

**2007-2009 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

For

**Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Mecosta,
Montcalm, Osceola, and Ottawa Counties**

Prepared by the

WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

submitted as Region 8's

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

**in accordance with requirements of the
U.S. Economic Development Administration**

September 2007

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INTRODUCTION

The West Michigan Regional Planning Commission is pleased to submit this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). This CEDS represents the first phase of the new three-year planning cycle. The members within the seven county district represented in this report have indicated their intentions of utilizing the CEDS as part of their economic development strategy. The seven county area, known as Region 8, includes Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Osceola, and Ottawa counties (see Map 1). This report has been prepared in accordance with requirements of the U.S. Economic Development Administration Planning Grant 06-83-04353.

With the submission of this CEDS, the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission completes its thirty-fifth year as an Economic Development District.

U.S. Economic Development Administration Investment Policy Guidelines

Investment applications will be competitively evaluated on their ability to meet or exceed the following investment policy guidelines:

Be market-based and results-driven. An investment will capitalize on a region's competitive strengths and will positively move a regional economic indicator measured on EDA's Balanced Scorecard, such as: an increased number of higher-skill, higher-wage jobs; increased tax revenue; or increased private-sector investment.

Have strong organizational leadership. An investment will have strong leadership, relevant project management experience, and a significant commitment of human-resources talent to ensure a project's successful execution.

Advance productivity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. An investment will embrace the principles of entrepreneurship, enhance regional clusters, and leverage and link technology innovators and local universities to the private sector to create the conditions for greater productivity, innovation, and job creation.

Look beyond the immediate economic horizon, anticipate economic changes, and diversify the local and regional economy. An investment will be part of an overarching, long-term comprehensive economic development strategy that enhances a region's success in achieving a rising standard of living by supporting existing industry clusters, developing emerging new clusters, or attracting new regional economic drivers.

Demonstrate a high degree of commitment by exhibiting:

- High levels of local-government or nonprofit matching funds and private-sector leverage.
- Clear and unified leadership and support by local elected officials.
- Strong cooperation between the business sector, relevant regional partners, and local, state, and federal governments.

Vision Statement

The following Vision Statement is the preferred future in 2025 of the seven counties within Region 8. Due to the variety that exists across the seven counties, the Vision Statement is general enough that each of the seven counties can embrace the universal ideas and revise them to meet their own unique features and goals.

The Region's population continues to grow and thrive in well-planned communities that represent the varied lifestyles that West Michigan residents choose. West Michigan's clean environment and diverse natural resources are fundamental to the Region's success and identity.

The Region's economy provides a wide range of jobs that support the Region's residents and provide a payroll and tax base necessary to maintain a high quality of life across the seven-county Region. The diverse economy includes a healthy mixture of base employers including manufacturing, health care services, natural resource-based employment, value-added agriculture, education, new technologies including renewable energy resources, and other forms of base employment. Well planned and coordinated public infrastructure is in place to assist in the healthy growth of the Region's economy.

Healthy urban centers and small towns provide a wide variety of services, while rural areas have sufficient land preserved for farmland and open space. Communities coordinate with neighboring communities and a variety of levels of government to provide a sustainable level of services to their residents. A wide variety of housing exists to meet the varied demands of the diverse population.

Public and private schools provide quality educational opportunities to students from kindergarten through the twelfth grade and the Region's universities, colleges, and other training facilities provide the necessary skills for West Michigan's residents to compete locally or globally.

Mission Statement

The Board of the WMRPC adopted the following Mission Statement on June 21, 2002:

To assist planning efforts in community and economic development, provide a regional forum for sharing information and ideas, and promote cooperative solutions to regional issues.

Summary of Goals

The Goals and Objectives (listed in their complete form later in the CEDS) are divided into two categories: 1) Organizational and 2) Community and Economic Development.

Organizational Goals

Goal #1

The WMRPC shall maintain an active and productive role with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Goal #2

The WMRPC shall keep communities informed of programs offered by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

Goal #3

The WMRPC shall maintain a Board and CEDS Committee that meets rules established by EDA.

Goal #4

The WMRPC shall promote coordination between counties, cities, townships, villages, the federal government, the State of Michigan, non-profits and other community-based organizations.

Goal #5

While EDA is the primary partner related to economic development, the WMRPC shall actively participate with other community and economic development organizations.

Community and Economic Development Goals

Goal #1

Communities should maintain an up-to-date vision related to community and economic development.

Goal #2

Communities should recognize the relationship that exists between healthy urban centers and healthy rural areas.

Goal #3

Communities should promote a diverse economy that recognizes the Region's and individual communities' varied strengths.

Goal #4

Communities should investigate and emphasize the long-range impacts of projects as opposed to seeking short-term solutions to issues.

Goal #5

Communities should continuously seek to improve all aspects of community life.

Changes in EDA Rules

The 2007 CEDS submitted by the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) is a revised document that reflects many changes incorporated since the 2006 CEDS developed by the WMRPC. The changes reflect the final rules adopted by EDA and published in the Federal Register on September 27, 2006. The biggest changes influencing the WMRPC relate to the need for private-sector involvement on both the WMRPC Board and the CEDS Committee. Traditionally, both of these bodies were comprised of public-sector representatives appointed by members of the WMRPC. Members include the counties of Allegan, Ionia, Mecosta, Montcalm, Osceola, and Ottawa (and the communities within those counties); and the cities of Big Rapids, Cedar Springs, Grand Rapids, and Wyoming.

EDA's new rules established that the private sector must comprise a minimum of 35 percent of the WMRPC Board. The CEDS Committee must include private sector representatives as a majority of its membership. The WMRPC, recognizing that it is still the public sector members that help fund the organization, changed the bylaws to allow each of our members to appoint a third representative to the Board. This person shall be a private sector representative (a key person in any for-profit enterprise, a director of a chamber of commerce, a representative of an institution of post-secondary education, a workforce development group, or labor. Members also will continue to appoint two representatives to the CEDS Committee, but now one representative will need to be from the private sector.

Having private sector representatives around the table of the WMRPC will provide many benefits related to better understanding the needs of business. At the same time, it presents new challenges related to meeting the needs of the private sector representatives, and keeping the new representatives interested in attending meetings that typically center on the needs the public sector. How should the WMRPC change to provide appropriate long-term incentives for the private sector to attend and participate in meetings without diluting the benefits of communities sitting around the same table on a regular basis? The answer to this question is evolving as the new process unfolds.

Another major change is that the WMRPC was one of the first regions to receive a three-year grant cycle. This longer grant cycle (it was historically one year) will provide many opportunities to the WMRPC and its member communities to develop stronger projects and

implementation strategies. Again, this process is evolving as we move forward – so input in the new process is welcome.

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This section describes the composition of the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) Board and CEDS Committee.

WMRPC Board

The WMRPC Board is comprised of public and private, and elected and appointed officials from throughout Region 8 who focus on issues which are common to members or cross jurisdictional boundaries. The WMRPC acts as a regional forum to share ideas and develop regional solutions. The WMRPC also acts as a liaison between West Michigan and state and federal agencies.

The WMRPC Board currently has a 33-member policy board, which includes three representatives designated by each member community and three at-large Board member spaces reserved to assure broad representation of the region, including minority representation as required by EDA. There are also three alternate representatives designated by members. Board members are shown in Table 1. The Board provides policy direction with respect to the Commission's economic planning and implementation activities as well as other programs undertaken by the organization. At the June 16, 2006 meeting of the WMRPC the Board amended the WMRPC bylaws to require members to appoint two public sector representatives and one private sector representative. This increased the size of the Board to 33 members – creating the appropriate ratio of public and private sector representatives. Three of the members are non-voting members from the City of Cedar Springs. The WMRPC also adopted guidelines that create a CEDS Committee that has a majority of private sector representatives.

Aside from its CEDS activities, the WMRPC continues its role as the local planning organization for regional transportation planning under Michigan State legislation, the coordinator for Michigan's Transportation Asset Management program, and functions as the Regional Clearinghouse for most state and federally funded programs. As a designated depository for U.S. Census information, the WMRPC provides social and economic data to public and private organizations throughout the Region. The WMRPC also has in-house GIS capabilities to assist in regional planning efforts and provide local units of government with access to publicly owned digital data. Through its Board and committee meetings, educational workshops, and regional events; the WMRPC encourages the exchange of ideas on public policy, emerging technologies, and programs of regional significance. Where possible, staff assists communities with planning, project implementation, and grant writing. In addition, at any given time, the WMRPC is engaged in projects, funded by state or federal grants and/or local funding sources.

At this writing, special WMRPC projects include continuing corridor studies along M-40/M-89 in Allegan County, M-66 in Ionia County, and a developing corridor group in the Greenville Area. The WMRPC is also assisting in one land use plan and several recreation plans for communities. Since the last update of the CEDS, the WMRPC assisted with two transit studies, three additional recreation plans, one additional land use plan, and many other community-specific projects.

Table 1 – West Michigan Regional Planning Commission Board of Directors

Name	Address	Telephone
Public Sector Representatives		
Terry Burns (Allegan County)	220 Hoover Blvd. Holland, MI 49423	(616) 355-2525
(Allegan County)		
Thomas Hogenson (City of Big Rapids)	322 S. Warren Avenue Big Rapids, MI 49307	(231) 592-4409
Mark Gifford (City of Big Rapids)	226 N. Michigan Avenue Big Rapids, MI 49307	(231) 592-4036
Christine Burns (City of Cedar Springs)	66 S. Main St. Cedar Springs, MI 49319	(616) 696-1330
Pat Capek (City of Cedar Springs)	66 S. Main St. Cedar Springs, MI 49319	(616) 696-1330
Suzanne Schulz (City of Grand Rapids)	300 Monroe NW Grand Rapids, MI 49503	(616) 456-3033
George Heartwell (City of Grand Rapids)	300 Monroe NW Grand Rapids, MI 49503	
Gregg Yeomans (Ionia County)	1302 W. Lincoln Avenue Ionia, MI 48846	(616) 527-6583
Shawn Seal (Ionia County)	955 Marshall Drive Portland, MI 48875	(517) 647-7625
Ray Steinke (Mecosta County)	19207 W. Jefferson, Box 141 Morley, MI 49336	(231) 856-7090
Paul Bullock (Mecosta County)	400 Elm Street Big Rapids, MI 49307	(231) 796-2505
John Johansen (Montcalm County)	3474 Monroe Road Greenville, MI 48838	(616) 754-5375
Marcia Walker (Montcalm County)	811 Hawthorne Court Greenville, MI 48838	(616) 754-8236
Elmo Hoaglund (Osceola County)	19020 – 130th Avenue Tustin, MI 49688	(231) 829-3540
Dan Massy (Osceola County)	Osceola Economic Alliance 301 W. Upton Reed City, MI 49677	(231) 832-7397
Edward Berghorst (Ottawa County)	1781 Lakeview Drive Zeeland, MI 49464	(616) 772-6661
Mark Knudsen (Ottawa County)	12220 Fillmore West Olive, MI 49460	(616) 738-4852
Spencer Bertram (City of Wyoming)	P.O. Box 905 Wyoming, MI 49509-0905	(616) 530-7258
Tim Cochran (City of Wyoming)	P.O. Box 905 Wyoming, MI 49509-0905	(616) 530-7258

Table 1 (Continued)

Name	Address	Telephone
Private Sector Representatives		
L. Charles Mulholland (At-Large Member)	4685 N. Bailey Road Coral, MI 49322	(231) 354-6325
Regina Davis (At-Large Member)	Fair Housing Center of West Michigan – 20 Hall St. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49506	(616) 451-2980
Howard H. Hansen (At-Large Member)	1973 Oakleigh Woods Dr. Grand Rapids, MI 49504	(616) 735-9099
Ken Graff (Allegan County)	850 Lake Michigan Drive South Haven, MI 49090	(269) 637-2307
Joseph Harper (City of Big Rapids)	128 N. Warren Big Rapids, MI 49037	(231) 796-7639
Michele Andres (City of Cedar Springs)	15476 Simmons Avenue NE Cedar Springs, MI 49319	(616) 696-4443
(City of Grand Rapids)		
Joe Marhofer (Ionia County)	8408 Krupp Road Belding, MI 48809	(616) 794-1264
Charles McCafferty (Mecosta County)	9435 Briarstone Drive Stanwood, MI 49346	(231) 972-7292
Tom Lindeman (Montcalm County)	P.O. Box 96 Greenville, MI 48838	(616) 754-4918
Morris Langworthy (Osceola County)	17135 Pineview LeRoy, MI 49655	(231) 876-3483
(Ottawa County)		
Lillian Vanderveen (City of Wyoming)	2751 Colgate Court SW Wyoming, MI 49519	(616) 534-3013
Alternates		
Tom Jessup (Allegan County)	6717 – 108th Avenue South Haven, MI 49090	(269) 637-3374
Linda Howard (Mecosta County)	1332 Nine Mile Road Remus, MI 49340	(989) 967-3468
Sam Bolt (City of Wyoming)	P.O. Box 905 Wyoming, MI 49509-0905	

WMRPC Executive Committee

The WMRPC Executive Committee is comprised of the three officers elected by the Board of the WMRPC in January of each year, and additional members appointed by the Chair (typically two additional members of the Board). In 2007 the Executive Committee was made-up of the following five people:

- Charles Mulholland, Chair
- Vice Chair – Tim Cochran
- Ed Berghorst, Treasurer
- Regina Davis, Member
- Gregg Yeomans, Member

Regional CEDS Committee

In all economic planning and development activities, the WMRPC staff works closely with the District's CEDS Committee, the members of which are listed in Table 2.

The CEDS Committee consists of members from each of the seven counties in the region, which allows for broad geographic representation and provides for close coordination with local governments and agencies. The CEDS Committee membership is also representative of the diverse interests in the Region to ensure that the viewpoints of all interests are considered and to take advantage of local skills in program formulation and implementation. Represented on the Committee are interests of local governments, business, industry, agriculture, finance, community organizations, minorities, and women. All CEDS Committee members have experience in dealing with planning problems from a regional perspective.

The CEDS Committee currently is a 20-member committee comprised of members from each of the seven counties within Region 8 and two at-large members. At its June 16, 2006 meeting, the WMRPC adopted a set of guidelines for the CEDS Committee that satisfies EDA's requirements for the majority of the CEDS Committee being comprised of private sector representatives.

WMRPC Staff

The WMRPC maintains a staff of three:

- Dave Bee, AICP, Director – Mr. Bee started at the Region in 1999.
- Brandon Bartoszek, Planner – Mr. Bartoszek started at the Region in 2006.
- Nancy Murphy, Administrative Assistant – Ms. Murphy started at the Region in 2000.

Table 2 – 2007 CEDS Committee

Name	Address	Telephone
Public Sector Representatives		
Larry “Casey” Jones (Allegan County)	258 Golfview Plainwell, MI 49080	(269) 664-5362
Cindy Plautz (City of Big Rapids)	226 N. Michigan Big Rapids, MI 49307	(231) 592-4036
Kara Wood (City of Grand Rapids)	300 Monroe NW Grand Rapids, MI 49503	(616) 456-3196
Julianne Burns (Ionia County)	114 N. Kidd St, PO Box 496 Ionia, MI 48846	(616) 527-4170
William Mrdeza (Mecosta County)	Mecosta Co. Dev. Corp. 246 N. State Big Rapids, MI 49307	(231) 592-3403
Dan Petersen (Montcalm County)	11079 Baker Rd. Greenville, MI 48838	(616) 754-0918
Dan Massy (Osceola County)	Osceola Economic Alliance 301 W. Upton, Reed City, MI 49677	(231) 832-7397
Edward Berghorst (Ottawa County)	1781 Lakeview Drive Zeeland, MI 49464	(616) 772-6661
Ken Rizzio (Ottawa County)	6676 Lake Michigan Dr. Allendale, MI 49401	(616) 892-4120
Tim Cochran (City of Wyoming)	P.O. Box 905 Wyoming, MI 49509-0905	(616) 530-7258

Private Sector Representatives		
Nora Balgoyen-Williams (Allegan County)	2188 36th St. Allegan, MI 49010	(269) 686-5079
Joseph Harper (City of Big Rapids)	128 N. Warren Big Rapids, MI 49037	(231) 796-7639
(City of Grand Rapids)		
Chris Thelen (Ionia County)	Consumers Energy 530 W. Willow Lansing, MI 48909	(517) 374-2235
David Hamelund (Mecosta County)	18256 Taft Road Big Rapids, MI 49307	
Tom Lindeman (Montcalm County)	PO Box 96 Greenville, MI 48838	(616) 754-4918
Larry Morlock (Osceola County)	9357 S. 95th Avenue Ewart, MI 49631	(231) 734-5200
Lillian Vanderveen (City of Wyoming)	2751 Colgate Court SW Wyoming, MI 49519	(616) 534-3013
Chuck Birr (At-Large)	5609 Bentbrook Kentwood, MI 49508	(616) 813-6356
Howard H. Hansen (At-Large)	1973 Oakleigh Woods Dr. Grand Rapids, MI 49504	(616) 735-9099

CEDS Preparation and Approval Process

During the months of January through August, the WMRPC staff convenes meetings of the CEDS Committee. Meeting discussions include the status of implementation of CEDS projects, recent economic trends in the various counties and the region as a whole, changes in state and federal programs and regulations, project development and prioritization, program progress, and other matters related to economic development in the Region. In the course of these meetings, all local units are provided with an opportunity to submit potential projects for inclusion in the Annual CEDS Report. Also, the CEDS goals, objectives, and performance measures are reviewed and updated; and the development strategies and implementation plan are formulated. Additionally, guest speakers attend CEDS meetings to provide insight into other programs and economic development opportunities. Over the past year speakers included:

- Ray DeWinkle, President, Michigan Economic Developers Association
- Sandra L. Bloem, President, Economic Development Foundation
- Jenny Shangraw, Research and Information, Right Place Inc.
- Cathy Tenwold, East Central MI Planning and Development Reg. Commission
- Chris Hnatiw, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

The Region's 2007 CEDS Update was prepared with assistance from all WMRPC staff. In addition to the input received for the report from the CEDS Committee, assistance in reporting progress in economic development in each of the counties was received from various local officials and practitioners from throughout the Region.

After the report was drafted, it was reviewed and approved by resolution by each WMRPC member county and/or city within Region 8, the regional CEDS Committee, and the WMRPC Board.

The WMRPC Board, with assistance from the CEDS Committee, has the responsibility to oversee and review the CEDS implementation. WMRPC staff provides support services.

Public and Private Sector Involvement

Traditionally the WMRPC was primarily a public sector-oriented body. WMRPC Board Members and CEDS Committee members were elected or appointed officials designated to serve on the various bodies of the WMRPC by member counties and communities. With EDA's administrative EDA rule changes adopted in September 2006 the private sector became part of the process and the WMRPC embraced this change. Bylaws were changed to require members to appoint public and private sector representatives to the Board of the WMRPC and the CEDS Committee. At the time of this report, the WMRPC had met the requirements of the new rules.

While the Board and CEDS Committee both have private sector representation, a clear role has not yet emerged for the private sector representatives. The new private sector representatives currently review all of the same information as the public sector representatives and discuss the same issues around the same table – but some new members do not feel their roles are key to addressing the focus areas of the WMRPC. As with all new initiatives, it will take some time to determine how to best utilize the new ideas and issues that come with representatives from the private sector.

One role that has already emerged relates to the fact that the new faces around the table of the WMRPC Board and the CEDS Committee have enlivened the meetings and brought new ideas forward. The WMRPC will keep EDA informed of progress related to involving the private sector in the CEDS effort.

Scheduled Meetings and General Agenda Items

WMRPC Board	CEDS Committee	Executive Committee
• January 19, 2007 <i>Organizational</i>	• January 31, 2007 <i>Organizational</i>	• February 16, 2007 <i>General</i>
• March 16, 2007 <i>Educational</i>	• March 28, 2007 <i>CEDS Process</i>	• May 25, 2007 <i>Budget Amendments</i>
• June 15, 2007 <i>Educational</i>	• May 30, 2007 <i>CEDS Process</i>	• August 17, 2007 <i>Director Review</i>
• September 28, 2007 <i>Budget, Adopt CEDS</i>	• August 29, 2007 <i>Adopt CEDS</i>	• November 16, 2007 <i>Focus Areas</i>
• December 14, 2007 <i>Focus Areas</i>	• January 30, 2008 <i>Organizational</i>	• February 15, 2008 <i>General</i>
• January 18, 2008 <i>Organizational</i>	• March 26, 2008 <i>CEDS Process</i>	• May 16, 2008 <i>Budget Amendments</i>
• March 14, 2008 <i>Educational</i>	• May 28, 2008 <i>CEDS Process</i>	• August 15, 2008 <i>Director Review</i>
• June 20, 2008 <i>Educational</i>	• August 27, 2008 <i>Adopt CEDS</i>	• November 14, 2008 <i>Focus Areas</i>
• September 19, 2008 <i>Budget, Adopt CEDS</i>	• January 28, 2009 <i>Organizational</i>	• February 13, 2009 <i>General</i>
• December 12, 2008 <i>Focus Areas</i>	• March 25, 2009 <i>CEDS Process</i>	• May 15, 2009 <i>Budget Amendments</i>
• January 16, 2009 <i>Organizational</i>	• May 27, 2009 <i>CEDS Process</i>	• August 14, 2009 <i>Director Review</i>
• March 20, 2009 <i>Educational</i>	• August 26, 2009 <i>Adopt CEDS</i>	• November 13, 2009 <i>Focus Areas</i>
• June 19, 2009 <i>Educational</i>		
• September 18, 2009 <i>Budget, Adopt CEDS</i>		
• December 11, 2009 <i>Focus Areas</i>		

Regular meetings are held at 9:30 a.m. at the WMRPC office located at 820 Monroe Avenue NW, Suite 214, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503.

FOCUS AREAS

Each year the Board of the WMRPC adopts a set of focus areas at its December meeting to provide guidance for the Director, staff, and Board for the following year. Many focus areas relate to ongoing long-term programs (such as the CEDS process), while other times focus areas relate to one-time projects, or projects that only need to be addressed occasionally (such as a Master Plan for a County or updating the accounting software). Of course there are often opportunities that arise during the year that were not anticipated (such as a transit study for the Michigan Department of Transportation or a special project grant from EDA). Often times the Director decides if an opportunity is feasible to address with current staff levels, but other times the Director will bring the opportunity before the Board of the WMRPC to help decide if the project aligns with the overall mission of the WMRPC.

The following are the 2007 Focus Areas that were adopted by the WMRPC Board at the December 2006 Meeting of the WMRPC.

Economic Development

- Maintain and improve the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) program and continue CEDS Committee activities.
- Implement EDA rule changes and determine best approach for maintaining the interest of public and private sector Board Members and CEDS Committee Members.
- Work closely with communities, the CEDS Committee, entrepreneurs, and EDA to identify and promote EDA projects within Region 8.
- Work closely with EDA to develop a process that addresses EDA's vision of how regional planning organizations can encourage economic vitality in communities.
- Work with CEDS Committee and EDA to identify supplemental planning project for 2007/08.
- Recruit new at-large members and private sector members for the CEDS Committee with assistance from members and CEDS Committee.
- Review and strengthen relationship between communities, the private sector, the CEDS Committee, and the WMRPC Board.

Transportation

- Maintain and improve our Transportation Planning program under MDOT.
- Continue Transportation Asset Management Program in Region 8.
- Continue to serve on the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council.
- Continue to participate in the M40/M89 and M66 Corridor Committees.
- Expand rural opportunities with MDOT through Asset Management, Traffic Count program, and other transportation-related initiatives.
- Work with MDOT and Region 14 to complete a map of non-motorized facilities in MDOT's Grand Region.
- With the assistance of members, identify, and seek funding for, a 2007/2008 transportation planning project.

