



# Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

2018 Annual Report:

***Values in Action***

**“Planning Great Communities Together”**

*Serving Berrien, Cass, & Van Buren Counties*



**Southwest Michigan  
Planning Commission  
2018 Board**



**Berrien County**—*County Commissioners:*

Bill Chickering, Jim Curran, Teri Sue Freehling, and  
Ezra Scott

*Representatives:* Yemi Akinwale,

Marge Durm Hiatt, Dan Fette, Kristen Gunderson,  
Paul Pantaleo, Gloria Payne, Richard Remus,  
Don Ryman, James Schueneman, Dick Stauffer, and  
Jim Stover

**Cass County**—*County Commissioner:* Robert Ziliak

*Representatives:* Barb Cook, Don Delong,  
Leon Laylin, Linda Preston, Johnie Rodebush, and  
James Sayer

**Van Buren County**—*County Commissioners:*

Kurt Doroh and Don Hanson

*Representatives:* Robert Burr, Dave Foerster,  
Sandra Hanson, Jeff Radtke, and Daniel Ruzik

**SWMPC staff on front cover, left to right**—Kimberly Gallagher,  
Kristopher Martin, Patrice Rose, Jill Plescher, K. John Egelhaaf, Marcy  
Hamilton, Ryan Fellows, and Brandon Kovnat

## ***SWMPC Mission Statement***

**Our team uses its passion and expertise to connect people, assist communities and advance cooperative solutions to regional challenges experienced by the communities that created us.**

### **Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC)**

We are one of fourteen state recognized regional planning governmental non-profit organizations in Michigan. The organization was enabled by state legislation (the Regional Planning Act, 1945 PA 281) and formally created in 1971 by the three counties it serves, Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren. SWMPC is a regional planning resource staffed with professional regional planners and is designed to be responsive to the planning needs of our region.

SWMPC is the USDOT and MDOT recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Twin Cities Area (Benton Harbor-St. Joseph) and the Niles-Buchanan-Cass County Area Transportation Studies, as well as the rural and small urban transportation Regional Planning Agency for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. SWMPC is the state designated area-wide water quality management planning agency under the Clean Water Act, and the SWMPC leads and participates in watershed management planning. SWMPC is also the U.S. Economic Development Administration designated Economic Development District for those same three counties.

In this report you will find a representation of a few of our ongoing or recent projects.

*In recognition of his years of service to the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission,  
this document is dedicated to the memory of*

***Johnie Rodebush***

*Cass County Citizen Representative*



## Leadership Message

I am proud to submit to you the 2018 annual report of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission. It is our privilege to serve Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. Together we have been planning great communities for forty-six years. Our team uses its passion and expertise to connect people, assist communities, and advance cooperative solutions to regional challenges experienced by the communities that created us. This mission drives us every day.

I am conflicted by the obligation to represent our 2018 work through this report. My bias would be to generate one that is far too long with excessive detail. I know that in the end, that is unfair to the reader. Instead, we have opted for the route that takes you through a representative sample of our work. If the report does its job, your interest will be piqued and some readers will even reach back for more detail.

The breadth and dimension of our work is considerable and includes projects like the development of the Paw Paw River Water Trail, plans for the restoration of the Ox Creek Watershed, the investigation and mitigation of summertime beach closures on Lake Michigan, and the management of the seven-county Regional Prosperity Initiative. These are just a few of the ways that state funding has returned back to our region through the SWMPC. We occupy the same kind of valuable place relative to federal opportunities as well. One example is our facilitation of the Rural Transportation Planning process in which local transportation projects are solicited, prioritized, and funded across multiple fiscal years.

Thank you for your interest in our work. Our region is a special place. It is our good fortune to work with those who are dedicated to making it even better every day.

K. John Egelhaaf, AICP—Executive Director



*Pictured, left to right:*

- Marcy Hamilton**, Deputy Executive Director/  
Senior Planner—Environment and Community Planning  
♦ [hamiltonm@swmpc.org](mailto:hamiltonm@swmpc.org) | x1525
- Patrice Rose**, Office Manager  
♦ [rosep@swmpc.org](mailto:rosep@swmpc.org) | x1520
- K. John Egelhaaf**, Executive Director  
♦ [egelhaafj@swmpc.org](mailto:egelhaafj@swmpc.org) | x1512
- Kristopher Martin**, Associate Planner—Environment and  
Rideshare  
♦ [martink@swmpc.org](mailto:martink@swmpc.org) | x1521
- Jill Plescher**, Geographic Information System (GIS) Specialist  
♦ [plescherj@swmpc.org](mailto:plescherj@swmpc.org) | x1522
- Ryan Fellows**, Associate Planner—Economic Development and  
Community Planning
- Brandon Kovnat**, Associate Planner—Transportation  
♦ [kovnatb@swmpc.org](mailto:kovnatb@swmpc.org) | x1524
- Kimberly Gallagher**, Senior Planner—Transportation  
♦ [gallagherk@swmpc.org](mailto:gallagherk@swmpc.org) | x1518

Funding: Federal: \$300,444 Local: \$66,622 Total: \$367,067

## Overview

By law, metro areas must plan their transportation infrastructure together. The SWMPC facilitates this work with the Twin Cities (Benton Harbor-St. Joseph Urbanized Area) Area Transportation Study (TwinCATS) and Niles-Buchanan-Cass County Area Transportation Study (NATS). (Michigan portion of the South Bend Urbanized Area)

Because of this collaboration, 24 of our urbanized communities together decide how best to spend annual state and federal transportation funding. Each year the urban planning process results in essential transportation infrastructure development for the citizens and businesses in the region. In 2018 there were 26 projects totaling \$27,716,798.

