I-94 in a private easement on the north side of I-94. Due to the difference in elevation between S. Center Street and 66th Street, a lift station would be provided to pump the collected sewage back to S.Center Street. The sanitary sewer extension would include one crossing of the Pine Creek. The proposed project allows the City to serve properties along I-94 to accommodate development opportunities.
2010_CFP_05	Cherry Beach expansion	Chikaming Township	Purchase a 2.55 acre parcel with 394 feet of beach frontage to allow for more parking and expansion of public beach. This parcel is adjacent to the Chikaming Township Cherry Beach.
2010_CFP_06	Cultivating Entrepreneurship	BRACE	Capacity Building and Sustainability, Important to Business Resources & Counseling for Entrepreneurs (BRACE) are the principles of capacity building and sustainability. Strategic partnerships formed over the last three years have assisted with pushing forward the goals of this grass-roots initiative. As we focus on increasing capacity community to community across the county, we plan to build a strong fund development program to facilitate sustainability. Our collaborative efforts to facilitate

			regional entrepreneurial development will be advanced by, but are not limited to: information delivery; leadership; volunteerism; regional planning; outreach development; resource expansion; funding; and a "boots on the ground" approach. Our extensive partnerships, overwhelming support, and three years of experience are significant in laying the foundation and building capacity into the future. An aggressive fund development program will be implemented through the support of the BRACE Strategic and Sustainability Leadership Teams. We will encourage groups to support BRACE through their budgets, campaigns to solicit private contributions, and pursue local, state and federal grant opportunities. We know that the long-term economic health of our county is reliant upon developing a sustainable model for entrepreneurship development.
2010_CFP_07	Cultivating Entrepreneurship	BRACE	Business Resources Liaison We believe that a position working community-to-community, acting as the small business front door to the county is imperative to our economic development efforts. Known as the Business Resources Liaison (BRL), this business mentor will triage services, connect individuals to business development resources, plug holes where gaps exist, accelerate community outreach efforts and facilitate capacity building. The BRL will have a significant impact throughout the region on the increased number of business start-ups and the viability of these new entrepreneurial ventures. The BRL will be responsible for, but not limited to: strategic direction; board capacity; volunteer counseling; coaching; peer mentoring; resources; business needs and wants; market awareness; community presence; an entrepreneurial portal (website and data management interface); and leveraging resources. The placement of a BRL is considered an immediate priority. The BRL will be responsible for executing a work plan to meet the needs of partners and stakeholders, and for advancing Business Resources and Counseling for Entrepreneurs (BRACE), an entrepreneurial initiative for Van Buren County. We believe that a position of this nature will facilitate economic growth. BRACE is committed to producing an entrepreneurial development model that can be replicated throughout Michigan and the country. We are excited about the potential that the BRACE initiative has to affect change in our region.
2010_CFP_08	Cultivating Entrepreneurship	BRACE	Revolving Loan Fund It is the goal of Business Resources and Counseling for Entrepreneurs (BRACE) to have funds available to finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging private business. This loan fund program will be administered by the Business Resources Liaison under the guidance of the BRACE Strategic and Sustainability Leadership Teams and made available to pre-qualified business concepts/plans.
2010_CFP_09	S-I94 Infrastructure Project	Village of Paw Paw, Van Buren County	This project will provide water/wastewater supply to a significant tract of land within the Village of Paw Paw corporate limits that holds promise for new development along I-94 and M-40 (south of I-94). [It] will locate ground water sources, develop storage capacity, and develop the well and water-/wasterwater-mains needed to make this area of interest to developers, includes groundwater sitting/testing to determine if capable of providing needed water supply for use and fire protection by businesses that develop in area. In the past large commercial ventures have