Coastal Management

- Work with Coastal Management Program to identify planning opportunities in Region 8. Submit grant application in April 2007 for 2008 funding cycle.

Hazard Mitigation

- Work with Montcalm County, Osceola County, Mecosta County, Ionia County, and the City of Ionia to close grant with the Michigan State Police.

Land Use

- Continue to follow implementation of the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council's recommendations and strive to inform members of the recommendations and progress towards implementation. Actively participate whenever possible.
- Complete Sherman Township's Master Plan.
- Seek communities interested in performing land use plans in *partnership* with the WMRPC.

Associations and Outside Organizations

- Participate with Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) on activities to increase the visibility of regions statewide.
- Attend (staff and members of the Board) the annual MAR Conference in Bay City. Serve on Conference Planning Committee (Director).
- Attend the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) Conference (Director/Planner)
- Serve on MAP's Government Cooperation Committee (Director).
- Continue to support MSU's United Growth for Kent County (Director).

Cooperation and Coordination

- Continue to function as the Regional Clearinghouse Review Agency for federal funding programs.
- Maintain "Information Center" to meet the needs of our local units of government.
- Continue our out-reach efforts. Publish six WMRPC newsletters and prepare press releases on projects and successes. Conduct site visits on a regular basis. Support and participate in local initiatives. Maintain our website.
- Host Regional Event(s). Transportation Forum, recreation workshops, and others.
- Promote membership to additional Kent County Communities.

Capacity Building

- Continue to build our GIS (Geographic Information System) capabilities.
- Expand Technical Assistance to Local Entities in the areas of planning, project development, grants, and implementation. Pursue funding to support these activities.
- Bring information to the Board using speakers and other resources.
- Continue to upgrade web site.
- Update "Grant and Loan Opportunities" publication.

Administration

- Upgrade accounting system/software

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

The WMRPC works with a variety of agencies to promote economic and community development across the seven counties. This list changes as different issues arise, but the following is a good representation of the variety of the organizations in which the Region is involved.

Federal Programs

While there are numerous federal programs available to communities in Michigan, the two that are most closely tied to economic and community development include the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and U.S.D.A. Rural Development.

U. S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

The WMRPC is the liaison between the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and communities in Region 8. This long-term relationship began in 1972 when the WMRPC was designated an EDA Economic Development District.

This program involves several ongoing components including the annual updating of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS Committee, with the assistance of WMRPC staff, develops an annual document that describes the economic conditions of the seven counties, recent successes, and ongoing challenges related to economic development.

The CEDS Committee also solicits economic development projects from each of the communities (counties, cities, villages, and townships) in Region 8 as well as other community-based organizations. The CEDS lists all of these projects, which communities feel would benefit the economic conditions of the area. After CEDS Committee and WMRPC Board adoption, this list of projects is forwarded to EDA, USDA, MEDC, state and federal legislators, and other organizations for funding consideration. EDA requires projects appear in a CEDS for funding consideration.

Identifying a community project in the CEDS does not automatically move the project forward. After listing the project, communities must meet with the Region and EDA to develop and promote projects. The WMRPC facilitates meetings between communities and EDA to determine if a community's project meets EDA's criteria.

EDA funds projects related to economic development and job creation – such as infrastructure improvements that benefit existing or potential businesses, the development of industrial parks, the development of business incubators, or other projects intended to increase the income of an area's residents. Additionally, EDA's Investment Policy Guidelines provide communities with direction related to EDA's goals. The Guidelines follow:

1. Be market-based and results-driven – An investment will capitalize on a region's competitive strengths and will positively move a regional economic indicator measured on EDA's Balanced Scorecard, such as: an increased number of higher-skill, higher-wage jobs; increased tax revenue; or increased private-sector investment.

2. Have strong organizational leadership – An investment will have strong leadership, relevant project management experience, and a significant commitment of human-resources talent to ensure a project's successful execution.
3. Advance productivity, innovation, and entrepreneurship – An investment will embrace the principles of entrepreneurship, enhance regional clusters, and leverage and link technology innovators and local universities to the private sector to create the conditions for greater productivity, innovation, and job creation.
4. Look beyond the immediate economic horizon, anticipate economic changes, and diversify the local and regional economy – An investment will be part of an overarching, long-term comprehensive economic development strategy that enhances a region's success in achieving a rising standard of living by supporting existing industry clusters, developing emerging new clusters, or attracting new regional economic drivers.
5. Demonstrate a high degree of commitment by exhibiting:
 - High levels of local-government or nonprofit matching funds and private-sector leverage
 - Clear and unified leadership and support by local elected officials
 - Strong cooperation between the business sector, relevant regional partners, and local, state, and federal governments

Staffing changes at EDA are currently occurring, including the retirement of the Michigan EDA representative. Contact the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission for up-to-date contact information.

U.S.D.A. Rural Development

Rural Development is committed to improving the economy and quality of life in rural communities. Rural Development supports public facilities and services such as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and telephone/electric services. Rural Development promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools (such a program exists in Ionia, Montcalm, Mecosta, and Osceola counties). Rural Development also offers technical assistance to communities and businesses for such projects as starting agricultural and other cooperatives.

While Rural Development and the WMRPC do not have a formal working arrangement, the two agencies often work together on projects such as establishing the multi-county revolving loan program or specific community projects. Additionally, staff from Rural Development frequently presents information at Board and CEDS Committee meetings.

Contact information varies by specific programs within Rural Development. Contact the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission for up-to-date contact information.

State of Michigan Programs / Statewide Organizations

Like federal programs, there are numerous programs available for communities economic development needs. The two principle programs include the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

MEDC is Michigan's primary agency promoting economic development statewide. The MEDC was formed in 1999 through an alliance between the State of Michigan and several local communities. It has a private sector board of directors comprised of business people, local economic developers, and educators.

MEDC's services include the Community Assistance Team (CATeam), which responds to the economic development needs of communities by packaging economic incentives such as CDBG, Brownfield, SBT, and Urban Land Assembly. The CATEam also can provide planning grants and strategic planning services. The CATEam operates the Michigan Main Street program and the Blueprint for Michigan's Downtowns program.

MEDC provides many services for businesses including consultation education training, export services, job training, selling to government programs, and helping companies meet changing demands through strategic planning assistance.

Michigan offers many financing programs and incentives through the MEDC. Michigan's brownfield redevelopment program provides benefits to businesses that reuse contaminated, functionally obsolete, or blighted properties. The MEDC assists communities with infrastructure needs with Community Development Block Grants. The Industrial Development Revenue Bond program provides businesses with capital cost savings related to interest rates and taxes. The Economic Development Job Training program is a major feature of the state's economic development efforts. The Michigan Economic Growth Authority (MEGA) was created to promote economic growth and job creation through tax credits. The Michigan NextEnergy Authority was created to promote the development of alternative energy sources. Property tax abatements are available for new real and personal property. The Renaissance Zones are used to encourage the development of selected areas across Michigan and are virtually free of state and local taxes. Tool and Die Recovery Zones are industry-based zones designed to retain existing jobs. SBA 504 Loans provide small businesses with long-term financing for the acquisition or construction of fixed assets.

Contact information varies by specific programs within MEDC. Contact the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission for up-to-date contact information.

Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

Each year, the WMRPC receives state funds under the statewide "Regional Transportation Planning" program as legislated by Act 51's Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF). The WMRPC's work program includes the following activities:

Administration – Provide program and financial status accounts, which satisfy requirements of

the Regional Agency and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and to provide program administration and management, support.

Technical Assistance to MDOT – Assist in various tasks to update the Statewide Long-Range Plan (SLRP), and a State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Included are potential coordination and hosting of public involvement meetings as required.

Also assist in various tasks in addressing specific Department issues, projects and programs, such as road, transit, non-motorized, rail, marine, airport, State Planning and Research (SPR) Program, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Program, Enhancement (ENH) Program, Heritage Route (Scenic By-Ways) Program and other Department projects, programs, and issues. Work with MDOT as appropriate through the Program Coordinator and Manager, MDOT Regions and Transportation Service Center (TSC)'s, to reach mutual agreement of process and resources in conducting such work.

HPMS Update – Assist MDOT by annually updating sample segment data in accordance with the Highway Performance Management System (HPMS), Traffic Monitoring Guide (TMG), and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines, as provided by MDOT. Completion is to be by December 31 of the calendar year.

Traffic Counting – Develop an on-going program for obtaining traffic volume data and determining Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for strategic locations within the region, and to assist the Department in obtaining supplemental counts, i.e. assistance in TEA-21 activities, and counts provided to developers, local jurisdictions, and others.

Public Involvement – Assist MDOT in providing the public an opportunity, as appropriate, to review and comment on activities related to this Program.

Technical Assistance – Provide services to local transportation oriented entities with activities to improve existing transportation systems, add new transportation systems, and address local transportation issues directly relating to future actions to improve the area's transportation system.

Corridor Studies – The WMRPC has assisted in the development of three corridor studies in Region 8. These studies emphasize communities working together to enhance the capacity and safety of existing corridors through access management. Access management relates to the rational placement of entrances to corridors to reduce conflict between through traffic and traffic exiting or entering the corridor. Examples of access management include consolidation of driveways, aligning intersections, and service drives for connected businesses. MDOT has funded three studies in Region 8.

M-40/M-89 Corridor – This corridor study began in 1998 and continues today with quarterly meetings of the M-40/M-89 Corridor Committee. The study area stretches from the northwest corner of Allegan County to the southeast corner and passes through numerous townships and cities.

M-66 Corridor – This corridor study began in 2000 and continues today with quarterly meetings of the M-66 Corridor Committee. The original study area was between I-96 and the City of Ionia, but now includes the entire section of M-66 in Ionia County.

M-104 Corridor – This corridor study occurred in 2004 and involved two townships, one city, one village, Ottawa County Planning and Grants, the Ottawa County Road Commission, MDOT, and the WMRPC. The study focused on Access Management and improving traffic flow through the six mile corridor.

Greenville Area Transportation Study – This area-wide study was initiated by the WMRPC in June 2007.

Economic Development – In addition to traditional transportation improvements (road and bridge construction and maintenance, etc.) MDOT has several programs targeting economic development in Michigan. The Transportation Economic Development Fund provides for the distribution of money to counties and municipalities to assist in the funding of highway, road, and street projects necessary to support economic growth. The Transportation Enhancement Program funds enhancements that improve Michigan’s intermodal transportation network and the quality of life in Michigan. The State Infrastructure Bank has a limited amount of money for low-interest loans for transportation improvements.

Contact information varies by specific programs within MDOT. Contact the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission for up-to-date contact information.

Michigan Association of Regions (MAR)

The Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) is a volunteer body of Michigan’s 14 regional planning agencies dedicated to educating members about regional issues in Michigan, promoting interaction between Michigan’s regions, and disseminating information about statewide and national programs.

Michigan Economic Developers Association (MEDA)

The Michigan Economic Developers Association (MEDA) is a volunteer body dedicated to educating members about economic development in Michigan and to promote interaction between Michigan’s economic developers. Membership includes individual communities, counties, regions, state agencies, utilities, and private interests.

Regional Programs

The Right Place, Inc.

The Right Place, Inc. serves the “Greater Grand Rapids Area” which includes Kent County and the surrounding counties as needs arise – such as when Electrolux was closing in Greenville, which is located in Montcalm County. Ms. Birgit Klohs, the President of The Right Place Inc., leads a staff of 15 highly skilled individuals that include a representative in Japan and another in Germany.

“Founded in 1985, The Right Place, Inc. is a regional, non-profit economic development organization that is directed by a board consisting of business and community leaders. Its mission is to promote area economic growth through high-quality employment, productivity, and technology. The program focuses on retaining existing jobs, supporting local business growth, and attracting new businesses to the Greater Grand Rapids area” (The Right Place, Inc.).

The Right Place, Inc. receives funds from both private organizations and local government units. Funding is raised in five-year blocks to allow strategic planning and to limit uncertainties related to year-to-year fund raising.

The 2004-2008 Strategic Plan identifies five key strategies:

1. Lead Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction.
2. Identify and Develop Emerging Growth Opportunities.
3. Strengthen Manufacturing Leadership and Innovation.
4. Lead Urban Redevelopment Vital to Business Retention and Attraction.
5. Lead Regional Initiatives in Economic Development.

The program offers a variety of services for manufacturing expansion or relocation including:

- Local and state government liaison
- Site selection
- Workforce development
- Customized market research
- Manufacturing assistance

Staff also markets the region to a worldwide audience and actively pursues companies, professionals and resources whose presence would enhance the competitiveness of area manufacturers or strengthen the regional economy. The Right Place, Inc. also provides a link between business and education to help ensure the area’s workforce is prepared to meet the needs of business. The program, in cooperation with the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, serves as a conduit for information and as a liaison between development, infrastructure improvement, and other factors that contribute to the area’s business climate.

The Right Place, Inc. has an ongoing relationship with the WMRPC. Staff often attend WMRPC Board Meetings and CEDS Committee meetings and have worked to bring EDA grants into the City of Grand Rapids. Staff of both organizations also serve on several committees together and frequently exchange information related to economic development in the area.

Birgit Klohs, President
The Right Place Inc.
161 Ottawa Ave. NW, Suite 400
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503-2701
Telephone: (616) 771-0325
Web: www.rightplace.org

Allegan County

Allegan County

Allegan County relies on Michigan State University Extension to perform many of the economic duties of the County. The County is a member of the WMRPC and has two representatives on the WMRPC Board and two representatives on the CEDS Committee.

Larry “Casey” Jones, Chair
Allegan County Board of Commissioners
County Administration Building
3283 122nd Avenue
Allegan, Michigan 49010

Cities

The following cities are represented on the WMRPC through Allegan County. Each city has staff representing the economic and community development needs of the community. Basic contact information is provided for each community.

City of Allegan – Robert Hillard, Manager
112 Locust St.
Allegan, Michigan 49010
Telephone (269) 673-5511

City of Douglas – David Kowal, Manager
City of (The Village of) Douglas
86 W. Center St.
Douglas, Michigan 49406
Telephone (269) 857-1438

City of Fennville – City of Fennville
222 S. Maple St.
Fennville, Michigan 49408
Telephone (269) 561-8321

City of Otsego – Thad Beard, Manager
City of Otsego
117 E. Orleans St.
Otsego, Michigan 49078
Telephone (269) 694-6146

City of Plainwell – Erik Wilson, Manager
City of Plainwell
414 N. Main St.
Plainwell, Michigan 49080
Telephone (269) 685-6821

City of Saugatuck – Kirk Harrier, Manager
City of Saugatuck
102 Butler St.
Saugatuck, Michigan 49453
Telephone: (269) 857-2603

City of Wayland – Deborah Nier, Manager
City of Wayland
103 S. Main St.
Wayland, Michigan 49348
Telephone (269) 792-2265

Villages and Townships

Allegan County has 24 townships and 2 villages that are all represented on the WMRPC through Allegan County. Each township and village has its own elected body and varying levels of staffing to promote economic development. For up-to-date information on individual townships and villages contact either Allegan County (see above) or the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

Ionia County

Ionia County Economic Alliance

The Ionia County Economic Alliance (ICEA) serves all of the communities and businesses in Ionia County. The Alliance was created through a partnership between MSU Extension and Ionia County. The Alliance is funded through investment from Ionia County, MSU Extension, individual units of government throughout the County, and private businesses.

Services and programs for Business Retention and Expansion include the Manufacturers Retention and Expansion Visitation Program, the Small Business Retention and Expansion Visitation Program, workforce development efforts with companies and educational entities, counseling local businesses for information and referrals related to business plan enhancement and financial management, providing educational programs for local businesses to expand their skills, and obtaining grants to upgrade local infrastructure necessary for current business operations. Business Attraction services include marketing Ionia County and properties via the web from local to state sites, working with a regional economic development organization to attract new businesses through manufacturers directory and a site consultant event, assisting interested site consultants and companies with area information, incentive packaging to attract new businesses such as employee training and infrastructure upgrades, and counseling entrepreneurs in business plan development as well as financing options.

Community Development services include working to improve downtowns through strategic planning facilitation and educating on how business-government collaboration can benefit communities. Also within community development, ICEA facilitates regional land use planning through the organization of the M-66 Corridor Land Use Advisory Board, giving local government and state government a forum for discussing needs related to development. In addition to the above services, ICEA services as the Director of the County Economic Development Corporation and the Ionia County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (ICBRA). The ICEA obtained two \$200,000 grants from the USEPA for Brownfield Assessment and is currently managing these grants and the consultant firm hired to complete the grant projects. This grant will enable communities to reuse abandoned buildings, put them back on the tax rolls, and increase the local job base. In addition, this type of grant has been a spring board for receiving additional EPA and HUD funding in other counties that have received the grant in the past.

ICEA's 22-member Board of Trustees is comprised of both private and public representatives. Staff includes an Executive Director and an Administrative Assistant.

Diane Smith, Executive Director
Ionia County Economic Alliance
545 Appletree Drive
Ionia, Michigan 48846
(616) 527-8014
www.icea-mi.org

Cities

The following cities are represented on the WMRPC through Ionia County. Each city has staff representing the economic and community development needs of the community. Basic contact information is provided for each community.

City of Belding – Randall Debruine, Manager
City of Belding
120 S. Pleasant St.
Belding, Michigan 48809
Telephone (616) 794-1900

City of Ionia – Julianne Burns, Grants Administrator
City of Ionia
114 N. Kidd St.
Ionia, Michigan 48846
Telephone (616) 527-4170

City of Portland – Tom Dempsey, Manager
City of Portland
259 Kent St.
Portland, Michigan 48875
Telephone (517) 647-5027

Villages and Townships

Ionia County has 16 townships and 7 villages that are all represented on the WMRPC through Ionia County. Each township and village has its own elected body and varying levels of staffing to promote economic development. For up-to-date information on individual townships and villages contact either the Ionia County Economic Alliance (see above) or the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

Kent County

The West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) does not have a direct relationship with Kent County due to the County's decision to not belong as a member to the WMRPC. The WMRPC regularly invites participation and keeps up-to-date on County interests, but there is no formal agreement. The WMRPC does provide many services to Kent County communities, such as performing regional reviews, providing Census information, reviewing planning documents, etc. For this project the WMRPC also spent some time gathering land use plans and other information to determine the quantity of land dedicated to manufacturing. There are three communities that are members of the WMRPC. The Right Place, Inc. (see above) is one of the primary providers of economic development services in Kent County.

Member Communities

The following cities are represented on the WMRPC as individual units. Each city has staff representing the economic and community development needs of the community. Basic contact information is provided for each community.

- City of Cedar Springs** – Christine Burns, Manager
City of Cedar Springs
66 S. Main St.
Cedar Springs, Michigan 49319
Telephone (616) 696-1330
- City of Grand Rapids** – Dan Oegema, Business Advocate
City of Grand Rapids
300 Monroe NW, Room 920
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
Telephone (616) 456-3196
- City of Wyoming** – Tim Cochran, Planner
City of Wyoming
1155 28th St.
Wyoming, Michigan 49509
Telephone (616) 530-7258

Mecosta County

Mecosta County is a member of the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission and has two members on the WMRPC Board and a member on the CEDS Committee. The City of Big Rapids is also a separate member of the WMRPC. All communities in Mecosta County are represented on the WMRPC.

Mecosta County Development Corporation

The Mecosta County Development Corporation (MCDC) serves all of the communities and businesses in Mecosta County. The Corporation is housed in the same building as the area's Convention and Visitors Bureau and Chamber of Commerce. MCDC is funded through Mecosta County, and individual communities across the County (cities, villages, and townships) as well as private businesses.

MCDC provides a variety of services related to business retention and expansion including workforce training, small business classes and consultation, and technical assistance. MCDC also provides local economic development assistance to communities, gathers economic and demographic information, shares information about available buildings and land, and provides information to businesses seeking new opportunities. MCDC also participates in a multiple-county revolving loan program to assist businesses in funding projects.

The MCDC Board is comprised of both private and public representatives. Staff includes an Executive Director and an Administrative Assistant.

William Mrdeza, Executive Director
Mecosta County Development Corporation
246 North State Street
Big Rapids, Michigan 49307
Telephone (231) 592-3403
www.mecostaedc.com

City of Big Rapids

The City of Big Rapids operates its own economic development activities. The primary contact person is:

Mark Gifford, City Planner
City of Big Rapids
226 North Michigan
Big Rapids, Michigan 49307
Telephone (231) 592-4036

Villages and Townships

Mecosta County has 16 townships and 4 villages that are all represented on the WMRPC through Mecosta County. Each township and village has its own elected body and varying levels of staffing to promote economic development. For up-to-date information on individual townships

and villages contact either the Mecosta County Development Corporation (see above) or the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

Montcalm County

Montcalm Alliance

The Montcalm Alliance serves all of the communities and businesses in Montcalm County. Montcalm Alliance is funded through Montcalm County, and individual communities across the County (cities, villages, and townships) as well as private businesses.

The Alliance provides a variety of services related to business retention and expansion including workforce training, small business classes and consultation, and technical assistance. The Alliance also provides local economic development assistance to communities, gathers economic and demographic information, shares information about available buildings and land, and provides information to businesses seeking new opportunities. Montcalm Alliance also participates in a multiple-county revolving loan program to assist businesses in funding projects. The Montcalm Alliance also serves many of the functions of a planning department and is currently very involved in developing the County's first Comprehensive Plan.

The Montcalm Alliance Board is comprised of both private and public representatives. Staff includes an Executive Director.

Franz Mogdis, Executive Director
Montcalm Alliance
621 New Street
Stanton, Michigan 48888
Telephone (989) 831-5261

Cities

The following cities are represented on the WMRPC through Montcalm County. Each city has staff representing the economic and community development needs of the community. Basic contact information is provided for each community.

City of Carson City – Fred Brown, Manager
City of Carson City
123 E. Main St.
Carson City, Michigan 48811
Telephone (989) 584-3515

City of Greenville – Bryan Gruesbeck, Assistant Manager
City of Greenville
411 S. Lafayette St.
Greenville, Michigan 48838
Telephone (616) 754-5645

City of Stanton – Janet Miller, Clerk
City of Stanton
225 S. Camburn St.
Stanton, Michigan 48888

Telephone (989) 831-4440

Villages and Townships

Montcalm County has 20 townships and 6 villages that are all represented on the WMRPC through Montcalm County. Each township and village has its own elected body and varying levels of staffing to promote economic development. For up-to-date information on individual townships and villages contact either the Montcalm Alliance (see above) or the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

Osceola County

Osceola Economic Alliance

The Osceola Economic Alliance (OEA) serves all of the communities and businesses in Osceola County. The Alliance is under Michigan State University Extension and is funded by Osceola County. Michigan State University provides benefits for the Economic Developer's position (insurance, etc.).

The mission of the Osceola Economic Alliance is to "Encourage and facilitate community and economic growth in Osceola County, Michigan." The Alliance's primary customers include manufacturers, existing and start-up small businesses, local units of government, and individuals seeking housing information.

The Alliance's objectives include:

1. Conduct an ongoing business retention and expansion program.
2. Conduct business attraction activities.
3. Assist businesses utilize state and local programs.
4. Maintain an economic development website.
5. Publish manufacturing newsletters.
6. Provide business counseling, research, and referral services.
7. Serve on regional boards that serve the interests of Osceola County.
8. Serve as the point of contact for Osceola County's Community Development Block Grant for Housing Rehabilitation and as the information source for State housing programs.
9. Maintain the Osceola County website.
10. Conduct research, write grants, and provide other services to local units of government and non-profit organizations.

The OEA has a seven-member Board of Directors that includes representatives from Osceola County government, private industry, education, and local citizens.

Dan Massy, Community and Economic Development Agent
301 W. Upton Avenue
Reed City, Michigan 49677
Telephone: (231) 832-7397
E-mail: massyd@msu.edu

Cities

The following cities are represented on the WMRPC through Osceola County. Each city has staff representing the economic and community development needs of the community. Basic contact information is provided for each community.

