

Annual Performance Report—October 2019

Southwest Michigan Economic Development District

Serving Berrien, Cass, & Van Buren Counties

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022



Southwest Michigan Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Annual Performance Report—October 2019

Prepared by:
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
"Planning Great Communities Together"



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Economic Development Administration



www.eda.gov



Left to right: B.H. BL-94 Charrette, B.H. Arts District mural, Kee-Boon-Mein-Kaa Pow Wow, S.H. Lighthouse, Bangor Amtrak Station, and Dowagiac Under the Harvest Moon Festival.

Adjustment to Strategy

CEDS Committee

The CEDS Committee had six members discontinue their role and welcomed four new members: Jeff Rea (Greater Niles Chamber of Commerce), Michelle Audette-Bauman (MEDC), Jeff Carmen (Cass County), and Zach Vaughn (Cornerstone Alliance).



CEDS Strategy Committee Membership (October 2019)			
<i>Member</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Committee Member Role</i>
Troy Clay	President and CEO	Mno-Bmadsen	Economic development org
Matt Davis	President, P.E., LEED AP	Wightman & Associates, Inc.	Private sector
K. John Egelhaaf	Executive Director	Southwest Michigan Planning Commission	Economic development org
Dan Fette	Community Development Director	Berrien County	Economic development org
Jeff Carmen	County Administrator	Cass County	Public official
Jeff Rea	President and CEO	Greater Niles Chamber of Commerce	Economic development org
Debbie Gillespie	Director, Workforce Outreach	Lake Michigan College	Higher education; workforce dev.
Jodi Gruner	Economic Development Specialist	Michigan Dept. of Agriculture & Rural Develop.	Economic development org
Zach Vaughn	Project Manager of Physical and Business Development	Cornerstone Alliance	Economic development org
Shelley Klug	Manager of Econ. & Business Development	Indiana Michigan Power (AEP)	Economic dev. org; utility
Zachary Morris	Economic Development Coordinator	Van Buren County/Kinexus	Economic development org
Jeff Noel	VP Communications and Public Affairs	Whirlpool Corporation	Private sector
Mark Parrish	Tribal Council Member/ Secretary	Pokagon Band Tribal Council	Public elected official
Gail Patterson-Gladney	County Commissioner	Van Buren County	Public elected official
Dan Peat	Chief Strategy Officer	Kinexus (Michigan Works!)	Econ. dev. org; workforce dev.
Michelle Audette-Bauman	Community Development Team	Michigan Economic Development Corporation	Economic development org
Linda Preston	Supervisor/ MTA Chair	Pokagon Twp/ SWMPC	Public elected off.; econ. dev. org
Bill Wolf	County Administrator	Berrien County	Public official

Economic Development Integration

Following the issuance of Economic Development Integration (EDI) guidance from the EDA, the SWMPC has taken this opportunity to mold our organization's annual report with an EDI focus. The information contained in this annual report is also EDI focused.



Annual Update

This annual update was produced through surveying the CEDS Committee, one-on-one contact with CEDS Committee members, and using data from websites of local organizations and agencies.

Agency Acronyms

Cornerstone Alliance (CA)
Southwest Michigan Regional Prosperity Initiative (SWMPI)
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC)
Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

Other Acronyms

Twin Cities Area Transportation Study (TwinCATS)
Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS)

Economic Development Activities and Action Plan Progress

Vision

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

Goals

Goal #1: Livability for Talent Attraction

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

Goal #2: Education & Training

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

Goal #3: Infrastructure

Create, improve, and maintain services and infrastructure.

Goal #4: Support Business

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

Goal #5: Coordination

Promote better coordination among different economic development groups.

