



## **GROWING GREENER IN SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN**

☞ Cultivating a more prosperous region by connecting natural landscapes☞

WHEREAS, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is currently facilitating a green infrastructure planning initiative in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties called Growing Greener in SW Michigan. The goal is to develop a shared, multi-jurisdictional vision and a framework for conservation, land management, and growth and development decisions in SW Michigan. Specifically Growing Greener in Southwest Michigan will:

- Utilize a “collaborative approach” involving as many citizens and stakeholders as possible.
- Create a green infrastructure vision that is based on a scientific and community based approach.
- Utilize the best scientific data available for analysis.
- Ensure the public is involved in the development of a green infrastructure vision for southwest Michigan.
- Educate and build support for a green infrastructure vision for southwest Michigan.
- Provide a green infrastructure vision, resource database and information that can be used in local, regional and state plans and policies.

WHEREAS, the SWMPC plans to facilitate Growing Greener in SW Michigan with meaningful participation from local units of government, nonprofits, business organizations, etc. The SWMPC has also received several grants and has committed its own resources to support this program. Those participating in the green infrastructure program will ensure that their trails, open spaces, parks, projects and plans are included in the mapping and planning effort. Local units of government, nonprofits, and businesses alike will benefit from their local projects and plans being a part of a comprehensive regional effort, which will lead to better coordination of resources.

WHEREAS, the SWMPC will maintain the Green Infrastructure plan, map, and web-based tools, which will apply directly to current and future efforts in our region including, but not limited to:

1. Compliance with new federal law (SAFETEA-LU), which requires environmentally sensitive areas to be addressed in transportation planning.
2. Local, regional and statewide (MI Trails and Greenways Alliance) trail planning (especially coordination with MDOT’s road improvement plans).
3. Development and implementation of local land use plans, recreation plans and zoning ordinances.
4. County and SWMPC review of master, land use plans, recreation plans and zoning ordinances
5. Development of and implementation of watershed management plans in the Rocky, Paw Paw, Black, St. Joseph, Galien, & Dowagiac River Watersheds.
6. Heritage route and tourism planning for US 12 and Red Arrow Highway.
7. Development and implementation of SWMPC’s Comprehensive Economic Development Plan for the Economic Development Administration.
8. Development and implementation of County Conservation Districts’ Resource Inventory Plans (required by the State).

9. Development and implementation of County Hazard Mitigation Plans (required by FEMA).

WHEREAS, the SWMPC will develop a plan and program that reflects the needs of the community, nonprofits, business community and the local units of government and counties within the region. However, strategies may need to be implemented at the local level or with cooperation from the local units of government, non-profits, business community leaders, etc. To achieve these objectives, local input will be an essential element of the planning process.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that \_\_\_\_\_ will participate in Growing Greener in Southwest Michigan by doing the following:

- Work with other nonprofits, businesses, municipalities/counties in the region in good faith, striving to reach agreements on a Green Infrastructure vision and implementation strategy.
- Share information with the SWMPC such as plans and priorities
- Provide meaningful participation in workshops and other public input activities.
- Help to advance the efforts of the Growing Greener program through outreach to members or constituents.

Adopted by:

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_