City of Reed City – George Freeman, Manager
City of Reed City
227 E. Lincoln St.
Reed City, Michigan 49677
Telephone (231) 832-2245

City of Ewart –

Roger Elkins, Manager
City of Ewart
200 S. Main St.
Ewart, Michigan 49631
Telephone (231) 734-2181

Dan Elliot, Director
Ewart DDA/LDFA
127 N. River St.
Ewart, Michigan 49631
Telephone (231) 734-6119

Villages and Townships

Osceola County has 16 townships and 4 villages that are all represented on the WMRPC through Osceola County. Each township and village has its own elected body and varying levels of staffing to promote economic development. For up-to-date information on individual townships and villages contact either the Osceola Economic Alliance (see above) or the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

Ottawa County

Ottawa County Economic Development Office, Inc.

The Ottawa County Economic Development Office, Inc. (OCEDO) is a 501(c)(4) non-profit corporation which was formed in 1991 for the purpose of providing professional economic development services to Ottawa County, its local units of government, residents, and business and industry. OCEDO has a thirteen (13) member advisory Board of Directors. About half of its funding comes from local units of government; a third from fees for services; and the remainder from other sources. The Mission of OCEDO is to encourage and facilitate economic development activity county-wide which will retain and create job opportunities, tax base, and private sector investments.

Economic development services provided by OCEDO include the following:

- 1. Industrial Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Services:** Conduct industrial retention visits and assist manufacturers access federal, state, and local business assistance programs (financing, tax abatements, employee training, and infrastructure grants).
- 2. Small Business and Technology Development Center Services:** Provide no cost, one-on-one counseling to prospective and existing small business owners as a Satellite of Grand Valley State University's Region 7 Office under the Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC) program; distribute business start-up resource materials to clients (on preparing a business plan, registering a business, applying for licenses and permits, requesting a bank loan, and SBA loan programs).
- 3. Grant Writing Services:** Prepare applications for federal and state grants to help finance needed public infrastructure improvements to support private sector investments.
- 4. Other Services:** Undertake other related activities like preparing tax abatement applications, economic reports and surveys, and providing information.

Kenneth J. Rizzio, Executive Director
Ottawa County Economic Development Office, Inc.
6676 Lake Michigan Drive
Allendale, Michigan 49401
Telephone: (616) 892-4120
E-mail: krizzio@altelco.net

Ottawa County Planning and Grants Department

Ottawa County has the most complete planning department and staff of any of the counties in Region 8. The department assists communities in planning efforts, is involved in transportation planning and economic/community development, assists communities in seeking grants, has a complete planning library, and assists communities in numerous other ways. Closely tied to the Department is the County's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Department.

Mark Knudsen, Director
Ottawa County Planning and Grants
12220 Fillmore
West Olive, Michigan 49460

Telephone: (616) 738-4852
E-mail: mknudsen@co.ottawa.mi.us

Lakeshore Advantage

Lakeshore Advantage is a relatively new organization that serves the economic development needs of the Holland-Zeeland Area.

Randy Thelen, President
201 W. Washington Ave., Suite 410
Zeeland, Michigan 49464
Telephone: (616) 772-5226
E-mail: Randy.Thelen@LakeshoreAdvantage.com

Cities and Villages

The following cities and villages are represented on the WMRPC through Ottawa County. Each city has staff representing the economic and community development needs of the community. Basic contact information is provided for each community.

- City of Holland –** Phil Meyer, Director
City of Holland Planning Department
270 S. River Ave.
Holland, Michigan 49423
Telephone (616) 355-1300
- City of Grand Haven –** Patrick McGinnis, Manager
City of Grand Haven Planning Department
519 Washington Ave.
Grand Haven, Michigan 49417
Telephone (616) 842-3210
- City of Ferrysburg –** Craig Bessinger, Manager
City of Ferrysburg
408 Fifth St.
City of Ferrysburg, Michigan 49409
Telephone (616)
- Village of Spring Lake –** Ryan Cotton, Manager
Village of Spring Lake
102 W. Savidge St.
Spring Lake, Michigan 49456
Telephone (616) 842-1393
- City of Zeeland –** Tim Klunder, Manager
City of Zeeland
21 S. Elm St.
Zeeland, Michigan 49464

Telephone (616) 772-5352

City of Coopersville – Steven Patrick, Manager
City of Coopersville
289 Danforth St.
Coopersville, Michigan 49404
Telephone (616) 997-9731

City of Hudsonville – Dan Strickwerda, Director
City of Hudsonville Planning Department
3275 Central Blvd.
Hudsonville, Michigan 49426
Telephone (616) 669-0200

Townships

Ottawa County has 17 townships that are all represented on the WMRPC through Ottawa County. Each township has its own elected body and varying levels of staffing to promote economic development. For up-to-date information on individual townships contact either Ottawa County Planning and Grants (see above) or the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

Other Partners

The WMRPC has partnerships with a variety of local and statewide organizations including:

- The Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council
- The Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
- The West Michigan Strategic Alliance
- The Macatawa Area Coordinating Council
- The Grand Valley Metro Council
- Michigan State University
- University of Michigan
- Grand Valley State University
- Coalition of Greater Greenville
- United Growth for Kent County
- Monroe North Business Association
- The Michigan Association of Planning
- West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Region 8

Population and Demographics

Population Trends and Projections

Table 3 shows that Region 8's population increased by 31.9 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 1,104,848. The seven-county area grew at a much faster rate than Michigan, which increased by 7.3 percent during the same period to reach 9,938,444. The U.S. Census estimates that the Region's 2006 population was 1,165,330 – which means the Region's population growth has slowed and will probably not meet the projections that were prepared after the 2000 Census. The 2006 population estimate for Michigan was 10,095,643.

Table 3 – Population Trends and Projections

	Trends				Projections	
	1980	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2020
Region 8	837,655	948,502	1,104,848	31.9	1,304,955	1,564,894
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,277	9,938,444	7.3	—	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population, WMRPC

Age and Gender Distribution

In 2000 Region 8's median age of 33.0 was lower than Michigan's median of 35.5 due to a larger percentage of people under 35 (all four categories). While both Michigan and Region 8 had a higher percentage of women than men (due to women's longer life expectancy) Region 8 had a lower percentage of women than Michigan (Table 4).

Table 4 – Age and Gender Distribution in 2000

	Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	%
Under 5	82,502	7.5	6.8
5-17	227,217	20.6	19.4
18-24	118,976	10.8	9.4
25-34	155,563	14.1	13.7
35-44	178,107	16.1	16.1
45-54	140,517	12.7	13.8
55-64	84,295	7.6	8.7
65-84	102,745	9.3	10.9
85 and over	14,926	1.4	1.4
Median Age	33.0	—	35.5
Male	549,101	49.7	49.0
Female	555,747	50.3	51.0
Total	1,104,848	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Household Distribution

In 2000 Region 8 had a slightly higher percentage of family households than Michigan as-a-whole and a considerably higher percentage of married families (Table 5). Conversely, the Region had a lower percentage of single-parent households and non-family households which increased the average household size in Region 8.

Table 5 – Household Distribution in 2000

	Total Households	Family Households				Non-Family Households			Persons Per Household	Persons in Group Quarters
		Total	Married Couple	Female Householder, no spouse	Male Householder, no spouse	Total	Householder living alone	Householder 65+ living alone		
Region 8	399,178	281,521	225,701	40,722	15,098	117,567	93,384	32,034	2.7	35,733
(%)	100.0	70.5	56.5	10.2	3.8	29.5	23.4	8.0	—	—
Michigan (%)	100.0	68.0	51.4	12.5	4.1	32.0	26.2	9.4	2.6	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Employment Trends

Table 6 demonstrates the fact that Region 8 and Michigan have fallen behind the United States in employment growth. Region 8's unemployment rate began at 6.0 percent in 2002 and increased to a high of 6.9 percent in 2003 before decreasing in 2004 and 2005 – and then increasing again in 2006 to 6.1 percent. During the five year period Region 8's unemployment rate was consistently lower than Michigan's unemployment rate which also peaked in 2003 at 7.1 percent. The U.S. Unemployment rate peaked in 2003 (like Michigan and Region 8), but then dropped to a low of 4.6 percent in 2006.

Table 6 – Employment Trends

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8	6.1
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.9
United States					
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Distribution

While there have been significant changes since 2000 based on the continued loss of manufacturing jobs across Michigan, Table 7 shows that Region 8 was even more dependent on manufacturing-related jobs than even Michigan. Additionally, Region 8 had a higher percentage of employment related to agriculture, wholesale trade, and retail trade. Manufacturing, education, and retail trade remain the three largest employment categories in the Region and Michigan.

Table 7 – Employment Distribution in 2000

	Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	%
Employed Persons 16 and Over	545,533	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	7,711	1.4	1.1
Construction	32,657	6.0	6.0
Manufacturing	143,234	26.3	22.5
Wholesale Trade	25,274	4.6	3.3
Retail Trade	68,230	12.5	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	19,067	3.5	4.1
Information	9,507	1.7	2.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental leasing	27,835	5.1	5.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	35,758	6.6	8.0
Education, health and social services	101,425	18.6	19.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	36,699	6.7	7.6
Other services (except public administration)	24,646	4.5	4.6
Public Administration	13,490	2.5	3.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Income and Poverty

Region 8’s 2000 median household income of \$45,915 was above Michigan’s median of \$44,667 – but the Region’s per capita income of \$20,622 was lower than Michigan’s figure of \$22,168 (Table 8). In 2000 Region 8 had a lower percentage of people living below the poverty level than Michigan.

Table 8 – Income and Poverty in 2000

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	% of Population Below Poverty Level
Region 8	\$45,915	\$20,622	8.2%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$22,168	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Housing Information

Table 9 shows that in 2000 Region 8 had a lower percentage of traditional single-family homes (71.3 percent) than Michigan (74.5 percent). Region 8 had a higher percentage of duplexes, and identical percentage of multiple-family homes, and a higher percentage of mobile homes than

Michigan. Region 8 had a higher occupancy rate than Michigan as-a-whole and the median value of owner occupied housing was slightly lower in Region 8 than in Michigan.

Table 9 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total	Occupied Units	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
Region 8	309,702	19,829	66,329	38,033	631	434,500	399,178	\$114,100
%	71.3	4.6	15.3	8.8	0.1	100.0	91.9	—
Michigan (%)	74.5	3.5	15.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	89.4	\$115,600

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Physical Features

While demographics and a SWOT analysis are provided for each of the individual counties within Region 8, a description of the physical features is included only for the Region as-a-whole.

Location

Map 1 shows the location of Region 8 and the seven counties within the Region’s boundaries, along with the boundaries of each of the counties and the locations of the cities and villages.

Natural Features

Region 8 has many unique natural features that vary across the Region.

While only Allegan and Ottawa counties are located on Lake Michigan, the Lake’s influence can be felt across all seven counties. Lake Michigan creates a more moderate climate (cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter), and also creates “Lake Effect” snowstorms (heavy wet snow) that decrease in intensity further inland.

The Region’s three major rivers include the Grand River, the Muskegon River, and the Kalamazoo River. There are dozens of smaller rivers all of which either flow into one of the major rivers or Lake Michigan. Additionally, the Region has hundreds of inland lakes.

The Region’s topography is generally flat to rolling with elevations ranging from Lake Michigan’s elevation of 581 feet above mean sea level to 1,739 feet above mean sea level in Osceola Township’s Sherman Township.

The Region’s wildlife is typical of that found in most of lower Michigan. Common wildlife includes deer, raccoons, opossums, skunks, rabbits, badgers, muskrats, beavers, squirrels, rodents and other small mammals. There are also occasional observations of other animals such as bears, coyotes, and bobcats. The area is home to a variety of birds including owls, wild turkeys, pheasants and many others. The area is also a seasonal home to many migratory birds including ducks and Canada Geese.

The Region was originally covered with a dense forest of deciduous and coniferous trees. As the area was cleared for farming and development, or the trees were removed for timber, the area's forests were replaced by farm fields, open field areas, orchards and smaller forested areas containing both deciduous and coniferous trees.

To showcase the Region's natural features there are many Michigan State Parks, State Recreation Areas, State Forests, and State Game Areas. Additionally, there are parks maintained by each of the seven counties, all of the cities, most villages, and many townships.

Counties, Communities, and Land Use Summary

Counties – Region 8 contains seven counties, listed below by 2006 population size:

- Kent County, 599,524
- Ottawa County, 257,671
- Allegan County, 113,501
- Ionia County, 64,821
- Montcalm County, 63,977
- Mecosta County, 42,252
- Osceola County, 23,584

Cities – Region 8's cities, listed below by 2000 population include:

- Grand Rapids (Kent County), 197,800
- Wyoming (Kent County), 69,368
- Kentwood (Kent County), 45,255
- Holland (Ottawa and Allegan counties), 35,048
- Walker (Kent County), 21,842
- Grandville (Kent County), 16,263
- Grand Haven (Ottawa County), 11,168
- Big Rapids (Mecosta County), 10,849
- East Grand Rapids (Kent County), 10,764
- Ionia (Ionia County), 10,569
- Greenville (Montcalm County), 7,935
- Hudsonville (Ottawa County), 7,160
- Zeeland (Ottawa County), 5,805
- Belding (Ionia County), 5,877
- Allegan (Allegan County), 4,838
- Rockford (Kent County), 4,626
- Lowell (Kent County), 4,013
- Wayland (Allegan County), 3,939
- Otsego (Allegan County), 3,933
- Plainwell (Allegan County), 3,933
- Coopersville (Ottawa County), 3,910
- Portland (Ionia County), 3,789

- Cedar Springs (Kent County), 3,112
- Ferrysburg (Ottawa County), 3,040
- Reed City (Osceola County), 2,430
- Evart (Osceola County), 1,738
- Stanton (Montcalm County), 1,504
- Fennville (Allegan County), 1,459
- Douglas (Allegan County), 1,214
- Carson City (Montcalm County), 1,190
- Saugatuck (Allegan County), 1,065

In addition to cities, Region 8 has 22 villages ranging in population from Pierson in Montcalm County with 185 residents, to Sparta in Kent County with 4,159 residents.

Townships – Townships are another important form of government in Michigan and Region 8 has 129 of these units that are typically 36 square miles. Townships range in population from 406 in Cedar Township (Osceola County) to 41,658 in Ottawa County’s Georgetown Township (making it larger than only three of the Region’s cities).

Land Use – While there is no comprehensive land use plan for the seven-county area, a general description is useful for understanding the variety that exists in Region 8. Overall, the seven county area covers 4,700 square miles.

Kent County, covering 864 square miles, is the most urbanized of the seven counties. Grand Rapids and the surrounding cities and townships, contain large amounts of land used for industrial purposes, retail uses, all types and densities of housing, and public uses. The northern third of Kent County, as well as areas on the east side of the county, are less developed and contain large amounts of agricultural land. Natural and built features influencing development include the Grand River, I-96/I-196/M-6, and US-131.

Ottawa County, covering 565 square miles, is very urbanized on the east side of the County (adjacent to the Grand Rapids Area) and on the west side of the County – both to the south in Holland and to the north in the Grand Haven-Ferrysburg-Spring Lake area. Like Kent County, Ottawa County’s urbanized areas contain large amounts of land used for industrial purposes, retail uses, all types and densities of housing, and public uses. Ottawa County’s rural areas are very productive agricultural areas. Natural and built features influencing development include Lake Michigan, the Grand River, I-96, I-196, and US-31.

Allegan County, covering 832 square miles, has many smaller urbanized areas that are all separated by rural areas (as opposed to the larger urbanized areas in Kent and Ottawa counties that are linked to each other). The majority of Allegan County’s land used for industrial purposes are located in the northwest corner of the County, but are also spread amongst the County’s other cities. Commercial uses are located in all of the cities and most residential uses are in and immediately around the County’s cities. While Allegan County has many agricultural areas, land use is not as focused on agricultural uses as Ottawa County to the north. The Allegan State Game Area is a huge area that shapes development capacity in Allegan County. Natural and built features influencing development include Lake Michigan, the Kalamazoo River, I-196/US-31, and US-31.

Ionia County, covering 576 square miles, is fairly rural and focuses on agricultural uses. The County has three cities (Ionia, Belding, and Portland) that contain the majority of development related to manufacturing and retail. Housing is also located in and around these cities as well as the County's seven villages. Natural and built features influencing development include the Grand River, I-96, and M-66.

Mecosta County, covering 576 square miles, is fairly rural except for the City of Big Rapids and the surrounding townships, which contain the majority of development related to manufacturing and retail. Housing is also located in and around Big Rapids and the area known as Canadian Lakes, in the southeast quadrant of the County – as well as the County's four villages. Natural and built features influencing development include the Muskegon River and US-131.

Montcalm County, covering 713 square miles, is fairly rural except for the City of Greenville and the surrounding townships, which contain the majority of development related to manufacturing and retail. Housing is also located in and around Greenville – as well as the County's seven villages and the City of Stanton. Natural and built features influencing development include the Flat River, US-131, M-66, and M-57.

Osceola County, covering 576 square miles, is the Region's most rural county. The two cities of Reed City and Evart contain the majority of development related to manufacturing and retail. Housing is also located in and around these cities as well as the County's four villages. Natural and built features influencing development include the Muskegon River, US-131, US-10, and M-66.

Transportation Network

Region 8 is well-served by a network of roads maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Region's seven county road commissions, and the Region's cities and villages. Very few townships are responsible for maintaining roads. In addition to roads, the transportation network includes airports, rail, and transit.

Limited Access Highways – These are typically four lane divided highways accessible only at interchanges. Speed limits are typically 70 miles per hour but are lower (typically 55 miles per hour) in major urban areas. These include:

- I-96 crosses Ionia, Kent, and Ottawa counties and stretches across from the east side of Michigan all the way to the west side – linking Muskegon, Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Detroit.
- US-131 crosses Allegan, Kent, Montcalm, Mecosta, and Osceola counties and stretches from Michigan's southern border to the northern tip of Michigan's lower peninsula – linking Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Big Rapids, Cadillac, and Petoskey.
- US-31/I-196 crosses Allegan and Ottawa counties before splitting into US-31 that continues north along the Lake Michigan shoreline and I-196 that continues east to Grand Rapids.
- M-6 (the South Beltline) is the southern bypass around the Grand Rapids Area

Full Access Highways – These are typically two-lane roads that may include additional lanes in urbanized areas and may also include passing lanes and turning lanes. Speed limits are typically 55 miles per hour with reduced speed limits in cities and villages or other areas. Major trunklines in Region 8 include:

- US-10 is an east-west route that crosses southern Osceola County
- M-115 crosses the northeast corner of Osceola County
- M-66 is a north-south route that crosses Osceola, Mecosta, Montcalm, and Ionia counties
- M-20 is an east-west route that crosses Mecosta County
- M-46 is an east-west route that crosses northern Montcalm County
- M-57 is an east-west route that crosses southern Montcalm and Northeast Kent counties
- M-44 is an east-west route that crosses portions of Kent and Ionia counties
- M-21 is an east-west route that crosses most of Kent County and all of Ionia County
- M-45 is an east-west route that crosses all of Ottawa County and some of Kent County
- M-37 is a north-south route that crosses Kent County (includes the East Beltline)
- M-50 skirts the southern boundary of Ionia County
- M-40/M-89 crosses Allegan County from the southeast corner to the northwest corner
- M-222 is an east west route covering the east half of central Allegan County

Airports – The Region’s major international airport is the Gerald R. Ford International Airport in Kent County. Other airports include the following:

- Padgham Field, Allegan (Allegan County)
- Roben-Hood Airport, Big Rapids (Mecosta County)
- Memorial Airport, Grand Haven (Ottawa County)
- Greenville Municipal Airport, Greenville (Montcalm County)
- Park Township Airport, Holland (Ottawa County)
- Tulip City Airport, Holland (Allegan County)
- Ionia County Airport, Ionia (Ionia County)
- Riverview Airport, Jenison (Ottawa County)
- Lakeview-Griffith Field, Lakeview (Montcalm County)
- Lowell City Airport, Lowell (Kent County)
- Plainwell Municipal, Plainwell (Allegan County)
- Miller-Sparta Airport, Sparta (Kent County)
- Ottawa Executive Airport, Zeeland (Ottawa County)

Transit – The Region has a variety of transit opportunities in each of the seven counties. Portions of the more urban counties have complete transit services, while the more rural counties rely primarily on “dial-a-ride” type services and/or limited fixed routes. Transportation out of the region includes limited Amtrak Service, Greyhound, GandM Coach, Cardinal, and Indian Trails.

Rail Service – Rail service includes CSX, Conrail, Mid Michigan Railroad, Grand Trunk Western, Chesapeake and Ohio, Grand Rapids and Eastern Railroad, Norfolk Southern, Tuscola and Saginaw Bay, and Amtrak.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

The seven counties within the boundaries of the WMRPC have many strengths that make it a truly unique place that includes everything from the sandy beaches of Lake Michigan to a large metropolitan area, to small villages dotting the countryside, and thousands of square miles of farmland and forests. Some of the Region's strengths are listed below in related groupings:

Natural Features –

- Lake Michigan, Inland lakes, rivers, and streams
- Tourism opportunities
- Natural Resources
- Agriculture
- Natural beauty of area
- Four seasons
- Land available

Built Attributes –

- Extensive road network that includes many interstate highways
- Location, contains big city (Grand Rapids) and close to bigger cities (Detroit, Chicago)
- Mix of urban and rural communities
- Available infrastructure
- Available capacity in industrial parks
- Network of airports across Region
- Transit available in much of Region

Economy –

- West Michigan survives economic cycles better than Michigan as-a-whole
- Affordable cost of living
- Commitment to economic development
- Good manufacturing base and work force
- Many good, small, stable companies
- Grand Rapids' many attractions (Cultural, Employment, Tourism, Education)
- Expanding role of life sciences in Grand Rapids and Region
- Philanthropy – very generous individuals, businesses, and foundations

Education –

- Education opportunities (K-12)
- Many Universities in Region (public and private)
- Many trade-schools and technical centers

People –

- Growing population (greater growth than Michigan as-a-whole)
- Strong workforce and work ethic
- Educated professionals living in communities

Leadership and Programs –

- Michigan's programs targeting community development
- Many university programs
- West Michigan Regional Planning Commission
- West Michigan Strategic Alliance
- The Right Place, Inc.
- Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
- Good management of communities

Region-wide Weaknesses

There are many region-wide weaknesses across the seven-county area served by the WMRPC. Some of the Region's weaknesses are listed below in related groupings:

Natural Features –

- Distance to major population centers
- Weather (cloudy, cold, snow)
- Michigan's location (peninsula) takes it off the direct transportation route, increases cost of transporting products

Built Attributes –

- Road maintenance is under-funded
- Lack of interconnected transit that crosses borders

Economy –

- Communities having difficulties related to decreasing revenues from State of Michigan
- Loss of manufacturing and inability to replace lost jobs with good paying jobs
- Move from small farms to large farms influences small communities
- Companies losing local ownership Wage-rates compared to other areas
- Need to determine how to make up for jobs lost due to increased productivity
- Midwest facing flat growth
- Lack of investment capital

Education –

- Problems facing urban schools (funding, decreasing enrollment, test scores, low graduation rates, perceptions, etc.)
- Smaller rural districts often lack advanced classes
- Skills of labor pool often do not match needs of industry

Leadership and Programs –

- Communities having difficulties related to decreasing revenues from State of Michigan
- Unfunded mandates
- Government regulations
- Lack of promotion of Region

Region-wide Opportunities

There are many region-wide opportunities across the seven-county area served by the WMRPC. Many opportunities relate to the entire area. The following are some of the area's opportunities listed in similar groups:

Natural Features –

- Agricultural processing/value added agriculture
- Lake Michigan and other natural resources
- Increased agricultural productivity
- Environment, Grand River

Built Attributes –

- Internet services/wireless opportunities allow people to work anywhere
- M-66 turning into “Michigan’s Mainstreet” with a slower-paced way to traverse Michigan from south to north
- Development near interchanges across region

Economy –

- Increasing gas prices could encourage people to live in cities and urban centers – as opposed to continuing to expand into undeveloped areas
- Tourism and Service Industry
- Health services in region
- Restructuring of U.S. automotive industry
- West Michigan’s economy better than Michigan’s as-a-whole
- Affordable land and cost-of-living
- Diversify away from traditional manufacturing

Education –

- Colleges and Universities
- Restructuring of education system

People –

- Build on engineering expertise
- Dedicated workforce

Leadership and Programs –

- Focus on downtowns
- Strong opportunities for manufacturing
- Stable government in Region and United States
- Communities need to find niche and market themselves
- Intergovernmental cooperation
- Need to replace industrial tax abatements with improved incentives

Region-wide Threats

There are many region-wide threats to the seven-county area served by the WMRPC. Many threats are related to the entire area. The following are some of the area's threats grouped in similar categories:

Natural Features –

- Loss/degradation of natural resources
- Distance to major population centers
- Demand for water in Great Lakes Basin

Built Attributes –

- Unsustainable growth in rural areas
- Big box stores' impact on downtowns

Economy –

- Continued loss of manufacturing jobs and lack of diversification of employment leads to increasing poverty and unemployment
- Lack of confidence in economy and leadership inhibits start-up businesses
- Globalization and businesses leaving region for other parts of the USA or world
- Connection to “rust-belt” image
- Housing market
- Reliance on automobile for employment and transportation
- Lack of comprehensive energy plan for Michigan

Education –

- Lack of appropriate worker skills
- No goal of matching employers' needs with potential employees' skills
- School cuts

People –

- Aging workforce – are there enough well-educated people to replace those leaving the workforce?
- Michigan's difficulties keeping young people after graduating from college

Leadership and Programs –

- Continued decreases in revenue sharing and other community revenues will affect services, facilities, and overall quality of life
- Loss of expertise as people retire from government
- Renaissance Zones ending tax-free status (what happens when benefit is gone?)
- Single Business Tax recently eliminated
- Conflict between rural and urban areas/city township issues
- Difficult to offer tax abatements to businesses when economy is down and communities losing resources
- Partisan politics in Michigan wastes limited resources

Economic Clusters in Region 8

There are many economic clusters in West Michigan that can support continued job creation and help advance the Region's economy.