Goal #1: Livability for Talent Attraction

	Objectives and Strategies	Implementation projects (lead agency)	More information
1.1	Create a more diversified transportation system, integrated with community development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create walkable neighborhoods Encourage new transportation patterns that support efficient multi-model transportation options Support community development that is transit-oriented 	<p><i>Napier Avenue Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan</i> (SWMPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A section of Napier Avenue is being transformed from four-lanes into three-lanes including a turn lane (2019) <p><i>Connect Berrien: Berrien County Transit Integration Plan</i> (SWMPC, 2018)</p> <p>TCATA U-M 4-year National Science Foundation grant (SWMPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the DoubleMap smartphone app to track TCATA buses in real time (2019) 	<p>napieravenue.org</p> <p>connectberrien.org</p>
1.2	Encourage development of additional recreational opportunities and amenities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the development of additional public spaces in urban, suburban, and rural environments Promote existing and support development of new trails and natural areas (e.g., parks, recreation areas, rivers, and lakes) 	<p>Recreation plans; Indiana-Michigan River Valley Trail (SWMPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning work for Niles—Berrien Springs connection (2019) Construction started for missing link between Niles and Mishawaka (2019) <p>Paw Paw River Water Trail (SWMPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail maintenance, coordination, and signage through local municipality and area economic development funding (2019) 	<p>swmpc.org/inmitrail.asp</p> <p>pawpawriverwatertrail.org</p>
1.3	Support sustainable development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop infrastructure that can be sustained financially and environmentally over the long term Maintain or improve environmental quality 	<p>Green infrastructure workshops/grant writing (SWMPC)</p> <p>Watershed management plans and SAW grants (SWMPC)</p> <p>Lake Michigan Tributaries non-profit/tribal partnership (SWMPC)</p>	<p>swmpc.org/growgreen.asp</p> <p>sustainoxcreek.org swmpc.org/</p> <p>lakemitribs.asp</p>

Goal #1: Livability for Talent Attraction

	Objectives and Strategies (continued)	Implementation projects (lead agency)
1.4	Encourage increased access to housing options regarding density, cost, style, and location for existing residents and new talent	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate a region-wide Target Market Analysis to gain better data to support 'missing middle' housing development• Support education of developers and financiers regarding housing and demographic trends and community objectives• Support education of community leaders regarding redevelopment programs, land use and zoning techniques, and enforcement options to maintain housing stock	<p>Development of a housing toolkit for Southwest Michigan (SWMPI grant)</p> <p>St. Joseph County Housing Task Force local housing plan (SWMPI microgrant)</p>
1.5	Execution of Core Projects than have a positive impact on the economic vitality of Berrien County by improving the quality of place	

Livability for Talent Attraction **Highlights**

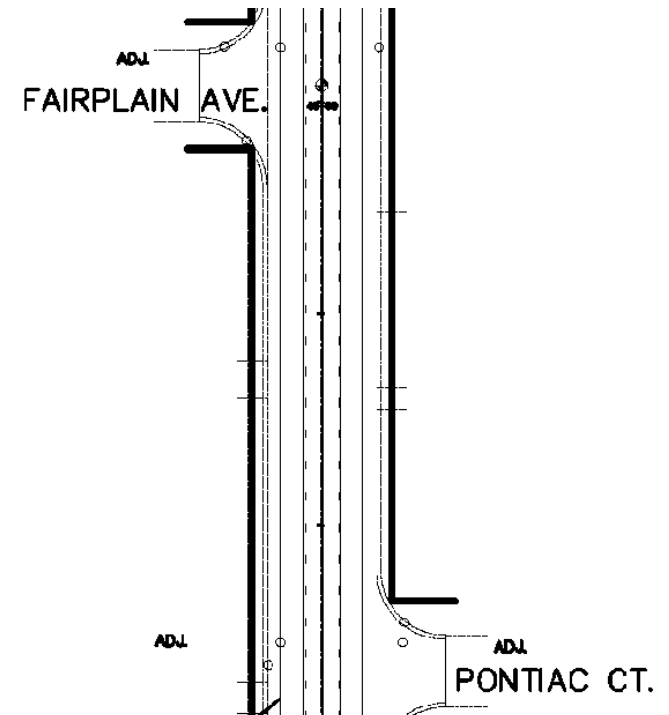
Napier Avenue

The Berrien County Road Department is transforming a segment of Napier Avenue from four-lanes into three-lanes including a turn lane. The section covers Napier Avenue from Miami Road to Colfax Avenue and is expected to reduce accidents by 80 percent. The new configuration will include a four-foot paved shoulder, that while not designated as a bike lane, should increase safety for cyclists.