## Partners

54 contributing partners: 24 Southwest Michigan communities, Berrien County/Road Dept., Cass County/Road Commission, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG), Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), Cornerstone Alliance, Buchanan Dial-A-Ride, Niles Dial-A-Ride Transit, Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority (TCATA), and Southwest Michigan Regional Airport.



## MACOG Travel Demand Modeling

**Budget:** MDOT: \$10,000; FHWA: \$40,000

**Timeline:** Concept initiated: October 2016; Agreement reached: March 2017; Model results for NATS Long Range Plan: 2019

**About:** Understanding the dynamics of how people travel within an urban area is essential to developing priorities for transportation infrastructure. The South Bend area has an important influence on how people travel in the southern part of our region. We predict future travel dynamics using powerful computing models. However, for 37 years, Indiana and Michigan have used two different models. SWMPC brokered an agreement between our colleagues in Indiana and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to study movements through a single travel demand model for both states. This will have important, far-reaching impacts on the way travel movements are understood and infrastructure projects are planned.

Funding: Grant (2015-18): Federal: **\$160,000** Local: **\$40,000** Total: **\$200,000**

**SWMPC Role:** Project manager and grant administrator

## Overview

Today there are four independent public transit providers in Berrien County providing essential services within their service boundaries; however, the coverage and level of the services is inconsistent across the county and many residents and employees do not have public transit options available to them.

Communities in Berrien County face serious challenges over the next ten years: meeting the needs of the aging population and tackling poverty, while attracting and retaining young people and supporting growth in the regional economy.

Over the last year and a half the Connect Berrien Project Team has been working with Nelson Nygaard on a plan for an improved and more robust countywide transit system that will put Berrien County in a better position to rise to these challenges. The final plan was developed through a collaborative process including eight public outreach meetings, eight stakeholder agency meetings, in person interviews and online survey.



## Partners

Lakeland Foundation: *Dana Wales*

Berrien County Manufacturers Association: *Pat Branstadter*

Berrien County : *Teri Sue Freehling, Jim Curran*

Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority - *Marcus Mohamad, Alex Little*

Niles Dial a Ride: *Ric Huff, Kelly Getman Dissette*

Buchanan Dial a Ride: *William Marx*

Berrien Bus, *William Wolf, Evan Smith*

## CONNECT BERRIEN VISION PLAN GOALS:



### ENHANCE

*Make transit more convenient than it is today*



### CONNECT

*Connect people to more places than they can reach today*



### SIMPLIFY

*Make transit easier to use than it is today*



### SUSTAIN

*Ensure the financial and long-term sustainability of all transit systems*



Funding: Federal: \$125,200 State: \$16,300 Local: \$15,000 Total: \$156,500

BETWEEN 2010 and 2016

WITHIN ½ MILE OF NAPIER:

## Overview

Napier Avenue (Berrien County) is an important corridor for the Twin Cities. Data shows significant portions of nearby residents without access to a vehicle. As currently configured, the absence of sidewalks and bike lanes present a major safety concern.

A plan was developed to more safely incorporate all modes of travel both motorized and non-motorized. The plan reaches from the St. Joseph River Bridge to the exit 29 I-94 ramp. A generous grant from MDOT and the Federal Transit Administration plus the participation of a broad range of stakeholders and public made the plan possible.

## Partners

**Steering Committee:** Benton Charter Township, Berrien County Road Department, St. Joseph Charter Township, Be Healthy Berrien, City of Benton Harbor, City of St Joseph, Disability Network of Southwest Michigan, Lakeland Health, Twin Cities Area

Transportation Authority (TCATA), local business representatives (Slumberland Furniture Store and Napier Shell)



843

vehicle-to-vehicle  
crashes



14

vehicle-to-pedestrian or  
bicyclist crashes\*

\*Includes one pedestrian fatality in Jan. 2018

### NO TRANSIT SERVICE

TCATA currently cannot provide fixed-route transit service along Napier due to its lack of sidewalks and crosswalks

### • Sidewalks are **DIFFICULT TO FIND**



### • Crosswalks are **INTERMITTENT**



### • Roadways are **TOO WIDE** to easily and safely cross



+7,000  
people



+7,000  
jobs



+1,600  
seniors



260  
non-auto  
commuters



+1,900  
school-aged  
children



58  
households do  
not have access  
to a car



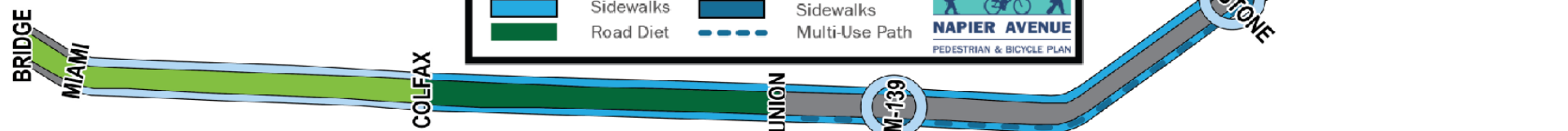
1,500  
living in poverty



1  
diverse  
community



Figure 4-1: Napier Avenue Project Phasing



Funding: Local: \$10,810 Total: \$10,810

## Overview

More than ever, communities seek to maximize the impact of finite resources. The need is particularly evident for our local road infrastructure. The SWMPC is an expert in the use of tools to help communities optimize the use of their road funding.