Manufacturing

While many manufacturing jobs have left the Region over the past several years, manufacturing remains a major employer in West Michigan. Manufacturers that supply parts to the automotive industry are located in each of the seven counties in Region 8 – employing tens of thousands of people. The region is also home to several office furniture manufacturing companies that employ thousands of people – primarily in Kent, Ottawa and Allegan counties.

Health Sciences

Healthcare and research are growing fields in West Michigan. In addition to the major hospitals in Kent County, there are many satellite campuses and independent hospitals in all seven of Region 8's counties. Also, in addition to health care there is research, health education, and health care/pharmaceutical product manufacturing. "Health Hill" in downtown Grand Rapids is busy with ongoing construction – Spectrum Health/Butterworth, St. Mary's Hospital, the Van Andel Institute, Grand Valley State University, and several private health care providers are either just completing projects or are in the middle of huge construction projects – all within a two block area. Adding to all of this excitement is the recent agreement to move Michigan State University's medical school to Grand Rapids – where it will add to the resources on Health Hill. Nearby, in Wyoming, Metropolitan Hospital is in the middle of building a new hospital campus. Further away from Grand Rapids hospitals are expanding in Holland, Greenville, Carson City, and other areas of West Michigan. Additional health-related jobs include Perrigo in Allegan, which manufactures generic drugs.

Education

West Michigan has many public and private colleges and universities. Public Universities include Grand Valley State University in Ottawa and Kent counties and Ferris State University in Mecosta and Kent counties. Additionally Kent County has branch campuses for Michigan State University and Western Michigan University. Community Colleges exist in Grand Rapids and Montcalm County. Ottawa County is home to Hope College and Kent County is home to several private colleges including Calvin, Aquinas, and many others.

K-12 Education (both public and private) is also a major employer in West Michigan. The Region contains all or part of over 60 school districts that employ thousands of people across West Michigan.

Retail

There are many retail centers in Region 8. Kent County is the primary retail center with several regional malls located in major concentrations of retail. The 28th Street Retail Corridor stretches from Cascade Township in the east through Kentwood, Grand Rapids, and Wyoming to the west. Grandville has a major concentration of retail (including a regional mall). The Alpine Avenue

Retail Corridor is located in the City of Walker and Alpine Township. Other retail corridors exist along the East Beltline, Plainfield Avenue, and retail is growing along the relatively new M-6 (South Beltline). Other concentrations of retail exist across much of the Region including in and around Greenville, Big Rapids, Ionia, Holland, Grand Haven, and Otsego/Plainwell.

Public Sector Employment

Public sector employment provides jobs for people across West Michigan. Federal, State, County, City, Village, and Township governments employ people with a wide range of skills and education. In addition to the more typical forms of employment, there are also several institutions that provide additional employment such as the State Correctional Facilities in Ionia and Montcalm counties and the large concentration of state and federal employees in downtown Grand Rapids.

Tourism

Tourism is a large, and growing, industry in West Michigan. The Region's natural resources are a natural attraction for year-round recreation. The Region offers everything from swimming and camping in the summer to skiing and snowmobiling in the winter. Grand Rapids' downtown provides many attractions including museums, conference centers, performing arts centers, restaurants, night life, and shopping (although more shopping opportunities are available in the malls surrounding Grand Rapids). In addition to the large urban center of Kent County, there are many smaller communities that cater to visitors such as Holland and Grand Haven in Ottawa County, Saugatuck and Douglas in Allegan County, and the many other communities in the eastern portion of Region 8. A "hidden" tourism attraction in Region 8 is the large number of second homes in the more rural counties and along Lake Michigan. Owners of "cottages" fill communities on weekends, pay taxes year-round, and create a unique feel for many parts of Region 8.

Agriculture

Agriculture is a big part of West Michigan. The moderating effects of Lake Michigan and the varied elevations make Allegan, Ottawa, and parts of Kent County ideal for growing fruit such as apples and blueberries. Additionally, the Region has many cash crops such as corn and soybeans and is home to a variety of livestock.

There are many agricultural "value-added" operations in Region 8 that use agricultural products to produce a variety of food products such as cheese, yogurt, dairy products, egg products, poultry, fruits, vegetables, and other food processing companies. In addition to value added products, agri-tourism is a growing industry in West Michigan – with everything from wineries to tours of apple orchards.

In addition to the jobs created in value-added agriculture and agri-tourism, this category provides several other benefits including providing additional markets for farmers to sell their products, making farming more profitable, and preserving farmland from other types of development.

Renewable Energy

Businesses providing renewable energy sources are creating new jobs in West Michigan in a variety of ways. Greenville is the new home of a United Solar Ovonix facility that, once on-line, will manufacture solar tiles that are roof shingles that also generate electricity through solar power. The company is investing millions of dollars in manufacturing facilities in Greenville that will employ hundreds of people. Another renewable energy resource that is growing in West Michigan relates to the use of agricultural products (corn, soybeans, etc.) to generate fuel for automobiles. This creates jobs both at the processing plants and farm jobs to produce the necessary agricultural products. A third opportunity has not taken off yet in West Michigan, but many communities are receiving interest in companies interested in developing electrical power with wind turbine generators.

Allegan County

Population and Demographics

Population Trends and Projections

Allegan County's population increased by 29.6 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 105,665 (Table 10). Projections indicate Allegan County's population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 144,266. 2006 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 113,501, which is a 7.4 percent increase over six years.

Table 10 – Population Trends and Projections

	Trends				Projections	
	1980	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2020
Allegan County	81,555	92,557	105,665	29.6	122,993	144,266
Region 8	837,655	948,502	1,104,848	31.9	1,304,955	1,564,894
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,277	9,938,444	7.3	—	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population, WMRPC

Age and Gender Distribution

Allegan County's age distribution in 2000 (Table 11) was similar to Michigan's and Region 8's distribution. The County's median age was identical to Michigan's median age of 35.5 and slightly higher than Region 8's median of 33.0. The County's only age groups that fell outside of the two comparison groups' ranges included the 5-17 group, which was slightly higher; the 18-24 group, which was lower; the 25-34 group, which was lower; and the 35-44 group, which was higher. The distribution of males and females in Allegan County was nearly equal – which is slightly unusual since communities usually tend to have more women due to the fact that they have a longer life expectancy.

Table 11 – Age and Gender Distribution in 2000

	Allegan County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Under 5	7,648	7.2	82,502	7.5	6.8
5-17	22,847	21.6	227,217	20.6	19.4
18-24	8,443	8.0	118,976	10.8	9.4
25-34	13,585	12.9	155,563	14.1	13.7
35-44	18,143	17.2	178,107	16.1	16.1
45-54	14,379	13.6	140,517	12.7	13.8
55-64	8,895	8.4	84,295	7.6	8.7
65-84	10,346	9.8	102,745	9.3	10.9
85 and over	1,379	1.3	14,926	1.4	1.4
Median Age	35.5	—	33.0	—	35.5
Male	52,782	50.0	549,101	49.7	49.0
Female	52,833	50.0	555,747	50.3	51.0
Total	105,665	100.0	1,104,848	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Household Distribution

In 2000 Allegan County had a higher proportion of family households (74.4 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 12). The County had a lower proportion of one-parent households than the two comparison areas. Since the County had a high proportion of family households, it follows that it had a lower proportion (25.6 percent) of non-family households than the Region or State. Allegan County's figure of 2.7 persons per household was similar to the comparison areas.

Table 12 – Household Distribution in 2000

	Total Households	Family Households				Non-Family Households			Persons Per Household	Persons in Group Quarters
		Total	Married Couple	Female Householder, no spouse	Male Householder, no spouse	Total	Householder living alone	Householder 65+ living alone		
Allegan County	38,165	28,405	23,438	3,474	1,493	9,760	7,919	2,989	2.7	1,917
(%)	100.0	74.4	61.4	9.1	3.9	25.6	20.7	7.8	—	—
Region 8	399,178	281,521	225,701	40,722	15,098	117,567	93,384	32,034	2.7	35,733
(%)	100.0	70.5	56.5	10.2	3.8	29.5	23.4	8.0	—	—
Michigan (%)	100.0	68.0	51.4	12.5	4.1	32.0	26.2	9.4	2.6	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Employment Trends

Between 2002 and 2005 Allegan County's labor force decreased before increasing in 2006. During the same five year period the number of employed first decreased and then increased to its high in 2006 (Table 13). The number of unemployed increased between 2002 and 2004, decreased in 2005, and then increased in 2006. The County's unemployment rate was consistently lower than Region 8's and Michigan's unemployment rates except in 2005 when it rose above the Region's average, but remained lower than Michigan's rate.

Table 13 – Employment Trends

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Allegan County					
Labor Force	55,063	53,181	53,622	54,517	57,102
Employment	51,974	49,699	50,129	51,174	53,661
Unemployment	3,089	3,482	3,493	3,343	3,441
Unemployment Rate	5.6	6.5	6.5	6.1	6.0
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8	6.1
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.9
United States					
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Distribution

Table 14 shows that in 2000 Allegan County had a higher proportion of its population employed in the manufacturing, agriculture, and construction sectors than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. The proportion of people employed in agriculture was double the Region's percentage. Manufacturing accounted for 31.3 percent of the population's employment – much higher than the 26.3 percent in Region 8 or the 22.5 percent in Michigan. Construction accounted for 7.0 percent of the population's employment. These figures indicate the County's residents' types of employment and do not represent jobs located within Allegan County. While Allegan County had an unusual distribution of employment, the top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) were the same in the County, Region, and State.

Table 14 – Employment Distribution in 2000

	Allegan County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Employed Persons 16 and Over	54,380	100.0	545,533	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1,535	2.8	7,711	1.4	1.1
Construction	3,794	7.0	32,657	6.0	6.0
Manufacturing	17,003	31.3	143,234	26.3	22.5
Wholesale Trade	2,148	3.9	25,274	4.6	3.3
Retail Trade	5,740	10.6	68,230	12.5	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	2,162	4.0	19,067	3.5	4.1
Information	641	1.2	9,507	1.7	2.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental leasing	1,910	3.5	27,835	5.1	5.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	2,702	5.0	35,758	6.6	8.0
Education, health and social services	8,042	14.8	101,425	18.6	19.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	3,151	5.8	36,699	6.7	7.6
Other services (except public administration)	2,207	4.1	24,646	4.5	4.6
Public Administration	1,065	2.0	13,490	2.5	3.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Income and Poverty

Allegan County's median household income of \$45,813 fell between Region 8's figure of \$45,915 and Michigan's median of \$44,667 in 2000 (Table 15). The County's per capita income of \$19,918 was lower than the Region and the State and can be partially explained by the County's larger household size. Allegan County had a lower percentage of people living below the poverty level than the Region or State.

Table 15 – Income and Poverty in 2000

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	% of Population Below Poverty Level
Allegan County	\$45,813	\$19,918	7.2%
Region 8	\$45,915	\$20,622	8.2%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$22,168	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Housing Information

Table 16 shows that Allegan County had a higher percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan in 2000. The County also had a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County had a very low proportion of multiple family housing. Allegan County’s occupancy rate of 88.2 percent indicates that there is a considerable amount of seasonal housing. The median value of owner-occupied in Allegan County was similar to the Region and State.

Table 16 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total	Occupied Units	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
Allegan	32,898	1,025	3,139	6,171	59	43,292	38,165	\$115,500
%	76.0	2.4	7.3	14.3	0.1	100.0	88.2	—
Region 8	309,702	19,829	66,329	38,033	631	434,500	399,178	\$114,100
%	71.3	4.6	15.3	8.8	0.1	100.0	91.9	—
Michigan (%)	74.5	3.5	15.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	89.4	\$115,600

Source: U.S. Census of Population

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Allegan County has a variety of strengths including:

- Politically secure across County
- Easy access to US-131 and US-31/I-196
- Reasonable tax base
- Location between Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo
- Allegan County has unique characteristics in each of the County’s four quadrants
- Located on Lake Michigan

Weaknesses

Allegan County has a variety of weaknesses including:

- Lack of county-wide economic development program, no single body promoting County
- No plan for US-131 Corridor through Allegan County
- County pulled in four different directions (Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Holland, and South Haven)
- Parts of County are viewed as too far from major transportation systems

Opportunities

Allegan County has a variety of opportunities including:

- Need to be able to plan for growth and respond to challenges and opportunities
- Natural resources
- Historic resources

Threats

Allegan County has a variety of threats including:

- Disagreements between different levels of government and on many elected bodies
- Lack of direction related to economic development

Ionia County

Population and Demographics

Population Trends and Projections

Ionia County's population increased by 20.7 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 61,518 (Table 17). 2006 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 64,821, which is a 5.4 percent increase over six years. Projections indicate Ionia County's population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 82,269.

Table 17 – Population Trends and Projections

	Trends				Projections	
	1980	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2020
Ionia County	50,976	57,024	61,518	20.7	70,879	82,269
Region 8	837,655	948,502	1,104,848	31.9	1,304,955	1,564,894
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,277	9,938,444	7.3	—	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population, WMRPC

Age and Gender Distribution

In 2000 Ionia County's age distribution (Table 18) differed from Michigan's and Region 8's distribution. The County's median age of 32.9 was lower than Michigan's median age of 35.5 and slightly lower than Region 8's median of 33.0. The County's age groups that fell outside of the two comparison groups' ranges included the 5-17 group, which was slightly higher; the 18-24 group, which was lower; the 25-34 group, which was higher; the 35-44 group, which was higher; and the 85+ group, which was lower. The distribution of males and females in the County shows the demographic effects of prisons with male populations (several State Prisons are located in the County).

Table 18 – Age and Gender Distribution in 2000

	Ionia County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Under 5	4,224	6.9	82,502	7.5	6.8
5-17	14,313	23.2	227,217	20.6	19.4
18-24	5,106	8.3	118,976	10.8	9.4
25-34	9,025	14.7	155,563	14.1	13.7
35-44	10,058	16.3	178,107	16.1	16.1
45-54	7,874	12.8	140,517	12.7	13.8
55-64	4,753	7.8	84,295	7.6	8.7
65-84	5,410	8.8	102,745	9.3	10.9
85 and over	755	1.2	14,926	1.4	1.4
Median Age	32.9	—	33.0	—	35.5
Male	33,074	53.8	549,101	49.7	49.0
Female	28,444	46.2	555,747	50.3	51.0
Total	61,518	100.0	1,104,848	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Household Distribution

Ionia County had a higher proportion of family households (73.5 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan in 2000, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 19). The County had a higher proportion of one-parent households than the two comparison areas. Since the County had a high proportion of family households, it follows that it had a lower proportion (26.5 percent) of non-family households than the Region or State. Ionia County's figure of 2.7 persons per household is similar to the comparison areas.

Table 19 – Household Distribution in 2000

	Total Households	Family Households				Non-Family Households			Persons Per Household	Persons in Group Quarters
		Total	Married Couple	Female Householder, no spouse	Male Householder, no spouse	Total	Householder living alone	Householder 65+ living alone		
Ionia County	20,606	15,151	12,095	2,084	972	5,455	4,511	1,844	2.7	5,789
(%)	100.0	73.5	58.7	10.1	6.4	26.5	21.9	8.9	—	—
Region 8	399,178	281,521	225,701	40,722	15,098	117,567	93,384	32,034	2.7	35,733
(%)	100.0	70.5	56.5	10.2	3.8	29.5	23.4	8.0	—	—
Michigan (%)	100.0	68.0	51.4	12.5	4.1	32.0	26.2	9.4	2.6	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Employment Trends

Between 2002 and 2006 the County experienced a labor force that decreased in 2003 and then increased the following three years. The number of employed followed this same pattern and the unemployment rate climbed in 2003 and 2004, then decreased in 2005 before increasing to its peak of 8.2 percent in 2006. The County's unemployment rate is consistently higher than Region 8's, Michigan's, or the nation's unemployment rates (Table 20).

Table 20 – Employment Trends

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Ionia County					
Labor Force	29,765	29,597	30,635	31,239	31,635
Employment	27,898	27,503	28,238	29,035	29,051
Unemployment	1,867	2,094	2,397	2,204	2,584
Unemployment Rate	6.3	7.1	7.8	7.1	8.2
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8	6.1
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.9
United States					
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Distribution

Table 21 shows that in 2000 Ionia County had a higher proportion of its population employed in the manufacturing, agriculture, finance, public administration, and construction sectors than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. The proportion of people employed in agriculture was double the Region's percentage. Manufacturing accounted for 26.9 percent of the population's employment. Construction accounted for 7.4 percent of the population's employment. Finance, at 5.5 percent was only slightly higher. Public Administration, due partially to the prisons in Ionia County and partially to the County's proximity to Lansing, accounted for 8.2 percent of residents' employment. These figures indicate the County's residents' types of employment and do not represent jobs located within Ionia County.

Income and Poverty

Ionia County's median household income of \$43,074 in 2000 was less than Region 8's figure of \$45,915 and Michigan's median of \$44,667 (Table 22). The County's per capita income of \$17,451 was lower than the Region and the State. Ionia County had a lower percentage of people living below the poverty level than the Region or State.

Table 21 – Employment Distribution in 2000

	Ionia County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Employed Persons 16 and Over	27,065	100.0	545,533	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	858	3.2	7,711	1.4	1.1
Construction	1,993	7.4	32,657	6.0	6.0
Manufacturing	7,277	26.9	143,234	26.3	22.5
Wholesale Trade	824	3.0	25,274	4.6	3.3
Retail Trade	3,140	11.6	68,230	12.5	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	925	3.4	19,067	3.5	4.1
Information	393	1.5	9,507	1.7	2.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental leasing	1,479	5.5	27,835	5.1	5.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	1,173	4.3	35,758	6.6	8.0
Education, health and social services	4,093	15.1	101,425	18.6	19.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1,480	5.5	36,699	6.7	7.6
Other services (except public administration)	1,203	4.4	24,646	4.5	4.6
Public Administration	2,227	8.2	13,490	2.5	3.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Table 22 – Income and Poverty in 2000

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	% of Population Below Poverty Level
Ionia County	\$43,074	\$17,451	7.9%
Region 8	\$45,915	\$20,622	8.2%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$22,168	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Housing Information

Table 23 shows that in 2000 Ionia County had a similar percentage of traditional single family homes as Region 8 and Michigan. The County had a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County had a low proportion of multiple family housing. Ionia County’s occupancy rate of 93.6 percent was higher than Region 8 or Michigan. The median value of owner-occupied housing in Ionia County was lower than the Region and State.

Table 23 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total	Occupied Units	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
Ionia Co.	16,331	663	1,758	3,240	41	22,006	20,606	\$94,400
%	74.2	3.0	8.0	14.7	0.2	100.0	93.6	---
Region 8	309,702	19,829	66,329	38,033	631	434,500	399,178	\$114,100
%	71.3	4.6	15.3	8.8	0.1	100.0	91.9	---
Michigan (%)	74.5	3.5	15.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	89.4	\$115,600

Source: U.S. Census of Population

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Ionia County has a variety of strengths including:

- Automobile industry still viable in Ionia County
- Location between Lansing and Grand Rapids on I-96
- Development on M-66 between Ionia and I-96
- Prisons in Ionia
- Ionia County has a diversity of income – in-county, Lansing, and Grand Rapids

Weaknesses

Ionia County has a variety of weaknesses including:

- Ionia County should have had space waiting for Lansing Area automotive manufacturers and suppliers
- Lack of philanthropy in County
- Image of prisons in Ionia County
- Lack of funding for communities to carry out goals

- Attitudes of many people towards government
- Not enough control over growth and lack of zoning in most parts of County
- City-County-Township conflicts

Opportunities

Ionia County has a variety of opportunities including:

- Need to expand opportunities related to Ionia County's agricultural base
- Centralized mill operations in Portland
- Development south of Ionia on M-66
- GIS in County
- Improved relationships between various levels of government
- Desirable mid-point location between Grand Rapids and Lansing

Threats

Ionia County has a variety of threats including:

- Potential excess housing as much is being built while others are on the market
- Unemployment
- Lack of industry in Ionia County

Kent County

Population and Demographics

Population Trends and Projections

Kent County's population increased by 29.2 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 574,335 (Table 24). Kent County grew at a much greater rate than Michigan as-a-whole, which increased by 7.3 percent between 1980 and 2000. 2006 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 599,524, which is a 4.4 percent increase over six years. Projections indicate Kent County's population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 772,201.

Table 24 – Population Trends and Projections

	Trends				Projections	
	1980	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2020
Kent County	444,506	500,631	574,335	29.2	662,496	772,201
Region 8	837,655	948,502	1,104,848	31.9	1,304,955	1,564,894
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,277	9,938,444	7.3	—	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population, WMRPC

Age and Gender Distribution

In 2000 Kent County's age distribution (Table 25) was similar to Michigan's and Region 8's distribution. The County's median age was lower than Michigan's median age of 35.5 and Region 8's median of 33.0. The County's only age groups that fell outside of the two comparison groups' ranges include the under 5 group, which was slightly higher; the 25-34 group, which was higher; and the 55-84 groups, which were lower. The County's male-female distribution was similar to the State's distribution.

Household Distribution

Kent County had a lower proportion of family households (67.7 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan in 2000 (Table 26). The percentage of married couple households was between the two comparison areas. The County had a higher proportion of one-parent households than the two comparison areas. Since the County had a lower proportion of family households, it follows that it had a higher proportion (32.3 percent) of non-family households than the Region or State. Kent County's figure of 2.6 persons per household is similar to the comparison areas.