Construction of the missing trail link

Image source: Friends of the IN-MI River Valley Rail Facebook page



Engineering drawing section of new configuration

Image source: Berrien County Road Department

Indiana-Michigan River Valley Trail

Community open houses and stakeholder meetings took place to discuss the nine-mile trail extension from Niles to Berrien Springs. Preliminary planning work is funded by a Michigan Department of Health and Human Service's Michigan Health and Wellness 4x4 Grant.

Construction of the missing trail link in Niles Township (Fort Street to US-12) is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2019. Once complete, the trail will connect the City of Niles to Niles Township.

Livability for Talent Attraction **Highlights**

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

The MEDC Community Development team provided technical assistance support through their Redevelopment Ready Communities and Michigan Main Street programs in addition to funding assistance to several projects in Southwest Michigan. These quality of life improving projects included:

- *South Haven Center*
- *210 East (Paw Paw)*
- *Benton Harbor Pedestrian Bridge*
- *Harbor City Flats (Benton Harbor)*
- *GhostLight Theater activation (Benton Harbor)*
- *Kids' Place Playground Enhancement (Bangor)*
- *Chapin Mansion Access For All (Niles)*
- *Parcourse Renovation (Watervliet)*
- *Lawton SplashPad*



Niles Chapin Mansion (\$15,000 MEDC Public Spaces Community Places Grant)

Image source: South Bend Tribune



South Haven Center (\$750,000 MEDC Michigan Community Revitalization Program Grant)

Image source: MiBiz

Goal #2: Education & Training

Objectives and Strategies	Implementation projects (lead agency)
Promote accessibility and opportunities to participate in education and skilled training programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailor programs to market demands 	<p>W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research's Measuring Occupations in Demand (SWMPI microgrant, 2019)</p> <p>Kinexus Group Workforce Development Programming</p> <p>Urban Alliance's Momentum program (SWMPI grant)</p>
Encourage a larger number of internships and apprenticeships across the region and across the continuum of learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a regional clearinghouse and website that publicizes and provides links to internship/apprenticeship opportunities Support the creation and maintenance of an inventory of internship/apprenticeship opportunities Support programs that connect interns to job opportunities 	<p>Southwest Michigan First and Western Michigan University collaborative internship/apprenticeship opportunities regional clearinghouse and website (SWMPI grant)</p>
Encourage a culture of learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for all learners Encourage, and promote the personal and regional economic benefits of, lifelong learning Promote digital literacy 	<p>Momentum, Community Literacy Initiative, and Youth Solutions and Jobs for Michigan Graduates (SWMPI microgrants)</p>
Support work of existing organizations: adult education, credential acquisition, career exploration, functional literacy, skilled trades, and employers	<p>Momentum, Community Literacy Initiative, and Youth Solutions and Jobs for Michigan Graduates (SWMPI microgrants)</p> <p>Kinexus Group Workforce Development Programming</p>

Goal #2: Education & Training Highlights

Kinexus Group

Kinexus Group, which is comprised of Youth Solutions, Michigan Works! Berrien Cass Van Buren, Market Van Buren, and Change Agents Consulting, Inc., works to improve workforce, community, and business development in Southwest Michigan.