The plan is a multi-year strategy to optimize resources spent on the maintenance of local roads within the Township. It was derived from the locally developed goals for road condition and the projected Township budget assigned for road maintenance. An essential component of the plan is the generation of condition data for all local road segments. The plan lays out the right fixes at the right times so the Township has the best road conditions over time.

## Partners

Chikaming Township and Berrien County Road Department

## Quick Facts:

96.4 Miles of Road

Plan Horizon: 9 Years

2017: 72.9% of Local Roads in Poor Condition

2027: 1.9% of Local Roads Projected in Poor Condition

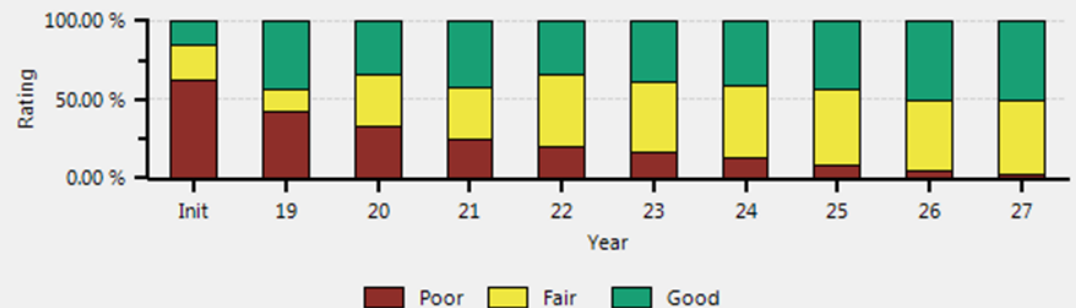
Annual Township Road Investment (through 2014): \$614,524



Above: Lakeside Inn, Lakeshore Road, Chikaming Township



Above: Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, near Chikaming Township Hall



Right: Chikaming Township projected road ratings by utilizing asset management

# Culvert Asset Management Pilot Program

Funding: State: \$67,138 Total: \$67,138

## Overview

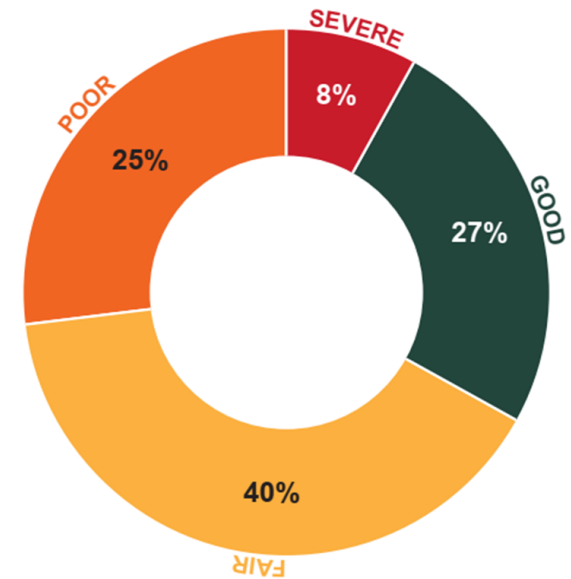
Collect data to establish: the total number, condition, and characteristics, of local road agency-owned culverts for the City of Benton Harbor, and Cass, and Van Buren Counties.

Three road agencies in our region were awarded grants to systematically evaluate the number, overall condition, cost to replace, and estimate the investment in labor necessary for periodic condition evaluation. Culverts inventoried: 3,415.

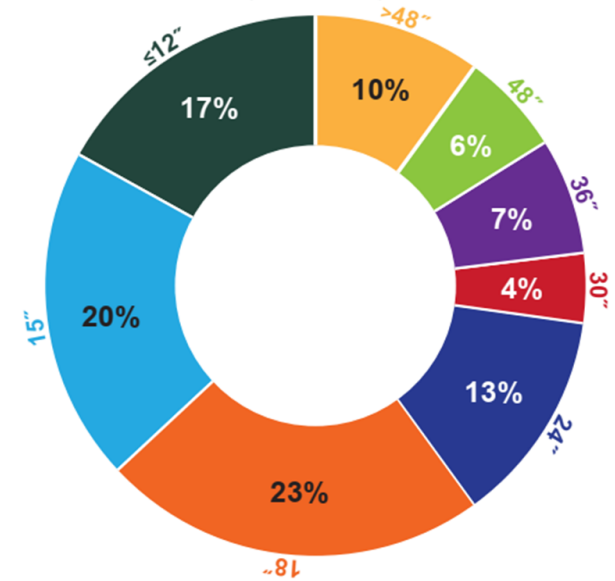
## Partners

City of Benton Harbor, Van Buren County Road Commission, and Cass County Road Commission