Table 25 – Age and Gender Distribution in 2000

	Kent County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Under 5	44,533	7.8	82,502	7.5	6.8
5-17	117,726	20.5	227,217	20.6	19.4
18-24	60,153	10.5	118,976	10.8	9.4
25-34	85,767	14.9	155,563	14.1	13.7
35-44	93,287	16.2	178,107	16.1	16.1
45-54	72,669	12.7	140,517	12.7	13.8
55-64	40,575	7.1	84,295	7.6	8.7
65-84	51,842	9.0	102,745	9.3	10.9
85 and over	7,783	1.4	14,926	1.4	1.4
Median Age	32.5	—	33.0	—	35.5
Male	281,952	49.1	549,101	49.7	49.0
Female	292,383	50.9	555,747	50.3	51.0
Total	574,335	100.0	1,104,848	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Table 26 – Household Distribution in 2000

	Total Households	Family Households				Non-Family Households			Persons Per Household	Persons in Group Quarters
		Total	Married Couple	Female Householder, no spouse	Male Householder, no spouse	Total	Householder living alone	Householder 65+ living alone		
Kent County	212,890	144,123	111,354	24,653	8,116	68,767	54,466	16,943	2.6	12,789
(%)	100.0	67.7	52.3	11.6	5.6	32.3	25.6	8.0	—	—
Region 8	399,178	281,521	225,701	40,722	15,098	117,567	93,384	32,034	2.7	35,733
(%)	100.0	70.5	56.5	10.2	3.8	29.5	23.4	8.0	—	—
Michigan (%)	100.0	68.0	51.4	12.5	4.1	32.0	26.2	9.4	2.6	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Employment Trends

Between 2002 and 2006 the County experienced a labor force that decreased in 2003 before increasing in 2004, 2005, and 2006. The number of employed followed this same trend (Table 27). The unemployment rate increased between 2002 and 2003, when it peaked at 7.3 percent. The unemployment rate decreased in 2004 and 2005, and again in 2006 to reach 5.6 percent. Kent County's unemployment rate was higher than the national average for the entire five year period but below Michigan's average for all but 2003.

Table 27 – Employment Trends

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Kent County					
Labor Force	315,551	314,720	319,403	324,999	325,350
Employment	296,343	291,747	298,111	306,529	307,024
Unemployment	19,208	22,973	21,292	18,470	18,326
Unemployment Rate	6.1	7.3	6.7	5.7	5.6
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8	6.1
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.9
United States					
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Distribution

Table 28 shows that in 2000 Kent County had a higher proportion of its population employed in the wholesale, retail, and finance sectors than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. These figures indicate the residents' types of employment and do not represent jobs that were located within Kent County. The top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) were the same in the County, Region, and State.

Table 28 – Employment Distribution in 2000

	Kent County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Employed Persons 16 and Over	289,158	100.0	545,533	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1,618	0.6	7,711	1.4	1.1
Construction	16,099	5.6	32,657	6.0	6.0
Manufacturing	68,610	23.7	143,234	26.3	22.5
Wholesale Trade	15,790	5.5	25,274	4.6	3.3
Retail Trade	38,064	13.2	68,230	12.5	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	9,855	3.4	19,067	3.5	4.1
Information	5,682	2.0	9,507	1.7	2.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental leasing	17,411	6.0	27,835	5.1	5.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	22,654	7.8	35,758	6.6	8.0
Education, health and social services	54,439	18.8	101,425	18.6	19.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	20,390	7.1	36,699	6.7	7.6
Other services (except public administration)	12,794	4.4	24,646	4.5	4.6
Public Administration	5,752	2.0	13,490	2.5	3.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Income and Poverty

Kent County’s 2000 median household income of \$45,980 was higher than Region 8’s figure of \$45,915 and Michigan’s median of \$44,667 (Table 29). The County’s per capita income of \$21,629 was between the Region and the State. Kent County had a lower percentage of people living below the poverty level than the State, but a higher proportion than Region 8.

Table 29 – Income and Poverty in 2000

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	% of Population Below Poverty Level
Kent County	\$45,980	\$21,629	8.7%
Region 8	\$45,915	\$20,622	8.2%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$22,168	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Housing Information

Table 30 shows that Kent County had a lower percentage of traditional single family homes in 2000 than Region 8 or Michigan. The County also had a lower percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County had a higher proportion of multiple family housing. Kent County’s occupancy rate of 95.0 percent was higher than Region 8 or Michigan. The median value of owner-occupied in Kent County was similar to the Region and State.

Table 30 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total	Occupied Units	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
Kent	152,644	13,850	46,682	11,069	25	224,000	212,890	\$115,100
%	68.1	6.1	20.8	4.9	0.0	100.0	95.0	—
Region 8	309,702	19,829	66,329	38,033	631	434,500	399,178	\$114,100
%	71.3	4.6	15.3	8.8	0.1	100.0	91.9	—
Michigan (%)	74.5	3.5	15.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	89.4	\$115,600

Source: U.S. Census of Population

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Kent County has a variety of strengths including:

- Regional job center and retail center
- Strong urban center
- Strong Transportation System that includes many expressways
- Strong Health Care/Health Sciences Emphasis
- Many cultural amenities
- Many higher education opportunities

- Many large manufacturers headquartered in Kent County

Weaknesses

Kent County has a variety of weaknesses including:

- Urban school districts
- Fiscal challenges in communities
- Lack of cooperation between cities/urban areas and townships/rural areas
- Development of rural areas threatens agricultural base of Kent County

Opportunities

Kent County has a variety of opportunities including:

- Continued improvement of Grand Rapids' downtown
- "Health Hill" development in Grand Rapids
- Life Sciences in County
- Expanding university and college presence
- Redevelopment of underutilized manufacturing areas and facilities in Kent County

Threats

Kent County has a variety of threats including:

- Loss of population and tax base in urban center of Kent County
- Continued unsustainable development in townships
- Continued loss of manufacturing employment in Kent County
- Loss of agricultural base in Kent County
- Continued duplication of services

Mecosta County

Population and Demographics

Population Trends and Projections

Mecosta County's population increased by 9.7 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 40,553 (Table 31). 2006 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 42,252, which is a 4.2 percent increase over six years. Projections indicate Mecosta County's population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 55,762.

Table 31 – Population Trends and Projections

	Trends				Projections	
	1980	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2020
Mecosta County	36,961	37,317	40,553	9.7	46,296	55,762
Region 8	837,655	948,502	1,104,848	31.9	1,304,955	1,564,894
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,277	9,938,444	7.3	—	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population, WMRPC

Age and Gender Distribution

Mecosta County's age distribution in 2000 (Table 32) differed from Michigan's and Region 8's distribution. The County's median age of 31.9 was lower than Michigan's median age of 35.5 and Region 8's median of 33.0. The County had three age groups that were greater than the comparison areas' distribution, so created many categories that were lower than the comparison areas'. The 18-24 age group accounted for 19.8 percent of the County's population (due to the presence of Ferris State University). Additionally, the age groups between 55 and 84 were larger due to the large amount of retirement-oriented communities (Canadian Lakes). The distribution of males and females in Mecosta County was unique since there were slightly more males than females.

Table 32 – Age and Gender Distribution in 2000

	Mecosta County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Under 5	2,431	6.0	82,502	7.5	6.8
5-17	6,708	16.5	227,217	20.6	19.4
18-24	8,043	19.8	118,976	10.8	9.4
25-34	4,386	10.8	155,563	14.1	13.7
35-44	4,930	12.2	178,107	16.1	16.1
45-54	4,731	11.7	140,517	12.7	13.8
55-64	3,985	9.8	84,295	7.6	8.7
65-84	4,818	11.9	102,745	9.3	10.9
85 and over	521	1.3	14,926	1.4	1.4
Median Age	31.9	—	33.0	—	35.5
Male	20,513	50.6	549,101	49.7	49.0
Female	20,040	49.4	555,747	50.3	51.0
Total	40,553	100.0	1,104,848	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Household Distribution

Mecosta County had a lower proportion of family households in 2000 (66.3 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan (Table 33). The proportion of married couple family households fell between the two comparison areas. The County had a similar proportion of one-parent households as the two comparison areas. Since the County had a lower proportion of family household, it follows that it had a higher proportion (33.7 percent) of non-family households than the Region or State. Mecosta County's figure of 2.7 persons per household was similar to the comparison areas.

Table 33 – Household Distribution in 2000

	Total Households	Family Households				Non-Family Households			Persons Per Household	Persons in Group Quarters
		Total	Married Couple	Female Householder, no spouse	Male Householder, no spouse	Total	Householder living alone	Householder 65+ living alone		
Mecosta County	14,915	9,893	7,946	1,385	562	5,022	3,649	1,321	2.5	3,383
(%)	100.0	66.3	53.3	9.3	5.7	33.7	24.5	8.9	—	—
Region 8	399,178	281,521	225,701	40,722	15,098	117,567	93,384	32,034	2.7	35,733
(%)	100.0	70.5	56.5	10.2	3.8	29.5	23.4	8.0	—	—
Michigan (%)	100.0	68.0	51.4	12.5	4.1	32.0	26.2	9.4	2.6	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Employment Trends

Between 2002 and 2006 the County experienced a steady, and slightly growing, labor force, while at the same time experiencing a slower rate in growth of employed, resulting in an increasing unemployment rate (Table 34). The labor force reached 20,636 people in 2006, with an annual average of 19,118 employed and 1,518 unemployed. In 2006, Mecosta County's unemployment rate was higher than the state, regional, and national averages.

Table 34 – Employment Trends

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Mecosta County					
Labor Force	19,122	19,865	20,051	20,181	20,636
Employment	17,984	18,548	18,654	18,783	19,118
Unemployment	1,138	1,317	1,397	1,398	1,518
Unemployment Rate	5.6	6.6	7.0	6.9	7.4
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8	6.1
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.9
United States					
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Distribution

Table 35 shows that in 2000 Mecosta County had a higher proportion of its population employed in the agriculture, construction, retail, transportation, education, and entertainment sectors than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. The proportion of people employed in Education accounted for 29.6 percent of the population's employment – much higher than the 18.6 percent in Region 8 or the 19.9 percent in Michigan. These figures indicate the County's residents' types of employment and do not represent jobs located within Mecosta County.

Table 35 – Employment Distribution in 2000

	Mecosta County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Employed Persons 16 and Over	17,470	100.0	545,533	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	435	2.5	7,711	1.4	1.1
Construction	1,124	6.4	32,657	6.0	6.0
Manufacturing	2,957	16.9	143,234	26.3	22.5
Wholesale Trade	365	2.1	25,274	4.6	3.3
Retail Trade	2,217	12.7	68,230	12.5	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	740	4.2	19,067	3.5	4.1
Information	333	1.9	9,507	1.7	2.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental leasing	548	3.1	27,835	5.1	5.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	679	3.9	35,758	6.6	8.0
Education, health and social services	5,165	29.6	101,425	18.6	19.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1,660	9.5	36,699	6.7	7.6
Other services (except public administration)	749	4.3	24,646	4.5	4.6
Public Administration	498	2.9	13,490	2.5	3.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Income and Poverty

Mecosta County's median household income of \$33,849 was much lower than Region 8's figure of \$45,915 or Michigan's median of \$44,667 in 2000 (Table 36). The County's per capita income of \$16,372 was also lower than the Region and the State. Mecosta County had a higher percentage of people living below the poverty level than the Region or State.

Table 36 – Income and Poverty in 2000

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	% of Population Below Poverty Level
Mecosta County	\$33,849	\$16,372	14.7%
Region 8	\$45,915	\$20,622	8.2%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$22,168	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Housing Information

Table 37 shows that Mecosta County had a lower percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan in 2000. The County had a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County had a low proportion of multiple family housing. Mecosta County’s occupancy rate of 76.1 percent indicates that there was a considerable amount of seasonal housing. The median value of owner-occupied in Mecosta County was lower than the Region or State.

Table 37 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total	Occupied Units	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
Mecosta	13,591	430	1,682	3,734	156	19,593	14,915	\$90,100
%	69.4	2.2	8.6	19.1	0.8	100.0	76.1	—
Region 8	309,702	19,829	66,329	38,033	631	434,500	399,178	\$114,100
%	71.3	4.6	15.3	8.8	0.1	100.0	91.9	—
Michigan (%)	74.5	3.5	15.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	89.4	\$115,600

Source: U.S. Census of Population

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Mecosta County has a variety of strengths including:

- High standard of living
- Availability of qualified workforce
- New industrial park ready to serve industries
- Natural features and tourism
- Diversified manufacturing base that continues to prosper even though many of Michigan’s industries are struggling
- Ferris State University
- Big Rapids as County’s center of government and commerce

Weaknesses

Mecosta County has a variety of weaknesses including:

- Conflicts between communities (primarily city and townships) creates image of no cooperation
- East-west access across County
- Limited north-south access through Big Rapids
- No county development plan for manufacturing and retail
- Elected officials need more training
- Short-sightedness of many residents

Opportunities

Mecosta County has a variety of opportunities including:

- Cost of living in northern Michigan will promote growth
- Affordable housing will promote growth
- Transit issues will need to be addressed
- Canadian Lakes' continued growth
- Renaissance Zone and Industrial Park
- Development in Big Rapids Township

Threats

Mecosta County has a variety of threats including:

- Lack of adequate east-west access across County
- Limited north-south access through Big Rapids
- Difficulties between communities will make collaboration more difficult and make attracting businesses impossible
- Big box stores' impact on Downtown Big Rapids

Montcalm County

Population and Demographics

Population Trends and Projections

Montcalm County's population increased by 28.8 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 61,266 (Table 38). 2006 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 63,977, which is a 4.4 percent increase over six years. Projections indicate Montcalm County's population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 85,191.

Table 38 – Population Trends and Projections

	Trends				Projections	
	1980	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2020
Montcalm County	47,555	53,059	61,266	28.8	71,719	85,191
Region 8	837,655	948,502	1,104,848	31.9	1,304,955	1,564,894
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,277	9,938,444	7.3	—	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population, WMRPC

Age and Gender Distribution

Montcalm County's age distribution (Table 39) was similar to Michigan's and Region 8's distribution in 2000. The County's median age of 35.6 was almost identical to Michigan's median age of 35.5 and slightly higher than Region 8's median of 33.0. The County's only age groups that fell outside of the two comparison groups' ranges include the under 5 group, which was lower; the 18-24 group, which was slightly lower; the 35-44 group, which was higher; and the 55-64 group, which was higher. The distribution of males and females in Montcalm County reflects the all male prison in Carson City.

Table 39 – Age and Gender Distribution in 2000

	Montcalm County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Under 5	3,996	6.5	82,502	7.5	6.8
5-17	12,584	20.5	227,217	20.6	19.4
18-24	5,076	8.3	118,976	10.8	9.4
25-34	8,369	13.7	155,563	14.1	13.7
35-44	1,038	16.5	178,107	16.1	16.1
45-54	7,955	13.0	140,517	12.7	13.8
55-64	5,727	9.3	84,295	7.6	8.7
65-84	6,590	10.8	102,745	9.3	10.9
85 and over	781	1.3	14,926	1.4	1.4
Median Age	35.6	—	33.0	—	35.5
Male	31,377	51.2	549,101	49.7	49.0
Female	29,889	48.8	555,747	50.3	51.0
Total	61,266	100.0	1,104,848	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Household Distribution

In 2000 Montcalm County had a higher proportion of family households (73.3 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 40). The County had a similar proportion of one-parent households as the two comparison areas. Since the County had a higher proportion of family households, it follows that it had a lower proportion (26.7 percent) of non-family households than the Region or State. Montcalm County's figure of 2.7 persons per household was similar to the comparison areas.

Table 40 – Household Distribution in 2000

	Total Households	Family Households				Non-Family Households			Persons Per Household	Persons in Group Quarters
		Total	Married Couple	Female Householder, no spouse	Male Householder, no spouse	Total	Householder living alone	Householder 65+ living alone		
Montcalm County	22,079	16,176	12,972	2,148	1,056	5,903	4,846	2,040	2.7	2,717
(%)	100.0	73.3	58.8	9.7	4.8	26.7	21.9	9.2	—	—
Region 8	399,178	281,521	225,701	40,722	15,098	117,567	93,384	32,034	2.7	35,733
(%)	100.0	70.5	56.5	10.2	3.8	29.5	23.4	8.0	—	—
Michigan (%)	100.0	68.0	51.4	12.5	4.1	32.0	26.2	9.4	2.6	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Employment Trends

Between 2002 and 2005 the County experienced a fairly stable labor force but it dipped in 2006. At the same time the County experienced a decreasing number of employed, resulting in an increased unemployment rate that decreased slightly in 2004 (Table 41) before increasing in 2005 to 8.4 percent – and then making a dramatic increase in 2006 to 12.6 percent. The labor force was 28,810 people in 2006, with an annual average of 25,167 employed and 3,643 unemployed. The County's unemployment rate is consistently higher than rates in Region 8, Michigan, or the United States, and the highest of the seven counties in Region 8.

Table 41 – Employment Trends

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Montcalm County					
Labor Force	29,343	29,434	29,832	29,588	28,810
Employment	27,156	27,095	27,485	27,089	25,167
Unemployment	2,187	2,339	2,347	2,499	3,643
Unemployment Rate	7.5	7.9	7.9	8.4	12.6
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8	6.1
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.9
United States					
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Distribution

Table 42 shows that Montcalm County had a higher proportion of its population employed in the manufacturing, agriculture, public administration, and construction sectors in 2000 than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. Manufacturing accounted for 29.7 percent of the population's employment – higher than the 26.3 percent in Region 8 or the 22.5 percent in Michigan. These figures indicated the County's residents' types of employment and did not represent jobs located within Montcalm County. While Montcalm County had a different distribution of employment, the top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) were the same in the County, Region, and State.

Income and Poverty

Montcalm County's median household income of \$37,218 fell below Region 8's figure of \$45,915 and Michigan's median of \$44,667 in 2000 (Table 43). The County's per capita income of \$16,183 was lower than the Region and the State. Montcalm County had a higher percentage of people living below the poverty level than the Region or State.

Table 42 – Employment Distribution in 2000

	Montcalm County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Employed Persons 16 and Over	26,560	100.0	545,533	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	869	3.3	7,711	1.4	1.1
Construction	1,998	7.5	32,657	6.0	6.0
Manufacturing	7,900	29.7	143,234	26.3	22.5
Wholesale Trade	673	2.5	25,274	4.6	3.3
Retail Trade	3,286	12.4	68,230	12.5	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	892	3.4	19,067	3.5	4.1
Information	415	1.6	9,507	1.7	2.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental leasing	920	3.5	27,835	5.1	5.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	1,109	4.2	35,758	6.6	8.0
Education, health and social services	4,680	17.6	101,425	18.6	19.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1,563	5.9	36,699	6.7	7.6
Other services (except public administration)	1,251	4.7	24,646	4.5	4.6
Public Administration	1,004	3.8	13,490	2.5	3.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Table 43 – Income and Poverty in 2000

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	% of Population Below Poverty Level
Montcalm County	\$37,218	\$16,183	10.4%
Region 8	\$45,915	\$20,622	8.2%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$22,168	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Housing Information

Table 44 shows that Montcalm County had a slightly higher percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan in 2000. The County had a much higher percentage of mobile homes than either of the two comparison areas and a lower proportion of multiple family housing. Montcalm County’s occupancy rate of 85.2 percent indicates that there was a considerable amount of seasonal housing. The median value of owner-occupied in Montcalm County was much lower than the Region and State.

Table 44 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total	Occupied Units	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
Montcalm	19,420	544	1,579	4,300	54	25,900	22,079	\$84,900
%	75.0	2.1	6.1	16.6	0.2	100.0	85.2	—
Region 8	309,702	19,829	66,329	38,033	631	434,500	399,178	\$114,100
%	71.3	4.6	15.3	8.8	0.1	100.0	91.9	—
Michigan (%)	74.5	3.5	15.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	89.4	\$115,600

Source: U.S. Census of Population

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Montcalm County has a variety of strengths including:

- Affordable and available workforce
- Land and many lakefront properties
- Philanthropy in County (Meijer)
- Hospitals in Montcalm County
- Power plant in Carson City
- Recreation opportunities in Montcalm County
- Agriculture industry

Weaknesses

Montcalm County has a variety of weaknesses including:

- Perceived as too rural for some types of development, commuting
- Very poor county (low incomes and persistent high unemployment rate)
- Loss of manufacturing jobs
- Lack of capital and entrepreneurial opportunities

- Much of County is far from freeway (US-131 runs through western panhandle)
- Disconnect between panhandle and rest of County
- Many people do not have skills to attract new businesses to Montcalm County

Opportunities

Montcalm County has a variety of opportunities including:

- Renewable energy opportunities
- Hospital expansion in Carson City
- Countywide transit
- Countywide land use plan completed
- Greenville's growth in housing and population
- Tourism (Shipshewana North)
- Changing landscape in Greenville (growth on west side of town)

Threats

Montcalm County has a variety of threats including:

- Loss of manufacturing
- Low per-capita income in Montcalm County
- High unemployment rate in Montcalm County
- Hitachi in Edmore – potential environmental problems and gateway to the community

Osceola County

Population and Demographics

Population Trends and Projections

Osceola County's population increased by 22.6 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 23,197 (Table 45). 2006 estimates show the County's population increased to 23,584, which is a 1.7 percent increase over six years. Projections indicate Osceola County's population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 31,563.

Table 45 – Population Trends and Projections

	Trends				Projections	
	1980	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2020
Osceola County	18,928	20,146	23,197	22.6	26,896	31,563
Region 8	837,655	948,502	1,104,848	31.9	1,304,955	1,564,894
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,277	9,938,444	7.3	—	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population, WMRPC

Age and Gender Distribution

In 2000 Osceola County's age distribution (Table 46) was different than Michigan's and Region 8's distribution. The County's median age of 37.6 was higher than Michigan's median age of 35.5 and Region 8's median of 33.0. The County's age groups that fell outside of the two comparison groups' ranges include the under 5 group, which was lower; the 5-17 group, which was higher; the 18-44 groups, which is lower; and the 55-84 groups, which was higher. The distribution of males and females in Osceola County is similar to the comparison areas.

Table 46 – Age and Gender Distribution in 2000

	Osceola County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Under 5	1,428	6.2	82,502	7.5	6.8
5-17	5,514	23.7	227,217	20.6	19.4
18-24	1,207	5.2	118,976	10.8	9.4
25-34	2,603	11.2	155,563	14.1	13.7
35-44	3,545	15.3	178,107	16.1	16.1
45-54	3,114	13.4	140,517	12.7	13.8
55-64	2,502	10.8	84,295	7.6	8.7
65-84	2,964	12.7	102,745	9.3	10.9
85 and over	320	1.4	14,926	1.4	1.4
Median Age	37.6	—	33.0	—	35.5
Male	11,437	49.3	549,101	49.7	49.0
Female	11,760	50.7	555,747	50.3	51.0
Total	23,197	100.0	1,104,848	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Household Distribution

In 2000 Osceola County had a higher proportion of family households (72.4 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 47). The County had a similar proportion of one-parent households as the two comparison areas. Since the County had a high proportion of family households, it follows that it had a lower proportion (27.6 percent) of non-family households than the Region or State. Osceola County's figure of 2.6 persons per household was similar to the comparison areas.