			looked at the site and completed site/architectural plans for development; yet the lack of water/wastewater adequate for their needs has doomed the project. Next to the area (w/in village limits) is an Antwerp Twp. industrial park that is minimally developed due to the lack of water and wastewater utilities to serve it. The Village system is capable of providing water but comes from the north side of I-94 and is not capable of maintaining needed pressure/fire capacity. A new well, storage and watermains [will] satisfy needs for existing/new development. The Village wastewater system is capable of handling more waste flow without expansion of facilities other than collection lines.
2010_CFP _10	Green Energy Project	Village of Paw Paw, Van Buren County	This project involves researching and selecting alternative energy generation - solar or wind - to supply the Village's energy needs; particularly the high electrical energy demand of the wastewater treatment plant. This project will explore which method is most feasible, affect purchase and installation of the selected green energy. This project will also allow net metering sale of excess electrical energy back into the grid operated by Indiana Michigan Power Company, a division of AEP. This project will reduce our costs for the Village's biggest demand for electric energy.
2010_CFP _11	Protecting our Watershed Project	Village of Paw Paw, Van Buren County	This project involves the construction of a duplicate wastewater sanitary sewer force main along and crossing the South Branch of the Paw Paw River. Currently the river and the wetlands along the river are threatened by a single aged sanitary sewer force main that crosses the wetlands and crosses the river. This sanitary sewer force main has had two breaks in the past 5 years. Each has resulted in sewage being dumped into the river and wetland area. The force main carries all sanitary waste from all customers and forces it about 1.2 miles to the wastewater treatment facility. This project would construct a duplicate line so that sewage may be switched to flow in either line. Thus, should there be a break in either line, sanitary flow would be diverted to the other line and any environmental damage would be averted or, at least, greatly lessened.
2010_CFP _12	Downtown Revitalization Project	Village of Paw Paw, Van Buren County	This project involves the purchase and reuse of a dominant vacant building in in the heart of downtown Paw Paw. The former Shopping Center - a longtime fixture in the community - closed its doors in 2008. It has been vacant ever since. It now appears a dagger in the heart and spirit of the people of Paw Paw. It is a mass of asphalt and cement block that takes up a full downtown city block, except for one small corner. This project would purchase the property, renovate it for modern mixed uses and secure tenants. This project would result in LEED certification for the building and block on which it sits.
2010_CFP _13	Hess Lake Park Improvements	Baroda Township	
2010_CFP _14	School Resource Officer Position	Village of Mattawan	To provide school officer position for Mattawan Consolidated Schools - this is above the regular officer position applied for.

2010_CFP _15	New Well & Water Looping	Village of Mattawan	
2010_CFP _16	Wasterwater System Improvements	Village of Bloomingdale	New piping and slip-lining - treatment plans. New location for discharge water, clean and repair lagoons. Major reconstruction!
2010_CFP _17	Resurfacing Village Streets	Village of Vandalia	Resurfacing streets; Camplite - M-60 to Bogue St.; Mulberry - M-60 to Wood St.; South - Marble to Maple; Maple - M-60 to End; Wood - from Maple to Walnut
2010_CFP _18	Lincoln Township Parks Improvements	Lincoln Charter Township	Lincoln Charter Township is completing its 5 year Recreation Plan and is anticipating several potential capital improvement projects for its park system. Potential projects include upgrades to Glenlord Beach, Lincoln Township Beach, 80 Acre Park, Community Center Park and additional non-motorized trails. For the coming year, the Township anticipates submitting at least one application to the MDNRE MDNRTF grant program for a project or project(s) (specific projects yet to be determined).
2010_CFP _19		The Village of Marcellus	We will be seeking grants from the USDA Rural Development to re-roof our existing municipal building and possibly to add on to the building to provide more space for our emergency services department.
2010_CFP _20	River Crossing	Benton Charter Township	This is a river crossing project that would alleviate backups in the line. Benton Charter Township has provided sanitary sewer services to its residents since the 1950's. In August 1997 Benton Charter Township joined the Benton Harbor – St. Joseph Joint Wastewater Treatment Board. Benton Charter Township collects and transmits all of its sanitary sewage into the sanitary sewer system of the City of Benton Harbor at a central collection point for transportation to the Benton Harbor - St. Joseph Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant. The transmission of all sanitary sewage from the City of Benton Harbor and Benton Charter Township flows from the central collection point (siphon) through an underground (river) transmission pipeline crossing the St. Joseph River to the Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant. This project would separate the collection system necessary due to capacity and to alleviate overflows and other environmental concerns. Due to the age, condition and capacity of the collection point at the river crossing, sewage has overflowed into the river system.
2010_CFP _21	Revolving Loan Fund	City of Dowagiac	The community is in a rural border county adjacent to Indiana. With the Michigan image and economy, this type of gap financing vehicle could help offset the disparity in operating a business in Michigan vs. Indiana. The banks have not loosened up their lending criteria and I do not see that happening anytime soon. This vehicle would be the tool that the city would use to help close the gap in a location in the City. The city has not gotten a revolving loan before and the County is not interested in a revolving loan. The City of Dowagiac, is the main player in the county as far as economic development.
2010_CFP _22	Revolving Loan Fund	St. Joseph Charter Township	Establish a revolving loan fund. Same as above (21010_CFP_21) in a sense. The County has a revolving loan fund, but is very depleted. Again the banks are not aggressive at all even with a USDA loan guarantee.

APPENDICES

See attached Michigan Prosperity Initiative, Region 4 – Major Assets and Strategies