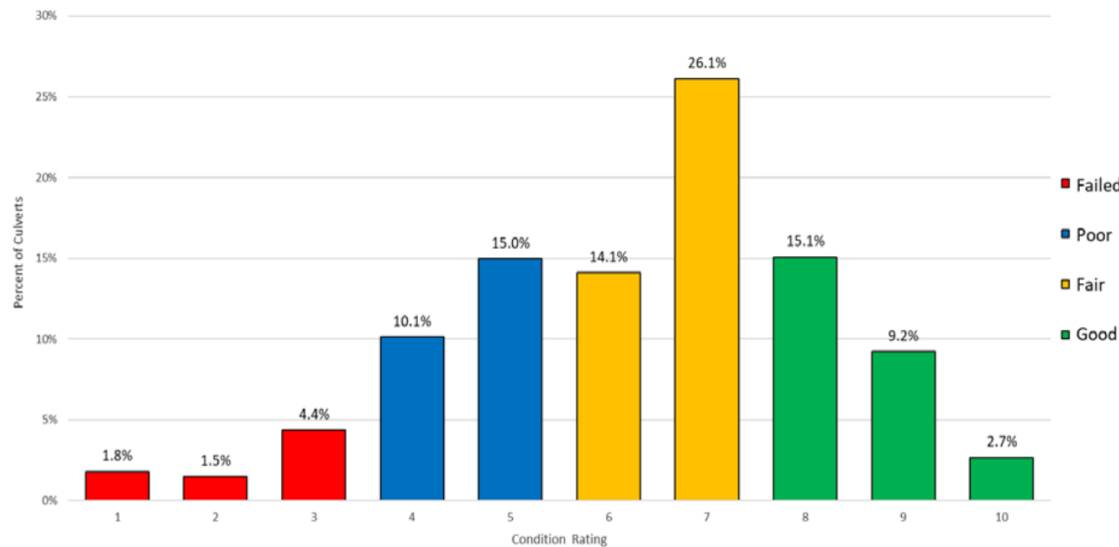
## Estimated Local Agency Culvert Condition



## Reported Culverts by Span or Diameter (in inches)



Overall Reported Culvert Condition Rating



49,664 culverts inventoried, 34,354 recorded condition ratings



# Rural Transportation Planning

Funding: Grant (2018): Federal: \$15,200 State: \$42,500 Total: \$57,700

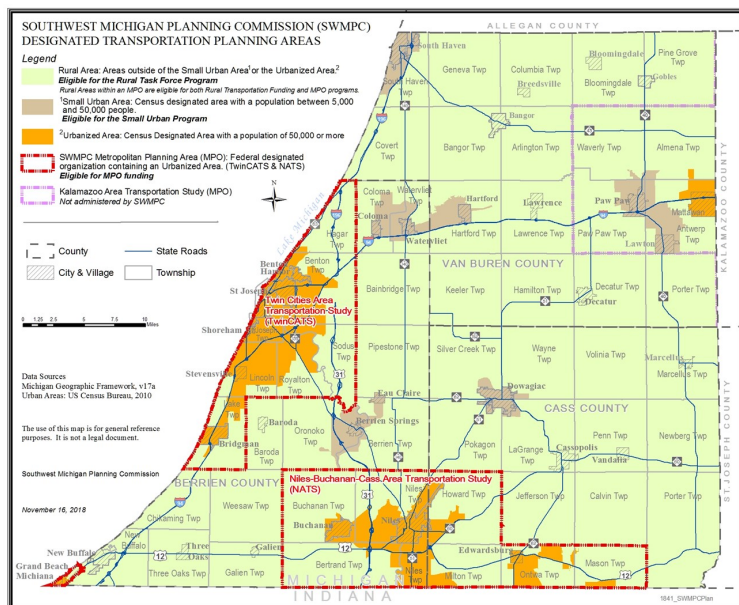
## Overview

SWMPC assists the state and local units of government in rural transportation planning. We are the recognized rural and small urban transportation Regional Planning Agency by USDOT and MDOT for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties.

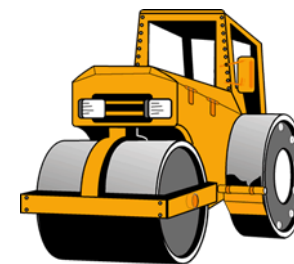
The SWMPC helps local units of government make the connection between their priority projects and the various transportation funding opportunities available. Several state processes exist for this kind of matching including one designed specifically for small urban places and one designed for rural communities. The SWMPC is tasked with orchestrating our partners through these processes.

## Partners

All non-urban local units of government in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, MDOT.



# 20.6 miles



## New PAVEMENT on roads in poor or fair condition

# 5 TRANSIT



## Capital improvement projects.

2018

Rural Transportation Funding Allocation: \$2,378,731

Small Urban Funding Allocation: \$492,915

# Asset Management Program

Funding: State: \$41,000 Total: \$41,000

## Overview

Since 2003 the Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) has required road agencies to collect and submit roadway pavement condition information based on a pavement rating system.