Table 47 – Household Distribution in 2000

	Total Households	Family Households				Non-Family Households			Persons Per Household	Persons in Group Quarters
		Total	Married Couple	Female Householder, no spouse	Male Householder, no spouse	Total	Householder living alone	Householder 65+ living alone		
Osceola Co.	8,861	6,413	5,152	859	402	2,448	2,004	865	2.6	360
%	100.0	72.4	58.1	9.7	6.3	27.6	22.6	9.8	—	—
Region 8	399,178	281,521	225,701	40,722	15,098	117,567	93,384	32,034	2.7	35,733
(%)	100.0	70.5	56.5	10.2	3.8	29.5	23.4	8.0	—	—
Michigan (%)	100.0	68.0	51.4	12.5	4.1	32.0	26.2	9.4	2.6	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Employment Trends

Between 2002 and 2006 the County experienced a decreasing labor force – decreasing from 10,978 in 2002 to 10,303 in 2006. The number of employed decreased at an even greater rate resulting in an increasing unemployment rate, until 2005 when the number of employed increased and the unemployment rate decreased to 7.3 percent (Table 48). The County's unemployment rate is consistently higher than rates in Region 8, Michigan, or the national unemployment rates.

Table 48 – Employment Trends

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Osceola County					
Labor Force	10,978	10,890	10,544	10,461	10,303
Employment	10,219	10,018	9,639	9,697	9,549
Unemployment	759	872	905	764	754
Unemployment Rate	6.9	8.0	8.6	7.3	7.3
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8	6.1
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.9
United States					
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Distribution

Table 49 shows that Osceola County had a higher proportion of its population employed in the manufacturing and agriculture sectors in 2000 than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. The proportion of people employed in agriculture was over double the Region's percentage. Manufacturing accounted for 31.7 percent of the population's employment – much higher than the 26.3 percent in Region 8 or the 22.5 percent in Michigan. These figures indicate the County's residents' types of employment and do not represent jobs located within Osceola County. While Osceola County had an unusual distribution of employment, the top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) were the same in the County, Region, and State.

Table 49 – Employment Distribution in 2000

	Osceola County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Employed Persons 16 and Over	10,012	100.0	545,533	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	380	3.8	7,711	1.4	1.1
Construction	607	6.1	32,657	6.0	6.0
Manufacturing	3,176	31.7	143,234	26.3	22.5
Wholesale Trade	196	2.0	25,274	4.6	3.3
Retail Trade	1,166	11.6	68,230	12.5	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	424	4.2	19,067	3.5	4.1
Information	132	1.3	9,507	1.7	2.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental leasing	254	2.5	27,835	5.1	5.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	340	3.4	35,758	6.6	8.0
Education, health and social services	1,845	18.4	101,425	18.6	19.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	712	7.1	36,699	6.7	7.6
Other services (except public administration)	415	4.1	24,646	4.5	4.6
Public Administration	365	3.6	13,490	2.5	3.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Income and Poverty

Osceola County's 2000 median household income of \$34,102 was lower than Region 8's figure of \$45,915 or Michigan's median of \$44,667 (Table 50). The County's per capita income of \$15,632 was lower than the Region and the State. Osceola County had a higher percentage of people living below the poverty level than the Region or State.

Table 50 – Income and Poverty in 2000

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	% of Population Below Poverty Level
Osceola County	\$34,102	\$15,632	12.5%
Region 8	\$45,915	\$20,622	8.2%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$22,168	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Housing Information

Table 51 shows that Osceola County had a lower percentage of traditional single family homes than Region 8 or Michigan in 2000. The County also had a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County had a very low proportion of multiple family housing units. Osceola County’s occupancy rate of 68.9 percent indicates that there is a considerable amount of seasonal housing. The median value of owner-occupied housing in Osceola County was much lower than the Region and State.

Table 51 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total	Occupied Units	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
Osceola	8,911	162	522	2,979	279	12,853	8,861	\$70,000
%	69.3	1.3	4.1	23.2	2.2	100.0	68.9	—
Region 8	309,702	19,829	66,329	38,033	631	434,500	399,178	\$114,100
%	71.3	4.6	15.3	8.8	0.1	100.0	91.9	—
Michigan (%)	74.5	3.5	15.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	89.4	\$115,600

Source: U.S. Census of Population

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Osceola County has a variety of strengths including:

- Cooperative attitudes (with surrounding townships) in Evert and Reed City
- Yoplait, Liberty Dairy, and strong manufacturing base
- Industry in Osceola County
- “Bedroom” community for Cadillac
- Clean, quite
- Retired people like the area
- Cities and villages have up-to-date infrastructure

Weaknesses

Osceola County has a variety of weaknesses including:

- Transit system may lose funding
- Local manufacturers very cyclical

- Need advanced internet capacity in County
- County seat in corner of County and perceived as not serving parts of County

Opportunities

Osceola County has a variety of opportunities including:

- NABCO building has space for new businesses
- Evert Industrial Park has space for new businesses
- Countywide land use planning
- Need to develop “Business Center” in Evert
- Need public sector to subsidize high-tech projects that area cannot wait for private sector to start
- Recreation opportunities in Marion
- US-131, US-10, and M-66

Threats

Osceola County has a variety of threats including:

- Loss of manufacturing jobs
- Unplanned growth
- Reduced state funding for local governments
- Not enough well-educated people to replace those retiring
- Lack of natural resource-based vision

Ottawa County

Population and Demographics

Population Trends and Projections

Ottawa County's population increased by 51.6 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 238,314 (Table 52). 2006 estimates show the County's population increased to 257,671, which is an 8.1 percent increase over six years. Projections indicate Ottawa County's population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 393,642.

Table 52 – Population Trends and Projections

	Trends				Projections	
	1980	1990	2000	% Change	2010	2020
Ottawa County	157,174	187,768	238,314	51.6	303,676	393,642
Region 8	837,655	948,502	1,104,848	31.9	1,304,955	1,564,894
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,277	9,938,444	7.3	—	—

Source: U.S. Census of Population, WMRPC

Age and Gender Distribution

Ottawa County's age distribution in 2000 (Table 53) was different than Michigan's and Region 8's distribution. The County's median age of 32.3 was lower than Michigan's median age of 35.5 and Region 8's median of 33.0. The County's age groups that fell outside of the two comparison groups' ranges include the three groups under 25, which were higher; and the groups between 25 and 84, which were lower. Ottawa County's male-female ratio was similar to the comparison areas.

Table 53 – Age and Gender Distribution in 2000

	Ottawa County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Under 5	18,242	7.7	82,502	7.5	6.8
5-17	50,154	21.0	227,217	20.6	19.4
18-24	28,319	11.9	118,976	10.8	9.4
25-34	31,828	13.4	155,563	14.1	13.7
35-44	38,006	15.9	178,107	16.1	16.1
45-54	29,795	12.5	140,517	12.7	13.8
55-64	17,858	7.5	84,295	7.6	8.7
65-84	20,775	8.7	102,745	9.3	10.9
85 and over	3,337	1.4	14,926	1.4	1.4
Median Age	32.3	—	33.0	—	35.5
Male	117,304	49.2	549,101	49.7	49.0
Female	121,010	50.8	555,747	50.3	51.0
Total	238,314	100.0	1,104,848	100.0	100.0

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Household Distribution

Ottawa County had a higher proportion of family households in 2000 (75.1 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 54). The County had a lower proportion of one-parent households than the two comparison areas. Since the County had a high proportion of family household, it follows that it had a lower proportion (24.9 percent) of non-family households than either the Region or State. Ottawa County's figure of 2.7 persons per household was similar to the comparison areas.

Table 54 – Household Distribution in 2000

	Total Households	Family Households				Non-Family Households			Persons Per Household	Persons in Group Quarters
		Total	Married Couple	Female Householder, no spouse	Male Householder, no spouse	Total	Householder living alone	Householder 65+ living alone		
Ottawa Co.	81,662	61,360	52,744	6,119	2,497	20,302	15,989	6,032	2.7	8,778
%	100.0	75.1	64.6	7.5	3.1	24.9	19.6	7.4	—	—
Region 8	399,178	281,521	225,701	40,722	15,098	117,567	93,384	32,034	2.7	35,733
(%)	100.0	70.5	56.5	10.2	3.8	29.5	23.4	8.0	—	—
Michigan (%)	100.0	68.0	51.4	12.5	4.1	32.0	26.2	9.4	2.6	—

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Trends

Between 2002 and 2006 the County experienced an increasing labor force that peaked at 138,851 in 2006. At the same time the number of employed increased at a steady increase to reach 131,564 in 2006. The County's unemployment rate peaked at 5.9 percent in 2003 and fell to 5.0 percent by 2005 and then increased slightly to reach 5.2 percent in 2006 (Table 55). The County's unemployment rate is consistently lower than Region 8's or Michigan's unemployment rates – and was the only county in Region 8 that was lower than the U.S. average in 2005. In 2006 the County's unemployment rate was higher than the U.S. average.

Table 55 – Employment Trends

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Ottawa County					
Labor Force	130,201	131,742	133,955	136,841	138,851
Employment	123,177	123,949	126,610	130,016	131,564
Unemployment	7,024	7,793	7,345	6,825	7,287
Unemployment Rate	5.4	5.9	5.5	5.0	5.2
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8	6.1
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.9
United States					
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.6

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Employment Distribution

Table 56 shows that Ottawa County had a higher proportion of its population employed in the manufacturing, agriculture, and other service sectors than the population in Region 8 or Michigan in 2000. Manufacturing accounted for 29.5 percent of the population's employment – higher than the 26.3 percent in Region 8 or the 22.5 percent in Michigan. These figures indicate the County's residents' types of employment and do not represent jobs located within Ottawa County.

While Ottawa County had an unusual distribution of employment, the top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) were the same in the County, Region, and State.

Table 56 – Employment Distribution in 2000

	Ottawa County		Region 8		Michigan
	#	%	#	%	%
Employed Persons 16 and Over	123,168	100.0	545,533	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	2,016	1.6	7,711	1.4	1.1
Construction	7,042	5.7	32,657	6.0	6.0
Manufacturing	36,311	29.5	143,234	26.3	22.5
Wholesale Trade	5,278	4.3	25,274	4.6	3.3
Retail Trade	14,617	11.9	68,230	12.5	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4,069	3.3	19,067	3.5	4.1
Information	1,911	1.6	9,507	1.7	2.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental leasing	5,313	4.3	27,835	5.1	5.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	7,101	5.8	35,758	6.6	8.0
Education, health and social services	23,161	18.8	101,425	18.6	19.9
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	7,743	6.3	36,699	6.7	7.6
Other services (except public administration)	6,027	4.9	24,646	4.5	4.6
Public Administration	2,579	2.1	13,490	2.5	3.6

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Income and Poverty

In 2000 Ottawa County's median household income of \$52,347 was much higher than Region 8's figure of \$45,915 or Michigan's median of \$44,667 (Table 57). The County's per capita income of \$21,676 was also higher. Ottawa County had a lower percentage of people living below the poverty level than the Region or State.

Table 57 – Income and Poverty in 2000

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	% of Population Below Poverty Level
Ottawa County	\$52,347	\$21,676	5.3%
Region 8	\$45,915	\$20,622	8.2%
Michigan	\$44,667	\$22,168	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Housing Information

Table 58 shows that Ottawa County had a higher percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan. The County had a lower percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas and a lower proportion of multiple family housing. Ottawa County's occupancy rate of 94.0 percent was higher than either comparison area. The median value of owner-occupied in Ottawa County was higher than the Region and State.

Table 58 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total	Occupied Units	Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing
Ottawa	65,907	3,425	10,967	6,540	17	86,856	81,662	\$133,000
%	75.9	3.9	12.6	7.5	0.0	100.0	94.0	—
Region 8	309,702	19,829	66,329	38,033	631	434,500	399,178	\$114,100
%	71.3	4.6	15.3	8.8	0.1	100.0	91.9	—
Michigan (%)	74.5	3.5	15.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	89.4	\$115,600

Source: U.S. Census of Population

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Ottawa County has a variety of strengths including:

- Strong and diversified industrial base and well-educated labor pool
- Population growth in Ottawa County – continues to be one of Michigan's fastest growing counties
- Good location – I-196 Corridor and rail
- New hospital opening in 2006 in Holland
- Attractive downtowns in Ottawa County
- Hope College and Grand Valley State University
- Tourism, including State, County and community parks

Weaknesses

Ottawa County has a variety of weaknesses including:

- Companies losing local ownership – not supporting the communities as much as in the past
- Schools do not react as fast as business and industry
- Concentration of manufacturing
- Labor pool does not always match training required for new jobs
- Issue of traditional “Dutch” way of doing things versus change
- Urban schools problems
- Changing demographics

Opportunities

Ottawa County has a variety of opportunities including:

- Jobs available if people are properly trained
- Combined community foundation in Holland and Zeeland
- Manufacturing continues to expand in Ottawa County
- Downtowns continue to thrive in Ottawa County
- Redevelopment of older areas of downtowns
- Holland’s waterfront

Threats

Ottawa County has a variety of threats including:

- Decreasing demand for housing in Ottawa County
- Jobs must meet needs of families
- Good cost of living in Ottawa County
- Urban-rural issues
- Unsustainable growth in townships and rural areas
- Loss of local businesses

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Goals and Objectives are divided into two categories: 1) Organizational Goals and Objectives and 2) Community and Economic Development Goals and Objectives. The West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) has primary control over the Organization Goals and Objectives. While the WMRPC can assist in implementation of the Community and Economic Development Goals and Objectives, there are more organizations and influences that the WMRPC does not have full control over that can impact these goals and objectives. The primary difference in the two sets of goals relate to the fact that the organizational goals tend to use the words “shall” or “will,” while the community goals tend to use the word “should” since the WMRPC cannot impose its goals on individual communities.

Organizational Goals and Objectives

The following five goals and the related objectives relate to the WMRPC, its Board, the CEDS Committee, and staff.

Goal #1

The WMRPC shall maintain an active and productive role with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Objectives:

1. Maintain contact with the Economic Development Representative for Michigan through telephone calls, e-mails, or personal contacts. Contact will be made with the Economic Development Representative at least monthly.
2. The WMRPC will meet or exceed the rules set forth by EDA for maintaining an Economic Development District – including staffing, Board representation, CEDS Committee representation, the development of a CEDS, and the proper administration of EDA funds.
3. The WMRPC will respond to any request for information from EDA within two (2) business days.

Goal #2

The WMRPC shall keep communities informed of programs offered by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

Objectives:

1. The WMRPC will annually solicit community projects for inclusion in the CEDS.
2. The WMRPC will regularly provide information about EDA using Board and CEDS Committee meetings, newsletters, the Internet, and other means of communication.
3. The WMRPC will coordinate meetings between EDA and communities interested in EDA funding for specific economic development projects.

Goal #3

The WMRPC shall maintain a Board and CEDS Committee that meets rules established by EDA.

Objectives:

1. The Board of the WMRPC will be comprised of public and private sector representatives appointed by member counties and communities. Private sector representatives will make up at least 35 percent of Board members. The Board will also have three at-large members.
2. The CEDS Committee will be comprised of public and private sector representatives appointed by member counties and communities. Private sector representatives will make up the majority of CEDS Committee members. The CEDS Committee will also have at least two at-large members.
3. Staff of the WMRPC will maintain an up-to-date list of Board and CEDS Committee members and will regularly survey members to determine if membership is current.

Goal #4

The WMRPC shall promote coordination between counties, cities, townships, villages, the federal government, the State of Michigan, non-profits and other community-based organizations.

Objectives:

1. The WMRPC will continue to disseminate information through Board meetings, CEDS Committee meetings, speakers, newsletters, mailings, telephone calls, the internet, and other means; and the WMRPC will continue to serve as the regional clearinghouse for federally funded projects.
2. The WMRPC will inform members of state, federal, and local programs through regular speakers at Board and CEDS Committee meetings.
3. The WMRPC will encourage the identification and used of “best practices” by identifying new and better ways that member communities are accomplishing community development. Additionally, the WMRPC will consider creating an Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee.

Goal #5

While EDA is the primary partner related to economic development, the WMRPC shall actively participate with other community and economic development organizations.

Objectives:

1. The WMRPC will maintain an active relationship with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), the Michigan Department of Transportation

- (MDOT) and other state agencies that promote community and economic development.
2. The WMRPC will actively participate in the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) and the Michigan Economic Developers Association (MEDA).
 3. The WMRPC will regularly invite local economic and community development organizations to Board and CEDS Committee meetings.

Community and Economic Development Goals and Objectives

The following five goals and the related objectives relate to the counties, cities, villages, and townships within the seven-county area served by the WMRPC.

Goal #1

Communities should maintain an up-to-date vision related to community and economic development.

Objectives:

1. Communities interested in economic development should provide regular updates related to potential projects to the WMRPC for inclusion in the CEDS.
2. All communities should strive to maintain up-to-date master plans that define each community's preferred vision. The WMRPC will assist in planning processes whenever possible and will review all plans submitted for review.
3. Communities should provide copies of their master plans to the WMRPC to provide information to be shared with all communities and to assist in creating a regional approach to studying land use trends and community goals.

Goal #2

Communities should recognize the relationship that exists between healthy urban centers and healthy rural areas.

Objectives:

1. Promote the complete use of existing infrastructure.
2. Recognize the importance of agriculture and open space to the overall quality of the Region.
3. Promote the revitalization of underutilized urban areas, brownfields, and other previously developed areas.

Goal #3

Communities should promote a diverse economy that recognizes the Region's and individual communities' varied strengths.

Objectives:

1. Communities should tailor economic development actions to match their individual strengths – such as urban centers’ built environments, agricultural areas, tourism, and natural resources such as lakes, streams, and forests.
2. Communities should work with existing employers to identify existing and future growth areas and natural employment “clusters” such as health care, tourism, or value-added agriculture.
3. Communities should look at neighboring communities’ economic development capacity to determine if potential projects are needed or if there is already excess capacity in the region.

Goal #4

Communities should investigate and emphasize the long-range impacts of projects as opposed to seeking short-term solutions to issues.

Objectives:

1. Determine the fiscal benefits and obligations for each potential community project – including jobs created (including “spin-off” jobs) taxes generated, costs to complete project, costs to maintain facilities, impacts on other public facilities, etc.
2. Determine if projects could have an adverse impact on the Region’s natural resources.
3. Seek long-term commitments of businesses seeking improvements to public facilities.

Goal #5

Communities should continuously seek to improve all aspects of community life.

Objectives:

1. Maintain an up-to-date capital improvements program that identifies necessary improvements or additions to public facilities.
2. Maintain and improve public facilities through the use of local, state, federal, and private resources.
3. Tie this goal directly to the community’s preferred vision of the future described in Goal #1.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Fortunately, many projects that were listed in previous CEDS Reports were implemented. Progress toward implementation was made on other projects, which increased their project ranking. Finally, a number of communities had new projects, which they requested to be added to the 2007 CEDS.

Each of the projects received for the 2007 program year was reviewed and endorsed by the regional CEDS Committee under the overall policy guidance of the Regional Commission, and is therefore consistent with the strategy for economic development. In addition, resolutions were passed by all District members who have elected to use the annual CEDS Report for their planning purposes.

Projects received for the 2007 CEDS Report were prioritized utilizing the ranking criteria and point system presented in Table 52. These criteria are used by the CEDS Committee to identify projects that are competitive under other funding sources in addition to EDA. As in previous years, a point system was utilized which reflects the economic distress of each county, jobs created or retained by the project, commitment of business, availability of local funding, planning, and project readiness. A project's point value consists of the cumulative point value it receives in satisfying these criteria. This past year, project totals ranged from a high of 44 to a low of 10. The highest possible score is 50 points.

Economic Development Administrative Specific Projects

Appendices A and B list and prioritize the projects submitted by communities across the seven county area served by the WMRPC that most closely match EDA's Investment Policy Guidelines. Appendix A to this report provides the 2007 EDA Targeted Community Projects List. The list gives the breakdown of each project's scoring on the ten prioritization criteria and the project's point total and lists projects that match EDA's programs and goals. A descriptive narrative for each project, which together comprises the District's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, is included in Appendix B of this report. The projects are listed by county in order to facilitate project identification. The projects narratives include project location, title, general description, and cost.

Community Development Projects

Appendix C to this report provides the 2007 Community Projects List. This list provides projects submitted to the CEDS Committee that may not match EDA's goals, but that are valid projects that should receive consideration for EDA and other programs. A descriptive narrative for each project is included in Appendix D of this report. The projects are listed by county in order to facilitate project identification. The narratives include project location, title, general description, and cost.

2007 is the fifth year Region 8 provided two separate project lists. This process allows communities to submit a wide variety of projects, and provides EDA with a more concise list. Such a list also helps communities adjust projects to better suit EDA's goals.

TABLE 59
CEDS PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria were used by Region 8's CEDS Committee to rank all projects submitted for inclusion in the 2007-2009 CEDS Report. The ranking of projects is required by EDA and assists us to identify projects that are competitive for EDA and other funding sources (CDBG, ISTEA, MDOT, RD/USDA, MDNR, etc.).

1. Matching funds (above required EDA match) available for project:

More than 25%.....	5
11% to 25%.....	3
10% or less.....	0

2. Matching funds are secured?

Yes.....	5
No.....	0

3. Preliminary Engineering:

Completed.....	5
In Progress.....	3
Lacking.....	0

4. Number of full-time private jobs project will create within two (2) years:

100 or more.....	5
50 to 99.....	3
10 to 49.....	1
Less than 10.....	0

5. Number of full-time private jobs project will retain within two (2) years:

100 or more.....	5
50 to 99.....	3
10 to 49.....	1
Less than 10.....	0

6. Ratio of project cost to number of jobs created or retained by project:

\$10,000 or less per job.....	5
\$10,001 to \$30,000 per job.....	3
\$30,001 to \$80,000 per job.....	1
Over \$80,000 per job.....	0

7. Secured from incoming or expanding firm(s)?

Letter of Commitment.....	5
Letter of Intent.....	3
None of the Above.....	0

8. Project is included in a current, adopted local Comprehensive Plan, Capital Improvements Plan, Tax Increment Finance Plan, Downtown Plan, or similar planning document?

Yes.....	5
No.....	0

9. Project is located in an area having overall distress based on the following: 1) the area's two-year average unemployment rate is 1% above the national unemployment rate, and/or 2) the local per capita income is 80% or less than the national average.

Both 1 and 2 above.....	5
Either 1 or 2 above.....	3
Neither 1 nor 2 above.....	0

10. Is project served by Utilities?....water, sewer, all-season roads, gas/electric? (1 point for each utility, maximum 5 points)

Vital Projects and Strategies

For the first time, the WMRPC is including a list of Vital Projects and Strategies in the CEDS process. This “Top 10” list does not necessarily list the projects that receive the highest score, but includes a list of projects that will have the greatest impact and that are very likely to move forward – since a project that is likely to move forward is more valuable to economic and community development than a project that one that does not have the necessary support and resources to move forward. The list is not ranked, but shows the variety that exists across the Region.

Alleghen County

The City of Holland (located in Alleghen and Ottawa counties) provides a wide variety of jobs for the Region. The continued success of Holland’s businesses and economic development efforts will require the expansion of infrastructure into areas that are currently not adequately served. The City’s Master Plan for this area identifies the need for six miles of new roadways, and related infrastructure. The Waverly Industrial Park is also located in this area and is in need of additional infrastructure. The entire region would benefit from EDA’s assistance in this process.

Another project that is not yet listed is a potential anaerobic digester for the conversion of animal wastes into energy and fertilizer. Such a project would benefit the area since it combines many benefits including jobs, value-added agriculture, and renewable energy.

Big Rapids

The City of Big Rapids has many infrastructure-related needs. Since the City is essentially built-out, it is essential to improve the capacity of the City’s existing industrial areas to allow for the expansion of the City’s economy. The entire region would benefit from EDA’s assistance in selected infrastructure improvements in Big Rapids.

Cedar Springs

The City of Cedar Springs wants to expand roadways and build a 63 acre industrial park. The City is one of the more distressed areas in Kent County but has been making great strides towards improving its downtown and other areas. The proposed industrial park is near US-131. The entire region would benefit from EDA’s assistance in this project.