- U.S Department of Labor grant to Benton Harbor's YouthBuild Program
- Talent Investment Agency's Workforce Development Agency grant to train 100 certified nursing assistants in Southwest Michigan
- Kinexus' Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren hosted Manufacturing Day at Lakeshore
- Talent Investment Agency's Workforce Development Agency grant for a manufacturing collaborative in Southwest Michigan
- Creation of Market Van Buren (economic development organization)

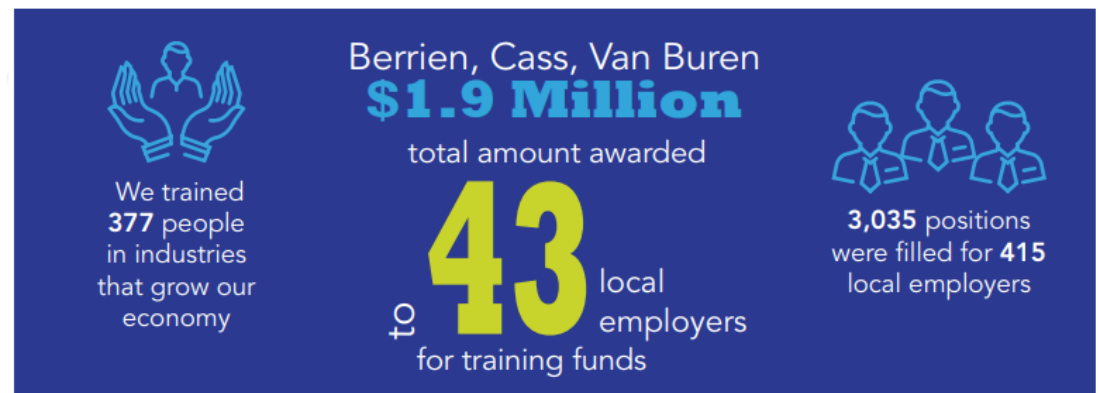


Manufacturing Day 2019

Image source: Moody on the Market

Kinexus' Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren 2018 efforts

Image source: Kinexus



Goal #3: Infrastructure

	Objectives and Strategies	Implementation projects (lead agency)	More information
3.1	Improve infrastructure information		
3.2	Encourage infrastructure development and interconnectivity to better support education, training, and employment		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase mobility: transit and non-motorized • Increase access to technology: broadband and access to equipment 	<p>Connect Berrien Plan and TwinCATS Walk and Roll Plan (SWMPC)</p> <p>Community Literacy Initiative (SWMPI microgrant)</p>	<p>connectberrien.org swmpc.org/walkbiketwincats.asp</p> <p>kalamazooliteracy.org</p>
3.3	Advance the effective and efficient transportation of goods		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support regionally impactful infrastructure opportunities for the movement of freight (e.g., completion of US-31, US-131 BR/US-131 Interchange Upgrade, three lanes of traffic on I-94, through the region) • Recognize intermodal freight transportation opportunities (e.g., rail transportation, reliever port for Chicago and Detroit) • Promote maintenance and improvement of the freeway system and connecting roads • Promote maintenance and improvement of state and local roads • Encourage aviation to better support business • Take advantage of our existing water infrastructure along the Lake Michigan shoreline for the transportation of freight (e.g., freight harbors on Lake Michigan) 	<p>TwinCATS and NATS Long Range Plans and Transportation Improvement Program (SWMPC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plans for TwinCATS and NATS (2019) • Produced the 2020—2023 Transportation Improvement Program for TwinCATS and NATS (2019) <p>Twin Cities Harbor Conservancy/Office of Great Lakes/Sea Grant/et al. charrette and planning (SWMPC)</p> <p>Road ratings for the Cities of St. Joseph and Bridgman (SWMPC, 2019)</p> <p>Hosted a Spring and Fall Summit for Improving Michigan's Infrastructure Asset Management (SWMPC, 2019)</p>	<p>swmpc.org/twincats2045.asp swmpc.org/nats2045lrp.asp</p> <p>swmpc.org/twincatstip.asp swmpc.org/natstip.asp</p> <p>swmpc.org/bhsjharbor.asp</p>