Every year since 2004 TAMC contracts with each of Michigan's Regional Planning Organizations to coordinate the annual PASER condition assessment for the paved federal-aid road system. A team of three raters composed of a representative from the MDOT, SWMPC and county road agencies embark on an effort to rate at least 50 percent of the paved federal-aid road system each year. Teams of trained raters assess the condition of 1566 lane miles of paved federal-aid eligible roads once every two years. Individuals must attend PASER training each year before being allowed to rate the roads

The information collected is used to generate annual reports, populate interactive maps and generate a wide range of performance measures presented in dashboards. In addition to use by the TAMC many agencies use PASER data to help manage their road systems and convey information to the public.

## Partners

Berrien Road Department  
Cass County Road Commission  
Van Buren Road Commission  
Transportation Asset Management Council  
Michigan Department of Transportation

### Berrien, Cass & Van Buren Counties

#### Federal Aid Eligible Roadway Miles

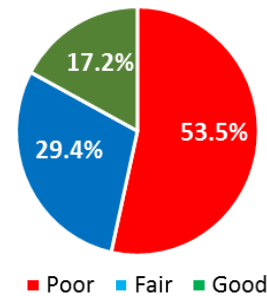
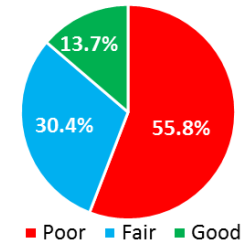
**MDOT Maintained:** 603 Miles

**Locally Maintained:** 963 Miles

**Total Miles :** 1566

#### Berrien County 2017-2018

##### Pavement Condition

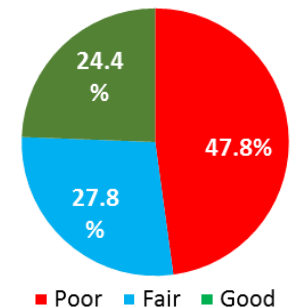


#### Cass County 2017-2018

##### Pavement Condition

#### Van Buren County 2017-2018

##### Pavement Condition



**Funding:** State of Michigan: \$250,000+

## Overview

In 2014-2015, *Twin Cities Harbor: A Study of Potential in Benton Harbor and St. Joseph* was an exploration of possibilities. It did not seek to represent a shared vision for the harbor. Over time, it became clear that a vision was the next step.

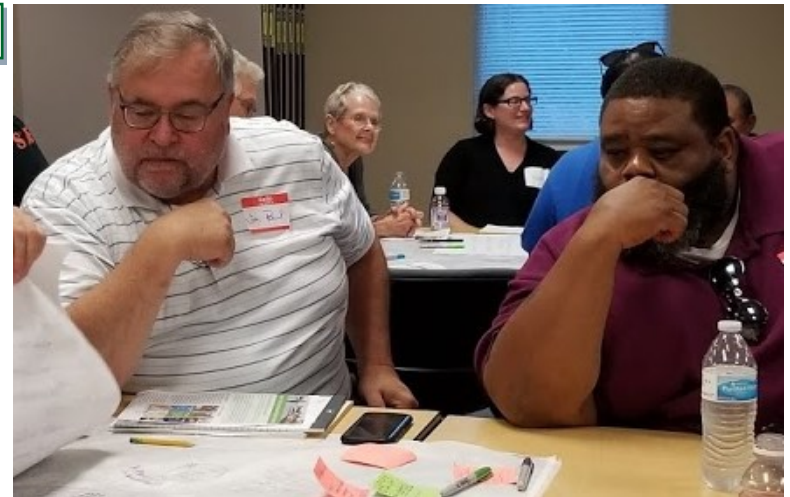
To form the vision, a broad partnership was built that balanced state and national expertise with the engagement of a deeply invested cross-section of local participants. Accordingly, a well-organized, highly participatory planning process culminated in a five-day charrette. From that process, a vision for the harbor is taking shape.

## Partners

City of Benton Harbor, City of St. Joseph, St. Joseph Charter Township, Berrien County, Governor's Office, Michigan Office of the Great Lakes, Michigan Sea Grant, Michigan State University, National Charrette Institute, and Twin Cities Harbor Conservancy.



*Left: The Twin Cities Harbor: A Study of Potential in Benton Harbor and St. Joseph* imagined exciting new possibilities throughout the harbor. This example imagines a new mixed-use development at the Central Dock property, across Main Street from the Whirlpool Corp. Riverview Campus in Benton Harbor.



## Value of Twin Cities Harbor:

- ♦ \$840M annually in business revenue
- ♦ 5,057 direct, indirect, and induced jobs
- ♦ \$251M per year in personal income

Source: USACE Fact Sheet for the Twin Cities Harbor





**Funding:** Federal EDA Grant (2016-18): **\$154,884**

## Overview

SWMPC is the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) designated Economic Development District (EDD) for Southwest Michigan (Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties). We prepare the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as a means to move toward a cohesive regional economic development strategy for Southwest Michigan. We report annually to show our progress on goals and objectives.

The 2018-2022 CEDS for Southwest Michigan is the product of a team of local experts from a range of institutions both public and private. A facilitated process engaged the team in meaningful discussion about where we are, have been, and opportunities ahead. A high priority was given to integrating and complementing the goals and objectives already in place among the institutions represented. It embodies the rare opportunity to take a regional, collective approach in establishing economic development priorities. Through a collaborative process in goal-setting, five comprehensive goals (see box) were established for building a more competitive and resilient economy for Southwest Michigan.

## Partners

**CEDS Steering Committee Roles:** Public elected officials, public appointed officials, economic development organizations, workforce development, higher education, community leaders, private sector, finance, utilities, and minority leaders from the following organizations.

**CEDS Steering Committee Organizations:** Berrien County, Cass County, Van Buren County, Chikaming Township Planning Commission, Cornerstone Alliance, Horizon Bank, Indiana Michigan Power (AEP), Kinexus (Michigan Works!), Lake Michigan College, Mno-Bmadsen, Pokagon Band Tribal Council, Pokagon Township, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance, and Wightman

## Goals: Southwest Michigan CEDS 2018-2022 and 2018 CEDS Report

### **Goal #1: Livability for Talent Attraction**

Promote a diverse environment that creates an excellent quality of life for talent.

#### ***SWMPC's active steps through the following initiatives:***

Napier Ave. Plan, Connect Berrien, Paw Paw Water Trail, Ox Creek, and Lake Michigan Tributaries

### **Goal #2: Education & Training**

Attract, retain, and develop a high-quality workforce.

**RPI's Active Steps:** 2018 grants to Urban Alliance's Momentum Program, Community Literacy Initiative, and Youth Solutions—Jobs for Michigan Graduates

### **Goal #3: Infrastructure**

Create, improve, and maintain services and infrastructure.

**SWMPC's Active Steps:** TwinCATS/NATS LRP/TIP, RTF, CMAQ, Asset Management, Harbor

### **Goal #4: Support Business**

Support and meet the needs of current, new, and emerging businesses.

**Active steps:** Cornerstone Alliance, SMEGA, Kinexus, counties, chambers of comm., et al.

### **Goal #5: Coordination**

Promote better coordination among different economic development groups.

**Active Steps:** All groups in CEDS Steering Committee and others working together

## Southwest Michigan CEDS—2018 Vision:

"To cultivate a resilient and competitive economy that supports an excellent quality of life and builds pathways to prosperity for all residents."

Funding: State: \$180,897

## Overview

In 2014 Governor Snyder created the Regional Prosperity Initiative. Since then, southwest Michigan has organized as Southwest Michigan Prosperity Initiative (SWMPI) Region 8 and has responded to the Governor's encouragement to further prosperity in the region.

The SWMPC co-facilitates with Southcentral Michigan Planning Council the Regional Prosperity Initiative as a collaborative effort within seven counties in southwest Michigan (Branch, Berrien, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren). Across a wide representation of sectors, the RPI looks for opportunities to identify and pursue areas where the region is uniquely poised to flourish. Those areas have been cast into goals for Region 8 and clarified in a Prosperity Plan.

## Partners

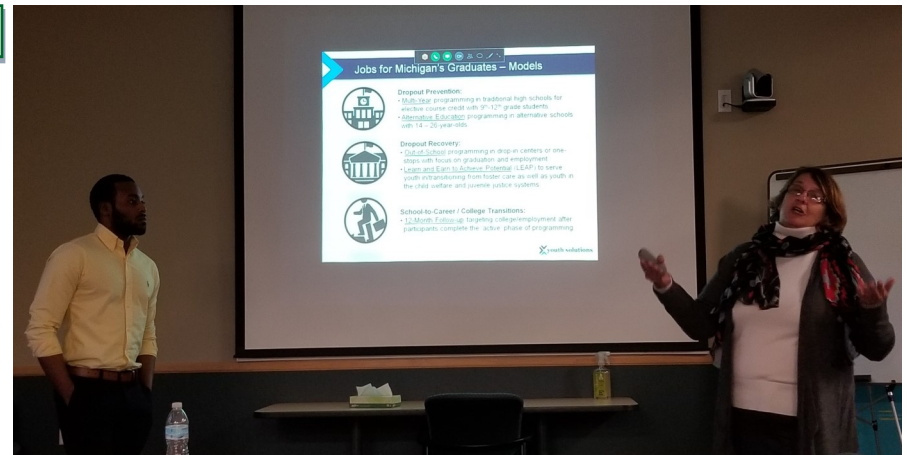
MDOT, MichiganWorks!, Kinexus, BCATS, KATS, Southcentral Michigan Planning Council, Kalamazoo Literacy Council, Southwest Michigan First, Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce, Western Michigan University, Lake Michigan College, Kalamazoo Road Commission, Battle Creek Unlimited, Kellogg Community College, Kalamazoo RESA, Van Buren ISD, and United Way of Southwest Michigan



Distance Learning program — 2018 SWMPI grant to the Southwest Michigan Community Literacy Initiative



Urban Alliance's "Momentum" program — 2018 SWMPI grant recipient



Youth Solutions & Jobs for Michigan Graduates (a 2018 grant recipient) gives a presentation to the SWMPI Committee

## Quick Facts:

### Lives Impacted Through SWMPI Funded Projects:

- 8 Distance Learning Centers – Adult Basic Edu., ESL, Literacy
  - ◆ 31 Learners Completed 10-Week Course
  - ◆ 28 Learners Obtained Employment
- "Momentum" Center for Job Skills Certification
  - ◆ 64 Graduates w/ Certifications
- High School Drop-Out Prevention/Job Training
  - ◆ 735 Youth Served
  - ◆ Full-Time Job Rate 67-74%
- **\$105,000** Committed to Selected 2018 RPI Projects
- **\$394,000** Committed to Selected RPI Projects Since Inception