Grand Rapids

It is difficult to select one project for the City of Grand Rapids since there are so many opportunities for improvements and since there are so many on-going projects. One project area that has a lot of potential for job creation and for changing Grand Rapids is the Grand Walk Sustainable Business Park. This large area is centrally located in Grand Rapids and is convenient to US-131, I-96, and I-196. The entire region would benefit from EDA’s assistance in this process.

Ionia County

The revitalization of the City of Ionia's older industrial area has been a long-standing issue in the Region 8 CEDS. Linking improvements to the County's agricultural base through value-added processing would create jobs, encourage the preservation of farmland, and use the City's existing infrastructure.

Mecosta County

Outside of Big Rapids, Mecosta County is a fairly rural area with an economy based on agriculture and natural resources. Researching the need for value-added agricultural activities would provide many benefits to Mecosta County and the entire Region.

Montcalm County

Supporting the needs of the City of Greenville and its Industrial Park is a high priority in Montcalm County. The Industrial Park's newest/largest tenant (United Solar Ovonic) is going to begin production of solar roofing materials in 2007 and has plans to expand in the very near future. Everything possible should be done to encourage the expansion of this facility in order to diversify jobs, replace recently lost manufacturing jobs, enhance the City's tax base, and expand the growing field of renewable energy in West Michigan. The City will require EDA's assistance with upgrading the City's water/wastewater treatment capacity, upgrading electrical utilities, and possibly other improvements related to transportation or further expansion of the industrial park.

While not as high of a profile, the expansion of Howard City's wastewater treatment capacity is also a key project in Montcalm County.

Osceola County

Reed City is currently seeking EDA funds to expand the capacity of its wastewater treatment plant. This project is key to the success of the area due to the fact that expanded capacity will allow existing businesses to expand and new businesses to locate in the City. Like other projects, this is located in an area that has a lot of farmland – so value-added agriculture is a very likely activity. The entire region would benefit from EDA's assistance in this project.

Ottawa County

Outside of Holland (see Allegan County) the biggest project that could benefit from EDA's assistance relates to improvements to the Mohr Industrial Park in Allendale Charter Township.

Wyoming

All three of the potential projects in the City of Wyoming relate to revitalizing older industrial areas or sites. Choosing a best project is difficult, but would most likely relate to which site has the ability to move forward first. The entire region would benefit from EDA's assistance in any of the three potential projects.

PLAN OF ACTION

The Plan of Action is an expanded version of the Organizational Goals and Objectives identified earlier in the plan.

Actions related to Organizational Goal #1: The WMRPC shall maintain an active and productive role with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

Action #1-1

The Director of the WMRPC will maintain contact with the Economic Development Representative for Michigan through telephone calls, e-mails, or personal contacts. Contact will be made with the Economic Development Representative at least monthly. Additionally, the Director will invite the EDA representative to at least one Board Meeting and/or CEDS Committee meeting every year. The Director will also strive to attend at least one EDA meeting per year outside of Michigan to stay current with EDA rules and initiatives. The Director will also maintain a relationship with the Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) in order to keep abreast of issues in other regions. The Director will maintain a current list of community projects suitable for EDA assistance and will advocate for communities by arranging meetings with EDA and will assist in the preparation of grant applications – including identifying appropriate roles for communities and EDA.

Action #1-2

The Director of the WMRPC will ensure that the WMRPC meets or exceeds the rules set forth by EDA for maintaining and Economic Development District. The Director will maintain an adequate staff to support the CEDS process. The Director will also work with member communities, the Board of the WMRPC, and the CEDS Committee to ensure Board members and CEDS Committee members represent the needs of West Michigan and are well informed of EDA's goals and objectives.

Action #1-3

The WMRPC will respond to any request for information from EDA within two (2) business days. Generally this will involve the Director contacting the EDA representative via e-mail or telephone, but other methods (when appropriate) will be used and other staff (when appropriate) will contact EDA.

Actions related to Organizational Goal #2: The WMRPC shall keep communities informed of programs offered by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

Action #2-1

The WMRPC will annually solicit community projects for inclusion in the CEDS. During the second and third year of the three-year cycle, the WMRPC will modify the previous process to

ask communities the progress of projects submitted the first year of the cycle and the WMRPC will solicit any new projects that will guide the Region towards its goals. This process will also be a regular agenda item at the CEDS Committee meetings (four times annually).

Action #2-2

The WMRPC will regularly provide information about EDA using Board and CEDS Committee meetings, where EDA and economic development are regular agenda items. Additionally, the WMRPC publishes six newsletters annually, with at least one annually related to EDA and the CEDS process. Our website, wmrpc.org, details EDA and recent economic development projects. Finally, the Director regularly visits counties, communities, and other groups and always relays information related to EDA.

Action #2-3

The Director of the WMRPC will coordinate meetings between EDA and communities interested in EDA funding for specific economic development projects. Prior to coordinating meetings, the Director will meet with interested communities to determine if potential projects are eligible for EDA funding and will help guide communities to develop projects that address their goals, as well as EDA's goals.

Actions related to Organizational Goal #3: The WMRPC shall maintain a Board and CEDS Committee that meets rules established by EDA.

Action #3-1

The Board of the WMRPC will be comprised of public and private sector representatives appointed by member counties and communities. Private sector representatives will make up at least 35 percent of Board members. The Board will also have three at-large members. The Director will provide an update at each Board Meeting identifying the public/private sector status of the Board and an up-to-date list of Board Members will be maintained. Letters will be sent to communities not maintaining adequate public and private representation on the WMRPC Board.

Action #3-2

The CEDS Committee will be comprised of public and private sector representatives appointed by member counties and communities. Private sector representatives will make up the majority of CEDS Committee members. The CEDS Committee will also have at least two at-large members. The Director will provide an update at each Board Meeting and CEDS Committee meeting identifying the public/private sector status of the CEDS Committee and an up-to-date list of Committee members will be maintained. Letters will be sent to communities not maintaining adequate public and private representation on the CEDS Committee.

Actions related to Organizational Goal #4: The WMRPC shall promote coordination between counties, cities, townships, villages, the federal government, the State of Michigan, non-profits and other community-based organizations.

Action #4-1

The staff of the WMRPC will continue to disseminate information at Board meetings and CEDS Committee meetings. Additionally the staff will coordinate or prepare speakers, newsletters, mailings, telephone calls, our website, and other means to disseminate information. The WMRPC will continue to serve as the regional clearinghouse for federally funded projects.

Action #4-2

The WMRPC will inform members of state, federal, and local programs through regular speakers at Board and CEDS Committee meetings. The Director of the WMRPC will coordinate speakers, taking the suggestions of Board and Committee members as to preferred topics.

Action #4-3

The WMRPC will encourage the identification and used of “best practices” by identifying new and better ways that member communities are accomplishing community development. Communities will be encouraged to share these practices at Board Meetings and CEDS Committee meetings. Identification of such practices will be encouraged through an annual competition. Additionally, the WMRPC will consider creating an Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee as a way to encourage more effective use of resources.

Actions related to Organizational Goal #5: While EDA is the primary partner related to economic development, the WMRPC shall actively participate with other community and economic development organizations.

Action #5-1

The WMRPC Board, staff, and CEDS Committee will maintain an active relationship with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and other state agencies that promote community and economic development. Each of these groups will be regularly invited to attend both Board Meetings and CEDS Committee meetings by staff of the WMRPC.

Action #5-2

The Director of the WMRPC will actively participate in the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) and the Michigan Economic Developers Association (MEDA) and the Michigan Association of Regions (MAR).

Action #5-3

The Director of the WMRPC will regularly invite local economic and community development organizations to Board and CEDS Committee meetings in order to share information in both directions.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The purpose of the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission's (WMRPC's) CEDS Program is to direct and coordinate efforts that will lead toward the maximum impacts of a reduction in local unemployment and poverty, a more stable and diversified economy, and improved living conditions within economically distressed areas of our district.

The CEDS Committee outlined the following performance measures that will be used to measure progress toward each of the major work program activities during the period between 2007 and 2010.

CEDS Maintenance and Document Update

The WMRPC will identify and rank economic development projects for Region 8, track economic trends, review the goals and strategies of the CEDS Program, and prepare an Annual CEDS Report/Status Report as required by the U.S. EDA. As a part of this effort, summary reports on the economic development strengths and weaknesses of the area will be prepared. These reports will be circulated to inform local officials, state and federal representatives, and the general public regarding economic development needs and opportunities within West Michigan. The WMRPC will work closely with communities and EDA to develop viable community projects with the financial assistance of EDA.

Technical Assistance to Local Government and Development Agencies

The WMRPC will provide technical assistance and advisory services to local units of government, development agencies, and the private sector as follows:

- **CEDS Project Implementation.** The WMRPC will educate local officials regarding the CEDS process and availability of EDA grants for projects via telephone, mail, and presentations; provide technical assistance to communities working on potential EDA projects; evaluate EDA grant eligibility of local projects; and provide supplemental technical assistance in planning, zoning, and grantsmanship as needed for project implementation. We will strive to obtain at least one EDA grant public works project within Region 8 each year.
- **Information Clearinghouse.** WMRPC staff will support and participate in local economic development initiatives and events occurring throughout Region 8; track evolving state and federal policy that effect local economic development and strengthen partnerships with key agencies with economic development (USDA Rural Development, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, etc.). The WMRPC will also publish its "Region 8 Notes" newsletter six times during the year and conduct outreach visits to disseminate relevant information to its membership on grant application deadlines; economic development and planning issues; and sources of data, maps and technical assistance.
- **Federal and State Project Review.** The WMRPC will continue to function as the regional clearinghouse for state and federally funded programs as requested. On average, the WMRPC reviews 50-100 projects each year under the Federal Project Review System for communities seeking federal assistance.

Maintenance of a Data Center

During the coming year, we will continue to respond to data requests from government, educational, private, and community organizations and individuals in West Michigan. We will also expand our data services by 1) enhancing our WMRPC website that can provide data on-line and links to primary data sites in preparation for the release of 2000 Census data; and by 2) improving our GIS system by importing additional digital data files, preparing additional statistical maps specific to Region 8, and keeping our in-house GIS technologies current.

Forum for Local Economic Development Organizations

Through its CEDS process, the WMRPC will maintain a regional network of professionals, which can respond effectively to economic opportunities as they arise. The CEDS Committee members will share ideas and information on common economic concerns and changing technologies and policies. The Committee will also provide direction to the WMRPC Board on technical assistance needs throughout the Region and look for opportunities to build new partnerships and leverage for outside funding and resources.

Region 8 Conference/Workshops

During the upcoming program year, the WMRPC will develop and conduct at least one workshop. The CEDS committee will identify areas in which they feel education of local officials is needed.

Identification of Additional Resources

The WMRPC will pursue additional resources and funding to build our capability to provide more in-depth technical assistance to local communities, particularly fee-for-services and state and federal grants. We will also support funding applications of local communities for economic/community development initiatives within Region 8.

Environmental Protection Program

As needed, the WMRPC will support environmental protection efforts, update the WMRPC's in-house environmental data, and assist in the preparation of environmental impact assessments for economic development projects as required by EDA. We will also seek opportunities to assist local communities revitalize abandoned or under-utilized properties in the older sections of communities throughout the Region 8.

Plant Closure Data

The WMRPC will supply EDA's Economic Development Representative (EDR) with timely information on plant closures or possible plant closures, as well as the number of employees affected by these actions, and otherwise assist EDA to identify areas which are eligible for sudden economic distress assistance.

Special Projects: Research and Training

The WMRPC will complete our joint project with our county economic development offices to build a database of industrial sites throughout the region, which can be used for local, county, and regional economic development planning purposes.

The CEDS Committee will identify other areas in which they feel research and dissemination of information is needed.

CONCLUSION

This document represents the first year that the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee have participated with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) since the major rule changes implemented in September 2006. It is also the first time the WMRPC and the CEDS Committee has participated in a three year program with EDA (previously one year cycles). This document represents a complete overhaul of previous documents – so there may be the need for revisions to create a process that addresses EDA’s needs and helps the communities in Region 8 move towards a more competitive and positive economic future. The Board of the WMRPC, the CEDS Committee, and the staff of the WMRPC stand ready to address any necessary changes and looks forward to new challenges during this three year planning and implementation cycle.

Appendix A

CEDS COMMITTEE GENERAL GUIDELINES

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee General Guidelines

1. Authority.

These General Guidelines are adopted by the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) in accordance with rules established by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the purpose of maintaining a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

2. Definitions.

- a. Board – The policy body of the WMRPC
- b. CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- c. CEDS Committee – The Committee made up of representatives from members gathered to develop and implement the CEDS
- d. EDA – The U.S. Economic Development Administration
- e. Member – A county, city, village, township that is a member of the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission
- f. Public Sector – Supported by government funds
- g. Private Sector – Supported by private funds
- h. Region 8 – The area consisting of Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Osceola, and Ottawa counties.
- i. Representative – A person appointed by a member to serve on the CEDS Committee
- j. WMRPC – West Michigan Regional Planning Commission

3. Purpose.

The CEDS Committee shall be a voluntary committee of economic and community developers from across Region 8, which includes communities in the seven counties of Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Osceola, and Ottawa. The Committee shall assist in developing the annual CEDS Document including identifying potential public works projects, planning projects, and other projects with the potential for promoting economic and community development.

4. Membership.

Membership on the CEDS Committee is dependent on membership in the WMRPC, with the exception of At-Large Committee Members.

5. Organization.

5.1 Committee. The CEDS Committee is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date CEDS and makes no policy decisions for the WMRPC. The WMRPC is responsible for approving the CEDS with the recommendation of the CEDS Committee.

5.2 Representation. Each Member with a population of at least 10,000 people shall have no more than two (2) representatives on the CEDS Committee. The Committee representation shall be comprised of one public sector representative and one private sector representative

from each Member with a population of at least 10,000 people. The term of office for a representative shall be one (1) year or until a new appointment is made by the Member's governing body. Each member with a population of at least 10,000 people may designate one (1) Alternate which may act only in the absence of a Representative.

5.3 At-Large Representatives. The CEDS Committee may have up to three (3) at-large members approved by the Committee. At-large positions shall create a committee that maintains a simple majority of private sector representation.

6. Officers.

6.1 Selection. In January of each year, the Committee shall select from its membership a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

6.2 Duties. A Chairperson shall preside at all meetings and shall conduct all meetings in accordance with the rules provided herein. The Vice-Chairperson, in the absence of the Chairperson, shall act in the capacity of the Chairperson.

6.3 The Vice-Chairperson shall succeed to the office of Chairperson in the event of a vacancy in that office; in which case, the Committee shall select a successor to the office of Vice-Chairperson at the earliest possible time. Such Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall serve until the current term of office is ended.

6.4 Tenure. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall take office immediately following their election, and shall hold their office for a term of twelve months. All officers can be re-elected to successive terms.

7. Meetings.

7.1 Meeting Notices. A notice of all meetings shall be sent to the list of CEDS Committee. Meeting agendas shall be posted at the office of the WMRPC. Agendas shall include the meeting date, address, time, and telephone number of the WMRPC office.

7.2 Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held as necessary to maintain an up-to-date CEDS. A schedule of anticipated meetings for the program year shall be maintained by the WMRPC.

7.3 Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson. Notice to CEDS Committee shall be mailed using the U.S. Postal service no fewer than seven (7) days in advance of the special meeting.

7.4 Quorum. In order for the Committee to conduct business or take any official action, a quorum consisting of Committee Representatives of a majority of the Members must be present. When a quorum is not present, no official action except for closing of the meeting may take place. When a quorum is not present Committee Members may discuss matters of interest, but can take no action until the next regular or special meeting.

Order of Business. The order of business for all regularly scheduled Committee meetings shall be:

- a. Call to order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Approval of Minutes
- d. General Business
- e. Unscheduled Business
- f. Adjournment

8. Minutes.

Minutes shall be prepared for all CEDS Committee meetings. The minutes shall contain a brief synopsis of the meeting including a recording of Committee Members in attendance, a complete restatement of all motions, and recording of votes. All communications and any actions taken shall be attached to the minutes.

9. Matters to be acted upon by Staff on Behalf of the CEDS Committee.

WMRPC staff may take any action necessary in the name of the CEDS Committee in accordance with plans, policies, and procedures established by the CEDS Committee and WMRPC Board. If a serious conflict of interest, public controversy, or uncertainty as to the plans, policies, or procedures occurs; staff shall make the matter known for resolution by the CEDS Committee and/or the WMRPC Board.

10. Amendments.

These general guidelines may be amended by a majority vote of the WMRPC Board during any regular meeting.

THESE GENERAL GUIDELINES WERE ADOPTED BY THE WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ON JUNE 16, 2006.

Appendix B

2007 EDA TARGETED COMMUNITY PROJECTS LIST DESCRIPTIONS

**WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2007 CEDS LIST – EDA TARGETED COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

ALLEGAN COUNTY

City of Holland

South End Street and Infrastructure Program. The City annexed 1,400 acres of neighboring Township property. The new Master Plan for this area identified six miles of new public streets that will be necessary to accommodate and guide new commercial, industrial, and residential development. Estimated cost: \$1.5 million

City of Holland

Global Welcome Center, Holland Airport. Construction of a 11,000 square foot terminal building and offices for both the fixed base airport operator and corporate clients. The proposed facilities will contribute to meeting the global travel needs of existing and potential businesses in the Holland area. Estimated cost: \$6.6 million

City of Holland

Waverly Industrial Park. Provide water, sewer, and road access in order to create three industrial sites for job and tax base growth. Estimated cost: \$350,000

City of Otsego

Water System Program. This project would improve and update the City's water system, providing better water pressure, fire protection, and circulation. The project would include construction of additional water wells, enlargement of existing water mains, and the possible construction of an additional water tower. Estimated cost: \$865,875

IONIA COUNTY

City of Belding

Storm and Sanitary Sewer Improvements. The wastewater improvements include 3,000 feet of new 16-inch force main from the City's main lift station location along Water Street south to M-44. The project also includes combined sewer separation in areas north of the Flat River to eliminate excessive inflow into the wastewater collection system and repair/replacement of several existing collection sewers throughout the City. Estimated cost: \$3.4 million

City of Ionia

Southside River Development. Redevelopment of several abandoned and obsolete sites located in the southeast portion of the city; most are former industrial sites. The sites will need testing and environmental activities, with redevelopment to establish infrastructure for industry. Most sites will also require some environmental clean-up prior to redevelopment. The City of Ionia has initiated brownfield activities for the area as required by the State of Michigan, in order to combine with other resources for redevelopment of these sites. Estimated cost: \$850,000

City of Portland / Danby Township

Development Site. The City of Portland and Danby Township wish to pursue the development of 58 acres. Possible uses include an industrial park. Estimated cost: \$4.0 million

KENT COUNTY

City of Grand Rapids

Monroe North. This project involves street redesign and reconstruction, flood wall repair, utility relocation and park development. It will use an investment strategy wherein governmental agencies and private sector interests will work together to expand industrial and other uses in this area. This project is expected to leverage substantial private investment in the area. Estimated cost: \$39.5 million

City of Cedar Springs

West Street Extension and Industrial Park. West Street will be extended south to 16 Mile Road. This extension is necessary to relieve the traffic congestion on West Street and also to provide adequate access to the proposed industrial park (which will provide 63 acres of industrial lots). Estimated cost: \$2, 555,000

City of Grand Rapids

East Side Combined Sewer Overflow Improvements. The City is presently constructing Phase I of this project and has invested \$215 million in sewer separation on the City's east and west sides. Work for Phase II will consist of the continued construction of storm sewers in a large area of the City's east side to separate the combined sewer system. Estimated cost: \$30.3 million

City of Grand Rapids

Grand Walk Sustainable Business Park. This project includes environmental site investigations, property acquisitions, infrastructure improvements, and site and building design assistance consistent with "Green Building Council" standards to increase a 1,100 acre location's competitiveness and combat pressures of land use sprawl. Estimated cost: \$11.0 million

City of Grand Rapids

New Water Supply Line (Second Transmission Water Main) to the Franklin Reservoir, including certain Combined Sewer Separation and Street Reconstruction. Based on the current demand and the need for redundancy, a second transmission water main to Franklin Reservoir is needed. This second transmission water main will serve a portion of the City of Grand Rapids as well as other customer communities. During the construction of the 48" transmission water main, other improvements will be made; these include combined sewer separation and needed street reconstruction along the proposed route. Estimated cost: \$29.5 million

City of Grand Rapids

Seward Avenue Extension. The extension of Seward Avenue (from Front/Wealthy Streets north to Leonard Street to Richmond Street, and long range, to Ann Street) is designed to create a north-south industrial connector street west of the US-131 Expressway. The purpose of the north-south connector is to improve access to industrial properties in the area and to keep industrial traffic away from adjacent residential neighborhoods. The project is expected to leverage substantial private investment and result in additional industrial capacity and considerable job creation and/or retention. Estimated cost: \$17.0 million

City of Grand Rapids

Steelcase Redevelopment Project. Steelcase, one of the City's major employers, will close all their manufacturing facilities located in the City, which will result in considerable loss in jobs and tax revenue. This project will assist in the demolition of existing buildings and improve infrastructure to attract new development to this 100-acre site. Estimated cost: \$14.0 million

City of Grand Rapids

Urban Land Assembly. This project will create a fund for the City to use to acquire blighted, contaminated, or underutilized land and buildings in order to secure sites for industrial expansion. Allocation of project funds will enable new and existing companies to expand and locate in the City, which will lead to the creation of new employment opportunities. The project will reduce the flight of businesses to greenfields and urban sprawl. Estimated cost: \$4.0 million

City of Wyoming

Eastern Avenue Industrial Redevelopment. There are a large number of industrial buildings of varying sizes along Eastern Avenue. Some of the buildings are vacant and some are obsolete. In order to make this industrial area more viable for new uses, the City will: do spot demolition, consolidate properties, rehabilitate buildings, and upgrade utilities. Estimated cost: \$2.5 million

City of Grand Rapids

Madison Square, South Town Redevelopment Project. The Madison Square neighborhood is the center of the South Town area and has been undergoing significant residential and commercial revitalization. One major catalyst project is the Hubb, which will convert a multistory industrial building into a commercial center with space for internet dependent businesses. Other area improvements will focus on the streetscape, street curbs, sidewalks, and landscaping. The industrial area at Cottage Grove Corridor will be integrated with the community to provide a more walkable environment. Estimated cost: \$7.6 million

City of Wyoming

Kelvinator Site Redevelopment. This project will include complete or partial demolition, along with redevelopment, of property on a 35-acre site formerly used by a Kelvinator plant. There will also probably be Brownfield activity and new utilities needed. Estimated cost: \$2.2 million

City of Wyoming

Chicago Drive Industrial Rehabilitation. Many businesses along Chicago Drive have very low valuation and employment. Redevelopment is greatly needed. This project would involve building demolition, removal of soil and water contamination, land filling, utility extensions, and other activities necessary to make property re-use feasible. Estimated cost: \$2.0 million

City of Grand Rapids

Wealthy Jefferson Initiative. The Wealthy Jefferson Master Plan provides a framework for the redevelopment of 22 blocks of underutilized urban land. Upon completion, the project will contain over 500 new dwelling units, 75,000 square feet of retail space, 246,000 square feet of office space, and 40,000 square feet of light industrial use. The goal of this project is to promote

mixed-use development as a strategy for urban revitalization within a walkable neighborhood environment. Estimated cost: \$12.0 million

City of Grand Rapids

Joint Regional Biosolids Management. Collection of primary and secondary treated residuals from the Wyoming Clean Water Plant and the Grand Rapids Wastewater Treatment Plant, with future storage to be converted to secondary digesters, and contract dewatering operation with land application/landfill disposal. Estimated cost: \$13.2 million

City of Wyoming

Delphi Industrial Redevelopment. The Delphi Industrial Building has 1.8 million square feet of space and was formerly used by General Motors for manufacturing automobile components. Only the north portion of the building is currently being used. This project would involve demolition of the south one million square feet of the building and construction of a commercial grade street with utilities to accommodate industrial use lots. Estimated cost: \$1,775,000

City of Grand Rapids

Relocation of Amtrak Station to the Rapid's Central Station. The current rail station does not have access to other transportation modes and its location has a negative impact on both rail passenger safety and local automobile traffic. This project will relocate the passenger rail line and the rail station to The Rapid's Central Station, which is a state-of-the-art multi-modal transit center. Project funds will provide for a track switch installation, several hundred feet of new track, platform and station construction, and related parking facilities. Estimated cost: \$9.2 million

MECOSTA COUNTY

Mecosta County Development Corporation / Morton Township

Mid-State Industrial Park Promotions. This planning project will develop and implement a targeted business recruitment program to attract new business to the Mid-State Industrial Park. Estimated cost: \$50,000

City of Big Rapids

Street and Bridge Improvements. Improvements to the City's transportation network are essential for access to businesses. Improvements include: Replace Baldwin Street Bridge. Reconstruct Mill, Rust, and Sanborn Streets. Reconstruct Bjornson Street. Reconstruct Darwin Avenue. Resurface Ferris Drive. Reconstruct South Michigan Avenue. Many of these projects also include improvements to other infrastructure. Estimated total cost: \$5.23 million

City of Big Rapids

Watermain Extensions. Extending water mains to underserved areas in and around the City provides additional opportunities for a variety of development. These projects include: DeKraff Street 12 inch water main. Creeks Edge water main. Nineteen Mile Road water main. Fourteen Mile Road water main. Fuller Street water main. Bjornson Street water main. Many of these projects also include improvements to other infrastructure. Estimated total cost: \$8,163,000

Mecosta County Development Corporation

Value-Added Agricultural Research. The three phases of the Value-Added Agricultural Program are: 1) Identify local strengths and determine the types of projects that will work best with the existing agricultural base. 2) Develop a feasibility study for the top two or three projects. 3) Develop a business and marketing plan for a specific project. Estimated cost: \$125,000

Mecosta County Development Corporation

High Speed Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure. Several local manufacturers have mentioned a disadvantage they experience due to lack of high-speed telecommunications capability. Access to high-speed telecommunications ability has become a critical factor in the daily operations of manufacturers as more customers expect and require that services be available over the internet. This project will explore the feasibility of providing fiber optic capability to rural manufacturers. Estimated cost: \$300,000

MONTCALM COUNTY

City of Greenville

Consumers Energy Substation Relocation Downtown Riverfront. The Consumers Energy Substation will be relocated away from its present location on the north side of the historic commercial downtown on the north side of Greenville. The substation is no longer needed in that area and the land could be better used for other development. Estimated cost: \$1.0 million

City of Greenville

Consumers Energy Substation Relocation – Industrial Park. This project would locate a Consumers Energy substation in the Greenville Industrial Park in order to adequately supply the energy needs of new and existing manufacturers. The current local energy capacity is inadequate and the area has had multiple power failures recently that have had a debilitating effect on a vulnerable local economy. Estimated cost: \$2.0 million

Village of Howard City

Waste Water Treatment Improvement Project. Install a mixed bed biofilm reactor; improve lift stations; replace 1,900 feet outdated sanitary main; implement substantial improvements to existing waste water treatment plant. Estimated cost: \$2.7 million

City of Greenville

Waste Water Treatment Plant and Waste Water System Upgrades. Residential development and a new heavy industrial water user (United Solar Ovonic) has made it necessary to implement additional system improvements to the City’s Waste Water Treatment Plant. The project will add a new trickling filter and a sludge storage tank and increase sanitary sewer line capacity to handle the additional waste water created by the anticipated job creation activities at the USO facility. Estimated cost: \$3,156,500

Village of Howard City

Ensley Street / Federal Road Improvement. Upgrade existing Ensley Street/Federal Road to “All Season” standards from Washburn Street and Cannonsville Avenue, giving Renaissance Zone/Industrial Park traffic access to two US-131 interchanges via “all season” roads. The

existing infrastructure is currently below acceptable standards. Efforts should be made to coordinate this project with Henkle Road Improvements. Estimated cost: \$1.5 million

Pierson Township

Amy School Road Industrial Park. Amy School Road is an important connector to the Renaissance Zone and the US-131 expressway by way of the Howard City truck by-pass. This project will improve access to the site for employee, employer, and truck traffic to the growing Amy School Industrial Park and encourage growth and development within the industrial park. Estimated cost: \$126,000

Pierson Township

Renaissance Zone. All-season standard road to provide access to the Renaissance Zone / Industrial Park and serve the ten parcels for employer, employee, and truck traffic. Project will include gravel base, paving, curb, gutter, and storm sewer. This will complete the infrastructure needs of this site and make the Renaissance Zone parcels more marketable. Estimated cost: \$300,000

Pierson Township

Henkle Road Improvement. This project will provide improved access to the Renaissance Zone and connect Kendaville Road to Lake Montcalm Road. Ditching, gravel base, and pavement will add improvement to the existing infrastructure. Estimated cost: \$230,000

OSCEOLA COUNTY

City of Reed City

Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion. Expand capacity of City's wastewater treatment plant from 0.92 mgpd to 1.8 mgpd. Estimated cost: \$3,135,000

Osceola County

Kettunen Center Road Paving. The 4,600 feet road leading into the conference facility is in very poor condition. As a consequence, safety issues have resulted and the economic potential available to the community cannot be fully realized. Estimated cost: \$180,000

Osceola County

Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. The County recently formed a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, which has submitted two grant applications to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): 1) \$200,000 Hazardous Substance Assessment grant and; and 2) \$200,000 Petroleum Substance Assessment grant. Assessment is the first step in returning contaminated properties into economically valuable properties. Estimated cost: \$400,000

Osceola County

Countywide Tourism Study. Osceola County's employment base is heavily dependent upon manufacturing and they have lost many manufacturing jobs. In response to those job losses, a group of concerned residents has determined that a countywide tourism and marketing study is a top priority. Estimated cost: \$30,000

City of Reed City

Industrial Park Feasibility Study. The City does not currently have an industrial park. This study would determine the optimum size and location for an industrial park and also estimate the cost of development. Estimated cost: \$80,000

City of Reed City

Business Incubator. Development and operation of a Business Incubator in downtown Reed City. The incubator will focus on providing help and assistance to new retail and service companies in order to enhance their potential for success. Estimated cost: \$500,000

City of Reed City

Industrial Park. Neither the City nor the surrounding community has an industrial park and property zoned as “industrial” may not be suitable for development for manufacturing or other industries. This project will acquire and develop a Certified Industrial Park for Reed City. Estimated cost: \$1.2 million

OTTAWA COUNTY

Allendale Charter Township

Mohr Industrial Park. Development of a new 40-acre industrial park along 48th Avenue, north of Rich Street. The needed public infrastructure improvements (road, water mains, and sewers) will support the building of eight industrial lots. The first tenant in the new park is expected to invest about \$1.0 million in a building and machinery and equipment, and will generate about 30 new jobs. Estimated total cost: \$1.85 million

Appendix C

2007 COMMUNITY PROJECTS LIST DESCRIPTIONS

**WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2007 CEDS LIST – COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

ALLEGAN COUNTY

No projects.

IONIA COUNTY

City of Portland

Rear Business Facades. The City of Portland is redeveloping/redesigning its downtown's rear facades to improve access to business, parking, and a boardwalk. Estimated cost: \$415,000

City of Belding

Downtown Business District Revitalization. The City will introduce physical improvements to the downtown area, along with rehabilitation of vacant and underutilized buildings. Physical improvements will include sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, gateway treatments, signage, and wireless internet access. These improvements will help to bring new businesses into the downtown area, retain existing businesses, and provide opportunities for their growth. Estimated cost: \$1.8 million

City of Ionia

Ionia Regional Water Master Plan. A water master plan is needed to accommodate development in the City of Ionia and the surrounding townships. The area is currently performing an intergovernmental water authority study. Estimated cost: \$50,000

City of Belding

Central Riverside Park Improvements. Central Riverside Park is located in Downtown Belding. The Park Master plan and the DDA Development plan both call for improvements to the park parking lot and the development of additional recreation areas, including a band shell structure to house the City's summer concert series. Estimated cost: \$657,695

City of Portland

Maple Street Reconstruction. The City of Portland is planning to reconstruct Maple Street, improve the storm sewer system, and perform facade improvements. Estimated cost: \$1.2 million

City of Portland

Pedestrian Trail Loop Completion. Complete pedestrian trail loop on south side of City from Okemos Road and I-96 to Cutler Road and Charlotte Highway. Estimated cost: \$455,000

City of Portland

Grand River Boardwalk. Extend Kent Street Boardwalk from Bridge Street to Library. Estimated cost: \$1.0 million

City of Portland

Rowe Avenue Reconstruction. Extend and widen Rowe Avenue to serve proposed Rindle Haven Development. Estimated cost: \$467,000

KENT COUNTY

City of Grand Rapids

Urban Marketplaces Development. This project involves the rehabilitation and expansion of the existing City-owned Farmer's Market on Fulton Street to provide improved utility services to all rental stalls and weather protection roofing. Adjacent property would be acquired for parking and new restroom construction. Phase Two would create a year-round downtown marketplace combining a farmer's market and sales of locally crafted merchandise. Estimated cost: \$2.0 million

City of Grand Rapids

Greening Infrastructure Project. This project will create the infrastructure improvement necessary to develop greening and beautification projects throughout the downtown and neighborhood business districts of Grand Rapids. Greening is being used as an economic engine for the revitalization of commercial areas. Elements will include irrigation, planter boxes, streetscape and design, and medians. A successful greening program is most likely through a comprehensive and coordinated plan that includes private and public entities and properties. Estimated cost: \$1.5 million

City of Grand Rapids

Public Works Center for Leaf Composting and Storage of Inert Excavation Materials. This project will assemble land, rezone and develop an 80-acre public site for processing and operating of inert materials collection and storage; leaf and grass clipping composting facility; tree disposal site; all serving an urban region. Estimated cost: \$225,000–300,000

MECOSTA COUNTY

City of Big Rapids

Habitat for Humanity Infrastructure Improvement. A portion of land has been donated to Habitat for Humanity by a private individual for the development of seven lots. Improvements needed for this project to proceed are street improvements and paving (\$120,000), water main (\$60,000), and sanitary sewer (\$120,000). Total Estimated cost: \$300,000

City of Big Rapids

Storm Water Improvements. Growth and development put additional demands on the City to address drainage issues. The following projects are needed: Northeast City storms sewer. Ives stream bank stabilization. Division storm sewer replacement. Hemlock Street culvert repair. River Street stormwater pipe. Replace old storm sewers. Cedar Street storm water system upgrade. Many of these projects also include improvements to other infrastructure. Estimated total cost: \$3,084,198

City of Big Rapids

River Street Park Improvement. River Street Park is a very popular location for soccer and little league programs. Park users now park along the street, which is congested and a safety hazard. Implementation of the River Street Master Plan would provide parking in the park as

well as upgrade the fields for youth sports. This project would benefit area youth with improved playing fields and safety and also benefit all park users with better picnic and general park facilities. Estimated cost: \$500,000

City of Big Rapids

Railroad Depot Restoration. The City's historic railroad depot is located along the State Rails to Trails system and is used as a staging area. Repairs need to be made due to vandalism. The City plans to purchase the property from the State and renovate it for use as a museum and retail, as part of its 150 Year Celebration. Estimated cost: \$100,000

City of Big Rapids

Riverwalk Phase III Bridge Extension. The Riverwalk runs along the Muskegon River from the City's Northend Riverside Park to Hemlock Park and connects three City parks and the White Pine State Park. The primary purpose of the Riverwalk is to make the river accessible to physically handicapped persons; the walk includes accessible fishing platforms. Phase I and Phase II are complete. Phase III funding will be sought to construct a pedestrian walkway along a bridge over the Muskegon River connecting Phase I and Phase II trails and will provide a safer route for pedestrians. Estimated cost: \$350,000

City of Big Rapids

Water Main Upgrades / Replacements. Maintaining and upgrading water mains in the City is essential for business growth. The following improvements are needed: Install 12" water main on Hunt Street. Replace undersized water mains citywide. Replace water mains on Winter and Chestnut. Replace 8" water mains with 12" water mains on Ferris State University campus. Replace water mains on Ives and South Streets. Replace water mains at Big Rapids Middle School. Replace water main on Mill Street. Replace water main on Darwin Street. Replace water mains on Ridgeview, Bailey, and Dexter. Replace water main on Ferris Drive. Many of these projects also include improvements to other infrastructure. Estimated total cost: \$3,979,000

City of Big Rapids

Airport Runway Extension. Larger aircraft require a longer runway than is provided at Robin Hood Airport. The City needs to extend the existing runway from 4,300 to 5,001 feet. The increase in length will allow higher performance aircraft to land and take off. These aircraft support local companies. Estimated cost: \$450,000

City of Big Rapids

New Street Construction. Extend Venlo Street north to Fuller Avenue. Provide north, south route to retail/business area located on Perry Avenue (M-20). Estimated cost: \$200,000

City of Big Rapids

Utility Master Plan. Two service areas require master planning for either storm water system, sanitary, or water: 1) Northeast quadrant: All three utilities are lacking and planning is needed to determine the type of facilities, rationale, priority, and cost. 2) Determine need and system function for extension of drinking water system to serve customers west of US-131, north to 19 Mile Road. Estimated cost: \$100,000

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Osceola County

Homeowner Assistance Program. Compared to the State of Michigan, the County has a higher percentage of homes built prior to 1939; these older homes typically require more maintenance. Since household income in the County is 27.3 percent lower than the State as a whole, many homeowners need financial assistance to help pay for necessary home repairs. Estimated cost: \$212,000

Osceola County

Rose Lake Park Road Paving Project. Rose Lake Park, which is part of the County's park system, is very popular and operates at maximum capacity throughout the camping season. The result is excessive wear on the roads that makes it difficult to maintain acceptable road surface. This project will eliminate the need for grading and graveling and the problem of excessive dust. Estimated cost: \$50,000

Osceola County

Crittenden Park Electric Project. Crittenden Park, part of the County's park system, needs to have electricity brought to 20 primitive sites in order to meet both existing and future demands. Estimated cost: \$150,000

Osceola County

Rose Lake Park Electric Project. Rose Lake Park's electrical systems were adequate when they were installed, but modern trailers and recreational vehicles (with all their conveniences), often overload the system and have caused problems for park users. This project is designed to meet both current and future demands. Estimated cost: \$155,000

Osceola County.

Two Mile Road Upgrade. The Osceola County landfill reopened under new management. The purpose of this projects is to upgrade a two mile portion of 2 Mile Road that leads from old US-131 to the landfill. Estimated cost: \$400,000

OTTAWA COUNTY

City of Holland

Holland Civic Center Renovation / Expansion. The City will hire professional services for the preparation of conceptual plans for the renovation and expansion of the City's Civic Center, a multi-purpose facility to be used for community events, community recreation, and multi-purpose trade and community shows. Estimated cost: \$8.0 million

Appendix D

2007 EDA TARGETED COMMUNITY PROJECTS LIST

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2007)
EDA Targeted Community Projects List
WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Applicant/Name (County) Project Description	Ratio of Local Match	Match \$ Secured	Preliminary Engineering Complete	Create Jobs	Retain Jobs	Letters of Commitment	Utilities Served	Project in Plan	Job-Cost Ratio	Community Distress	Project Points Totals
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Monroe North	5	5	3	5	5	0	5	5	6	5	44
City of Reed City (Osceola) Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion	0	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	6	5	44
City of Cedar Springs (Kent) West Street Extension and Industrial Park	0	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	8	5	43
Osceola County Kettunen Center Road Paving	5	5	5	1	1	5	3	5	8	5	43
City of Greenville (Montcalm) Consumers Energy Substation Relocation Downtown Riverfront	0	5	3	5	5	0	5	5	10	5	43
City of Greenville (Montcalm) Consumers Energy Substation Relocation – Industrial Park	0	0	3	5	5	5	5	5	8	5	41
Village of Howard City (Montcalm) Waste Water Treatment Improvement Project	0	0	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	41
City of Belding (Ionia) Storm and Sanitary Sewer Improvements	0	5	3	3	5	3	5	5	6	5	40
City of Greenville (Montcalm) Wastewater Treatment Plant and Wastewater System Upgrades	0	0	3	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	39
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) East Side Combined Sewer Overflow Improvements	5	5	3	5	5	0	5	5	0	5	38
Osceola County PP Brownfield Redevelopment Authority	5	5	5	1	0	5	5	5	1	5	37
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Grand Walk Sustainable Business Park	5	0	3	5	5	3	5	5	0	5	36

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2007)
EDA Targeted Community Projects List
WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Applicant/Name (County) Project Description	Ratio of Local Match	Match \$ Secured	Preliminary Engineering Complete	Create Jobs	Retain Jobs	Letters of Commitment	Utilities Served	Project in Plan	Job-Cost Ratio	Community Distress	Project Points Totals
Mecosta County Development Corporation / Morton Township (Mecosta) PP Mid State Industrial Park Promotions	5	0	0	3	3	0	5	5	10	5	36
City of Ionia (Ionia) Southside River Development	0	5	5	3	0	3	5	5	3	5	34
City of Holland (Allegan) South End Street and Infrastructure Program	5	0	3	5	5	0	5	5	2	3	33
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) New Water Supply Line to Franklin Reservoir	5	5	3	0	5	0	5	5	0	5	33
Osceola County PP Countywide Tourism Study	0	0	5	3	0	5	5	5	5	5	33
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Street and Bridge Improvements	5	0	3	1	5	0	5	5	3	5	32
City of Holland (Allegan) Global Welcome Center, Holland Airport	5	0	3	0	5	0	5	5	5	3	31
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Seward Avenue Extension	3	0	3	5	5	0	5	5	0	5	31
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Steelcase Redevelopment Project	5	0	0	5	0	3	5	5	3	5	31
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Urban Land Assembly	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	5	6	5	31
Village of Howard City (Montcalm) Ensley Street / Federal Road Improvement	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	5	6	5	31

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2007)
EDA Targeted Community Projects List
WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Applicant/Name (County) Project Description	Ratio of Local Match	Match \$ Secured	Preliminary Engineering Complete	Create Jobs	Retain Jobs	Letters of Commitment	Utilities Served	Project in Plan	Job-Cost Ratio	Community Distress	Project Points Totals
City of Wyoming (Kent) Eastern Avenue Industrial Redevelopment	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	5	6	5	31
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Water Main Extensions	5	0	3	5	0	0	5	5	1	5	29
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Madison Square, South Town Redevelopment	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	5	3	5	28
Pierson Township (Montcalm) Amy School Road Industrial Park	0	0	3	1	1	3	2	5	8	5	28
City of Reed City (Osceola) PP Industrial Park Feasibility Study	1	5	0	1	0	0	5	5	5	5	27
City of Wyoming (Kent) Kelvinator Site Redevelopment	0	0	0	5	3	0	5	5	4	5	27
City of Holland (Allegan) Waverly Industrial Park	0	0	3	5	0	0	5	5	5	3	26
City of Wyoming (Kent) Chicago Drive Industrial Rehabilitation	0	0	0	5	1	0	5	5	4	5	25
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Wealthy Jefferson Initiative	5	0	3	1	1	0	5	5	0	5	25
City of Reed City (Osceola) Business Incubator	1	5	0	1	0	0	5	5	3	5	25
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Joint Regional Biosolids Management	5	0	3	1	0	0	5	5	0	5	24
City of Wyoming (Kent) Delphi Industrial Redevelopment	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	5	3	5	23

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2007)
EDA Targeted Community Projects List
WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Applicant/Name (County) Project Description	Ratio of Local Match	Match \$ Secured	Preliminary Engineering Complete	Create Jobs	Retain Jobs	Letters of Commitment	Utilities Served	Project in Plan	Job-Cost Ratio	Community Distress	Project Points Totals
Pierson Township (Montcalm) Renaissance Zone	0	0	5	1	0	0	4	5	3	5	23
Mecosta County Development Corp. PP Value-Added Agriculture Research	0	0	0	3	0	0	5	5	5	5	23
Mecosta County Development Corp. High Speed Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure	0	0	0	3	0	0	5	5	5	5	23
City of Reed City (Osceola) Industrial Park	0	5	0	1	0	0	5	5	1	5	22
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Relocation of Amtrak Station to the Rapid's Central Station	5	0	0	1	0	0	5	5	0	5	21
City of Otsego (Allegan) Water System Program	0	5	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	21
Allendale Township (Ottawa) Mohr Industrial Park	5	0	3	1	0	0	2	5	1	3	20
City of Portland / Danby Township (Ionia) Development Site	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	0	2	5	20
Pierson Township (Montcalm) Henkle Road Improvement	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	5	4	5	19

Appendix E

2007 COMMUNITY PROJECTS LIST

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2007)
Community Projects List
WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Applicant/Name (County) Project Description	Ratio of Local Match	Match \$ Secured	Preliminary Engineering Complete	Create Jobs	Retain Jobs	Letters of Commitment	Utilities Served	Project in Plan	Job-Cost Ratio	Community Distress	Project Points Totals
City of Portland (Ionia) Rear Business Facades	0	5	5	1	1	0	5	5	10	5	37
City of Belding (Ionia) Downtown Business District Revitalization	0	5	3	1	5	3	5	5	4	5	36
City of Ionia (Ionia) PP Ionia Regional Water Master Plan	0	5	3	5	0	0	5	5	5	5	33
Osceola County Homeowner Assistance Program	5	5	5	0	1	3	3	5	0	5	32
City of Belding (Ionia) Central Riverside Park Improvements	0	5	3	1	1	3	5	5	4	5	32
Osceola County Rose Lake Park Road Paving Project	5	5	0	0	0	3	5	5	0	5	28
Osceola County Crittenden Park Electric Project	5	5	0	0	0	3	5	5	0	5	28
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Urban Marketplaces Development	5	0	0	3	3	0	5	5	2	5	28
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Habitat for Humanity Infrastructure Improvement	5	0	3	0	0	5	5	5	0	5	28
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Storm Water Improvements	5	5	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	28
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) PP River Street Park Improvement	5	0	5	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	25
City of Portland (Ionia) Maple Street Reconstruction	0	0	5	1	1	0	5	5	2	5	24

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2007)
Community Projects List
WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Applicant/Name (County) Project Description	Ratio of Local Match	Match \$ Secured	Preliminary Engineering Complete	Create Jobs	Retain Jobs	Letters of Commitment	Utilities Served	Project in Plan	Job-Cost Ratio	Community Distress	Project Points Totals
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Railroad Depot Restoration	5	0	0	0	0	3	5	5	0	5	23
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) PP Riverwalk Phase III Bridge Extension	5	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	23
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Water Main Upgrades/Replacements	5	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	23
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Greening Infrastructure Project	5	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	23
Osceola County Rose Lake Park Electric Project	5	0	0	0	0	3	3	5	0	5	21
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Airport Runway Extension	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	20
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Public Works Center for Leaf Composting	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	2	5	20
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) New Street Construction	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	20
Osceola County Two Mile Road Upgrade	0	0	0	1	1	3	1	5	2	5	18
City of Holland (Ottawa) Holland Civic Center Renovation/Expansion	5	0	0	1	1	0	5	5	0	0	17
City of Portland (Ionia) Pedestrian Trail Loop Completion	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	15
City of Portland (Ionia) Grand River Boardwalk	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	15

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2007)
Community Projects List
WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Applicant/Name (County) Project Description	Ratio of Local Match	Match \$ Secured	Preliminary Engineering Complete	Create Jobs	Retain Jobs	Letters of Commitment	Utilities Served	Project in Plan	Job-Cost Ratio	Community Distress	Project Points Totals
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) PP Utility Master Plan	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	15
City of Portland (Ionia) Rowe Avenue Reconstruction	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	10