Goal #3: Infrastructure

	Objectives and Strategies (continued)	Implementation projects (lead agency)	More information
3.4	Advance the effective and efficient transportation of people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote maintenance and improvement of the existing freeway system and connecting roads Encourage passenger rail as a viable transportation option for inter and inner regional movement Encourage aviation to better support passenger transportation Promote coordination of regional mass transportation (e.g., use existing transportation asset inventory) Promote non-motorized transportation options 	<p>TwinCATS and NATS Long Range Plans and Transportation Improvement Program (SWMPC)</p> <p><i>Connect Berrien Plan</i> to connect people to South Bend and Michigan City (SWMPC)</p> <p>Southwest Michigan Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (SWMPC)</p>	<p>connectberrien.org</p> <p>swmpc.org/trailwaysefforts.asp</p>
3.5	Assist in cultivating a comprehensive telecommunication system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote region-wide access to telecommunications (broadband, cellular) Encourage improved speed and quality of telecommunications infrastructure 	<p>FCC authorized \$2.6 million over 10 years to Michigan's Sixth Congressional District to expand rural broadband</p>	
3.6	Explore and promote a sustainable and economically competitive approach to energy supply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote competitive reliability and cost of energy Promote a diversified and sustainable energy portfolio 	<p>Indiana Michigan Power's Watervliet Solar Power Plant generates up to 4.6-megawatts of electricity</p> <p>SpartanSolar-Midwest Energy and Communication's Cassopolis Plant generates up to 0.8-megawatts (solar subscription program)</p>	<p>indianamichiganpower.com</p> <p>teammidwest.com</p>
3.7	Facilitate a collaborative approach to municipal infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote coordinated administration of regional water and sewer infrastructure to achieve competitive rates Encourage coordinated water and sewer infrastructure planning 		

Infrastructure Highlights

Vision

To ensure public investments and policies are strategically used for the optimization of a safe, reliable and equitable transportation network that enhances economic opportunity, growth, and quality of life while preserving our environment.

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) produced the NATS 2045 and TwinCATS 2045 Long Range Transportation Plans. These plans assess existing and future transportation infrastructure over a 20 - 30 year horizon for the two metropolitan planning areas in our region.

In addition to the Long Range Transportation Plans, SWMPC generated the 2020—2023 Transportation Improvement Plans for NATS and TwinCATS. These plans include a programming of all federal and state funded transportation projects in the planning area.

Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study

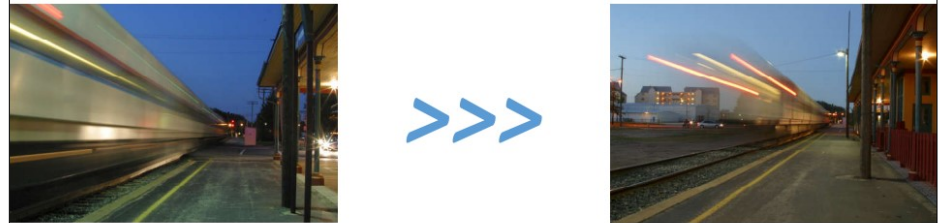


2045 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



Making Connections

Twin Cities Area Transportation Study (TwinCATS)



2045 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



Principles in Motion >>>

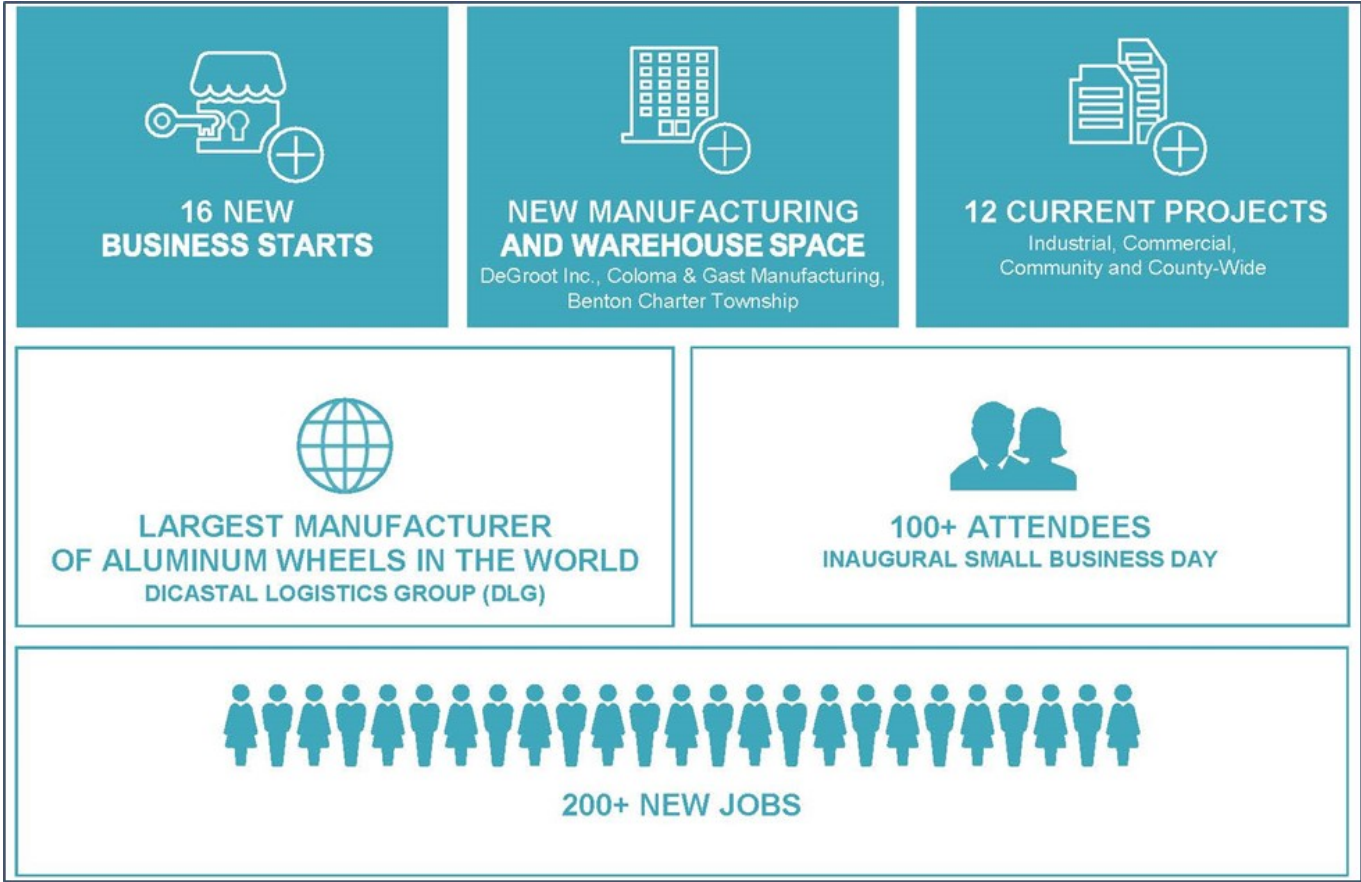
Goal #4: Support Business

Objectives and Strategies	Implementation projects (lead agency)	More information
Support and meet the needs of current, new, and emerging businesses	<p>Cornerstone Alliance efforts in 2018 led to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 new businesses • New manufacturing and warehouse space (DeGroot Inc. (Coloma) and Gast Manufacturing (Benton Charter Township) • New Dicastal Logistics Group operational facility (Hagar Township) • 100+ attendees at the inaugural Small Business Day • 200+ new jobs to the area <p>Greater Niles Chamber of Commerce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formed in 2019 with the merger of the Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance and Four Flags Area Chamber of Commerce • Service area includes the Cities of Niles and Buchanan, Bertrand Township, Niles Charter Township, Galien, Three Oaks, and Cass County <p>Market Van Buren</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formed in 2019 as a subsidiary of the Kinexus Group • Responsible for economic and community development throughout Van Buren County • Awarded a Michigan Economic Development Corporation grant that will be used to grow companies within the Life Sciences industry cluster 	<p>cstonealliance.org</p> <p>greaternileschamber.com</p> <p>marketvanburen.org</p>

Goal #4: Support Business **Highlights**



2018 Highlights



Infographic from Cornerstone Alliance

Goal #5: Partnering & Coordination**Promote better coordination among different economic development groups.**

Objectives and Strategies	Implementation projects (lead agency)
Provide resources to and, when appropriate, lead the downtown development efforts for municipal investment partners.	Cornerstone Alliance, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and area chambers use a variety of programs to assist in development efforts.
Further RPI organizational development. Encourage collaboration among public and nonprofit sectors. Strengthen the interface between the Regional Prosperity Plan and local plans.	

Resiliency in Region

The Palisades Nuclear Power Plant in Van Buren County, which employs over 600 full-time employees, is scheduled to permanently shut down in the spring of 2022.

The Southwest Michigan EDD is working with the U.S. Economic Development Administration and the Nuclear Decommissioning Collaborative to host a Regional Economic Diversification Summit (REDS) with Palisades being the centerpiece. Hosting a REDS allows the region to bring together federal agencies and local/regional partners to:

- Identify potential project financing and other resources
- Establish the project implementation action plans
- Assign initial roles and responsibilities



Image source: Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Goals for the Coming Year

Community and Economic Development Program of SWMPC

- A. **Administration** – Complete financial and progress reports including the 2020-2021 Annual Reports under the terms of the EDA planning grant
 - 1. Carry out operations policies and procedures
 - 2. Maintain and develop the print, digital, and on-line data collection and reports
 - 3. Issue annual service delivery report (GPRA)
 - 4. Conduct an annual audit of SWMPC
 - 5. Comply with EDA District regulations (eligibility, designation, CEDS)
- B. **Information Center** – Prepare, publish, and promote data products in response to client needs
 - 1. Review U.S. Census and other relevant data to analyze District economic trends
 - 2. Continue information distribution through:
 - a. SWMPC website
 - i. Include sections to assist communities with RFP/RFQ
 - ii. Include info to assist communities in realizing their planning goals
 - b. Bi-Monthly SWMPC Board Meetings
 - 3. Communicate availability of new data
- C. **Direct Community Assistance** – Optimize Implementation of CEDS Priorities
 - 1. Assist regional partners by researching other potential grant funding sources for important projects of regional impact
 - a. Assist with grant writing
 - b. Assist with technical services (mapping, etc.)
 - 2. Facilitate regional assistance and coordination of resources
 - a. Work with Michigan's Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council (MGSSLC) to align organizations and find collective impact
 - b. Maintain SWMPC contacts database
 - c. Host a Regional Economic Diversification Summit (REDS) in early 2020
- D. **Planning and Projects**
 - 1. Produce the 2019-2021 CEDS Annual Reports
 - 2. Build membership of the CEDS committee for 2019-2021 that complies with EDA guidance
 - a. Hold CEDS committee meetings as needed
 - b. Interact with CEDS committee through other forms of communication including surveys, conference calls, and other outreach
 - 3. Respond to EDA requests for additional reports, data, and regional information
 - 4. Maximize opportunities to collaborate with regional collectives to coordinate federal resources for the purposes of implementing the CEDS priorities
 - 5. Incorporate resiliency into CEDS and other planning
 - 6. Identify gaps in broadband internet coverage and develop strategies to close the gaps