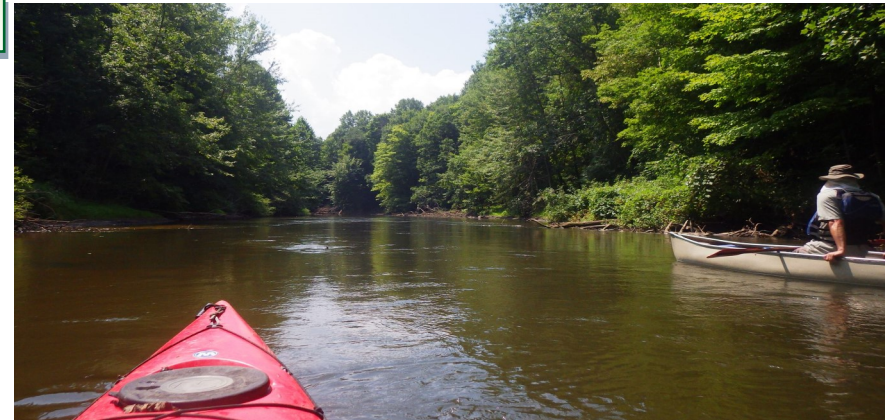


Funding: DNR Grant (2016-18): \$100,000

## Overview

The Paw Paw River extends from the Village of Paw Paw to Benton Harbor. It flows through communities, forests, and wetlands. This water trail provides great recreational opportunities for residents and tourists. It provides economic benefits to the communities along the river.

SWMPC served as project manager and grant administrator to create a water trail for the Paw Paw River. We are currently working with the stakeholders to secure future funding of the water trail to go for pathway maintenance and marketing.



## Partners

Benton Charter Township, Hagar Township, Coloma Township, City of Coloma, Watervliet Township, City of Watervliet, Village of Lawrence, Lawrence Township, Hartford Township, City of Hartford, Paw Paw Township, Village of Paw Paw, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, Cornerstone Alliance, Two Rivers Coalition, Sarett Nature Center, Al Pscholka (former state rep.), Waverly Township, Paw Paw Area Chamber





Funding: EGLE Stormwater, Asset Management, and Wastewater (SAW) Grant (2015-18): \$846,000

## Overview

When Ox Creek was designated as not meeting water quality standards, SWMPC secured funding and convened partners to develop a watershed management plan that identifies the need for better agricultural and urban stormwater practices to improve water quality. In addition, a vision for redeveloping the Orchards Mall area was developed to reduce runoff, improve non-motorized and public transportation options and create placemaking opportunities that will attract development and encourage investment.

Several beaches along Berrien County's coast close due to elevated levels of bacteria (E.coli). SWMPC undertook developing a watershed management plan for the 14 small creeks that drain to Lake Michigan from Stevensville to the Indiana border. SWMPC tested for E.coli in the streams, did DNA testing and used dogs trained to detect human waste in water. The conclusion is that failing septic and sanitary sewer systems are contributing human waste to the creeks which flow to Lake Michigan causing beach closures.

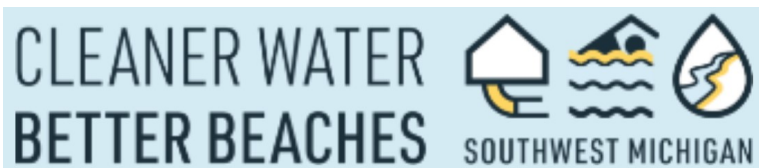


Dogs trained to detect human waste

Photo source: Herald Palladium

## Partners

Two Rivers Coalition, Berrien County Drain Commission, Cornerstone Alliance, Benton Charter Township, Berrien County Conservation District, Wightman, Berrien County Health Department, Great Lakes Scientific, Chikaming Open Lands, Pokagon Fund, Stevensville Village, Lincoln Township, Lake Township, Bridgman City, Chikaming Township, New Buffalo Township, New Buffalo City, Grand Beach Village, Michiana Village



# Westrain

Funding: State: \$86,741

## Overview

A single, regional, collaborative body to assist Amtrak and MDOT with a voice on matters related to the Pere Marquette passenger rail line.

The SWMPC is the chair of the Westrain group. The collaborative makes funding determinations on an annual promotion budget for the Pere Marquette line. The group also provides its voice to issues of advocacy back to MDOT and Amtrak.

## Partners

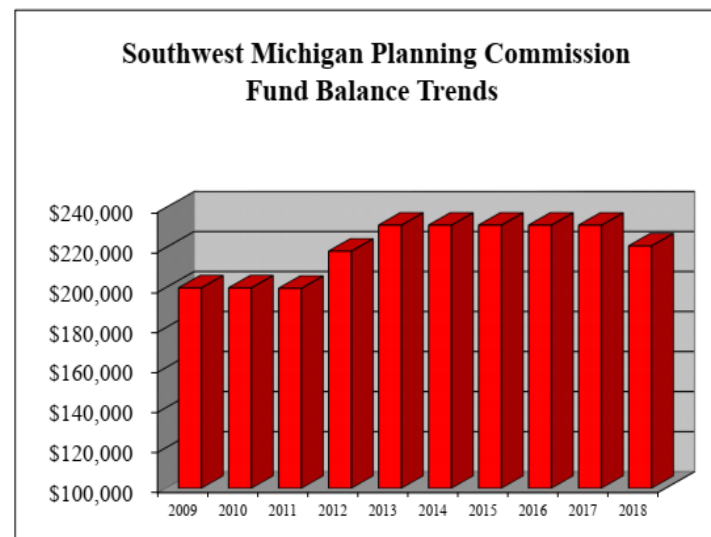
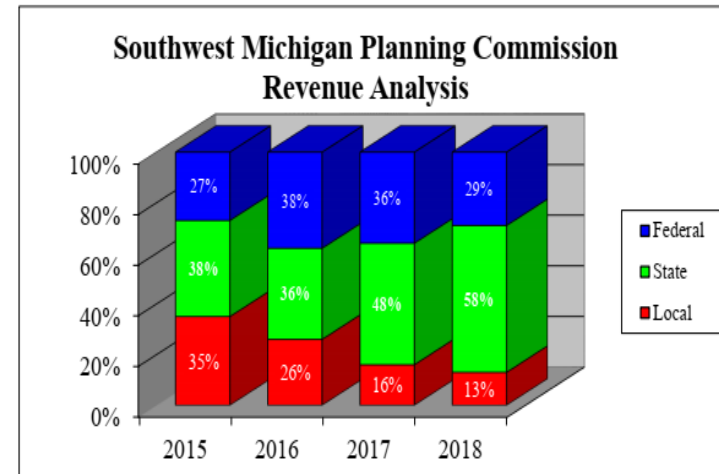
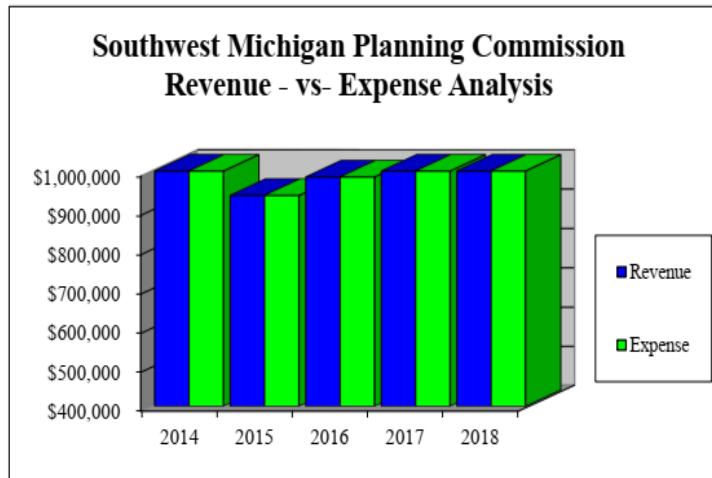
Westrain is a coalition of members along the *Pere Marquette* Amtrak passenger rail line (Grand Valley Metro Council in Grand Rapids, Macatawa Area Coordinating Council in Holland, City of Bangor, Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce, the Michigan Association of Rail Passengers, together with Amtrak and the Michigan Department of Transportation - Office of Passenger Rail)



View of St. Joseph-Benton Harbor Amtrak Station (left)



# Audited Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for September 30, 2018





## Awards

**Welch-Lackey Leadership Award** is presented each year by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission presents in honor of former Commissioners George A. Welch and William F. Lackey. These men served the Commission in times of great personal difficulties yet continued throughout to represent the spirit of public service and to further the goals of intergovernmental cooperation. Their contribution to the communities they served embodies the leadership qualities essential to the preservation of our citizen form of government.

The recipient of the Welch-Lackey Leadership Award is selected in the fall of each year from nominees selected by the SWMPC management. Each commissioner is requested to vote, by secret ballot, for the nominee(s) who best exhibits a sense of service, leadership, and intergovernmental cooperation as exemplified by the award.

*Pictured Right:* **2018 Welch-Lackey Award Recipient: Leon Laylin.**



**Graham Woodhouse Intergovernmental Effort Award** was established in 1987 to honor former Dowagiac Mayor, Graham Woodhouse and is presented annually for projects that exemplify intergovernmental cooperation by local units of government. Any local unit(s) of government may be nominated to receive the Award in recognition of demonstrated outstanding cooperative effort in problem solving.

The Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee will review all nominations. The criteria used in evaluating project nominations includes:

- Relative Degree of Effort by Local Units
- Scope
- Methodology
- Project Dimension



**2018 Graham Woodhouse Recipient: Indiana-Michigan River Valley Trail** in partnership with; National Park Service-Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, Indiana Department of Transportation, Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michiana Area Council of Governments; City of Niles, City of South Bend, Niles Charter Township, Town of Roseland, Berrien County Road Department, St. Joseph Parks, Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance, American Electric Power, Abonmarche, Wightman & Associates, Inc., Berrien County Foundation, Lakeland Foundation/Lakeland Health, Huizenga Family Foundation, Bike Michigan Coalition, and Be Healthy Berrien.