MICHIGAN PROSPERITY INITIATIVE:
Region 2 -- Major Assets and Strategies

Top Draft Priority Strategies,
Region 2 Planning Commission

- Identify business needs for workforce development across the region.
- Work with community colleges, and private and public colleges and universities to match business needs for workforce development with programs to meet those needs
  - Develop workforce and education strategies to increase educational levels, high wage jobs, and promote business retention/expansion to retain our graduating students.
- Identify existing infrastructure maintenance and repair needs and develop a regional capital improvements plan (CIP) to implement that maintenance.
- Develop a regional capital improvements plan (CIP) to implement improvements and expansion of infrastructure (e.g. sewer, water, electric and gas utilities, broadband, digital) where appropriate throughout the entire Region.
  - Improve and expand infrastructure (e.g. sewer, water, electric and gas utilities, broadband, digital) where appropriate throughout the entire Region.
- Explore options for alternative transportation modes between population centers.
- Continue to promote joint planning efforts.
- Where the region's identify may need improvement, work with regional leaders to identify strategies for improvement, and then promote those attributes as they develop
  - Encourage the creation/improvement of the images of the various populated areas in the region.
- Open our communities to immigration and welcome diversity.
- Develop a capital improvements program (CIP) for the development of amenities that attract young professionals.
- Integrate indigenous arts and culture with cities and small towns, including encouraging the further development of the Armory Arts Village in Jackson.
- Include surrounding rural communities in placemaking efforts whenever possible.
- Develop residential and commercial energy efficiency programs.

Major Natural & Infrastructure Assets

Natural Assets

- Inland lakes and rivers
- Scenic beauty, including the Irish Hills
- Wide-open spaces
- Clean air
- Clean water
- Wetlands
- Agricultural land
- Hunting and fishing
- State parks, Hidden Lake Gardens (MSU), and various county and municipal parks
- Sand and gravel

Infrastructure Assets

- Regional hospitals
- Electric power generating facilities
- Hillsdale College, Adrian College , Sienna Heights University, Spring Arbor University, Baker College (as well as close proximity to the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, and Eastern Michigan University)
- Jackson Community College (including satellite campuses in Adrian and Hillsdale)
- Most communities have sewer and water
- I-94 as well as US-127, US-223, and US-12
- Broadband service
- Rail connections (both passenger and freight; and potential stop on Chicago-Detroit high speed rail)
- Existing and proposed trail systems
- Industrial parks
- General Aviation Airports – Lenawee County Airport, Hillsdale Municipal Airport, Jackson County Airport – Reynolds Field
- Extensive cellular network
- Public transit – both line-haul and demand response service

October 3, 2010

Other Assets

- Golf courses
- A variety of historic resources including US-12 (a Historic State Heritage Route) and Downtown Hudson (listed on the National Historic Register)
- Close proximity to Ann Arbor, Lansing, Toledo, Detroit, Battle Creek, and Kalamazoo
- Michigan International Speedway
- A variety of arts and culture venues (Croswell Opera House and other theaters, community festivals, the Armory Arts Village (live/work space for artists))
- Border location
- Populated areas that anchor a sub-region: the Adrian, Tecumseh, and Clinton Area; the Hillsdale and Jonesville Area; the Jackson Area; the Brooklyn-Irish Hills Area

Draft Strategies by Category

Diversifying and Globally Connecting Business

- **Business assistance**
  - