



# The Quarterly

## Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

*Planning that is Credible, Credentialed, and Connected*

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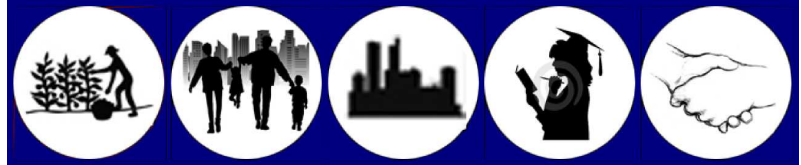
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### **STRATEGIC GROWTH PLAN FOR SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN**



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

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

Currently, the SWMPC is working on Phase 2 of this process, which involves identifying a set of key action steps for improving the region's economic health within the context of the state.

The 2009-2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS, [www.swmpc.org/ceds.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/ceds.asp)) for Southwest Michigan provides a framework for this process. SWMPC staff will gather information from research, various board meetings and public input to propose a large pool of action strategies for improving the region's economic health. The SWMPC's full board and the 360 Group will select five to ten strategies to focus on. Staff will use the following CEDS action plan categories to guide this process.

1. Land Use: The Natural & Built Environments
2. Social, Cultural and Physical Health
3. Education and Workforce Development
4. Collaboration within Southwest Michigan
5. The Regional Economy: Retention, Sustainability, Development, and Diversification

Learn more at <http://tinyurl.com/mpi-lpi-2010>

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# TRANSPORTATION



## BICYCLE SAFETY ROLLING THROUGH SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

The SWMPC's Bicycle Safety Program is beginning its third season. The program aims to educate young cyclists on bicycle safety as they ride on the road or on a trail. New this year are various obstacle courses, adapted from League of Michigan Bicyclists' training workshop, which will allow the participants to practice their newly acquired safety skills. Program Assistant Suzann Flowers will be visiting the following library locations this summer:

- July 1-Antwerp Sunshine Library, Mattawan
- July 8-Lawrence Branch Library, Lawrence
- July 27-Three Oaks Public Library, Three Oaks
- July 30-Covert Public Library, Covert
- August 21-South Haven Memorial Library, South Haven
- August 26-Edwardsburg Branch Library, Edwardsburg

Funding has been made possible by a grant from The DALMAC Fund and Tri-County Bicycle Association. "The DALMAC Fund is supported by proceeds from the annual Dick Allen Lansing to Mackinaw bicycle tour (DALMAC) and is administered by the Tri-County Bicycle Association of Lansing, MI." This grant will allow SWMPC to distribute various bicycle safety items at each of the library locations making it safer for young cyclists to bike. If you are interested in learning more about this program kindly contact Suzann Flowers at [flowerss@swmpc.org](mailto:flowerss@swmpc.org) or (269) 925-1137 x 17.

[www.swmpc.org/traffic\\_safety.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/traffic_safety.asp)

The SWMPC and Michigan Department of Transportation hosted the Training Wheels program in Benton Harbor to highlight the non-motorized facilities in the area.

## 9-COUNTY NON-MOTORIZED PROJECT FINAL INPUT SESSION

July 15, 2010 will be the final opportunity for public comment on the direction of non-motorized facilities in southwest Michigan. Add your voice to the 9-county non-motorized planning and mapping process being funded by MDOT for the southwest region, which includes, Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St.

### Event Information

Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds  
Expo Center Room A  
2900 Lake St.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048  
6:30-8:30 p.m.

Joseph, and Van Buren counties. The meeting will give all participants an opportunity to review existing and planned non-motorized maps for each of the 9 counties and the region to ensure connectivity throughout southwest Michigan. In addition, those attending will learn from Chuck Nelson, Michigan State University Professor, and Kyle Lewis, Kalamazoo River Valley Trail Program Director, about the Trail User Survey being conducted on the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail, Kal-Haven Trail, and Battle Creek Linear Park.

We encourage anyone interested in non-motorized facilities to attend this free event. Everyone has an opinion, and yours matter! See you on July 15th for an evening of non-motorized transportation planning.

[www.swmpc.org/smart\\_plan.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/smart_plan.asp)



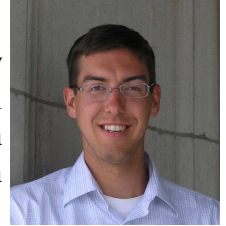
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# SWMPC HAPPENINGS

## WELCOME OUR NEW STAFF

### **Matthew Aslesen, Mobility Manager**

Matthew graduated from Beloit College in Wisconsin with a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and graduated from the University of Michigan with a Master's degree in urban and regional planning. Matthew interned with the Congress for the New Urbanism in Chicago, IL and with the Washtenaw County Office of Economic Development and Energy Department in Washtenaw County, MI. Matthew's hometown is Vermillion, MN.



### **Christina Pippen, Mobility Manager**

Christina graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Social Work with an emphasis in organization and community practice. She completed an internship at the Allen Neighborhood Center in Lansing, MI as the Medical Homes Program Coordinator where her focus was on assisting community residents access to healthcare. Christina's hometown is Detroit, MI.



### **Trevor Thomas, Transportation Planner**

Trevor graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor's degree in Aerospace Engineering and a Master's degree in urban and regional planning. He interned for AARP's Public Policy Institute and focused on housing and transportation while he was there. He also interned with the New York City Department of Transportation. Trevor's hometown is in Menominee, MI.



Southwest Michigan's first three-county business plan competition, Venture Quest 2010, will be accepting applications starting in August. Check <http://swmpc.org/vq.asp> for updates! Venture Quest 2010 is sponsored by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, the Van Buren and Cass County Economic Development Corporations and the Berrien County Department of Community Development. These stakeholders are actively seeking additional partners and sponsors. For more information on Venture Quest 2010, visit the <http://swmpc.org/vq.asp> or call Elizabeth Luther at 269.925.1137, ext. 13, email: [venturequest@swmpc.org](mailto:venturequest@swmpc.org).

*Image courtesy of Ron Plucinski, LMC graphic design student.*

## MOBILITY MANAGERS COORDINATING BUS SERVICE

As part of the 2009 Berrien County Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, with funding from the Federal Transit Administration's New Freedom Program, two staff members have been hired as mobility managers to "build coordination and expand the availability of transportation services to older adults, people with disabilities and people with lower incomes." Matthew Aslesen and Christina Pippen will be charged with:

1. Promoting and facilitating the integration and coordination of current public and human service transportation services
2. Establishing interagency agreements for sharing rides
3. Establishing a transportation brokerage to coordinate multiple providers and funding sources

Aslesen and Pippen will be working with the Twin Cities Area Transportation Authority to promote this coordination.



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## Calendar of Events 2010

[www.swmpc.org/calendar.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/calendar.asp)

### July

**5<sup>th</sup>** SWMPC offices closed  
**13<sup>th</sup>** 4:00 p.m. MDOT STIP review  
 (Kalamazoo)  
**15<sup>th</sup>** 6:30 p.m. 9-County Input  
 Meeting (Kalamazoo County  
 Fairgrounds)  
**19<sup>th</sup>** 9:30 a.m. TwinCATS  
**19<sup>th</sup>** 12:30 p.m. 360 meeting  
**27<sup>th</sup>** 1:30 p.m. NATS

### August

**3<sup>rd</sup>** Election Day  
**16<sup>th</sup>** 9:30 a.m. TwinCATS  
**23<sup>rd</sup>** 8:30 a.m. Trails Workshop  
 Series (Lawrence)  
**24<sup>th</sup>** 1:30 p.m. NATS  
**26<sup>th</sup>** 1:00 p.m. FOSJR Board  
 Meeting (Three Rivers)

### September

**6<sup>th</sup>** SWMPC offices closed  
**20<sup>th</sup>** 9:30 a.m. TwinCATS  
**23<sup>rd</sup>** FOSJR Board Meeting (Three  
 Rivers)  
**28<sup>th</sup>** 1:30 p.m. NATS  
  
 NATS=meets in Niles  
 TwinCATS=meets in Benton Harbor

## 2010 Board Meeting Schedule

### SWMPC Full Commission Meeting

*Location: Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians  
 Tribal Council Lodge-Dowagiac, MI  
 July 20, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.*

*Location: Southwestern Michigan College  
 Mathews Room West-Dowagiac, MI  
 October 19, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.*

### SWMPC Administrative Committee Meeting

*Location: Vincent Place Conference Room-Benton Harbor, MI  
 September 21, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.  
 December 21, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.*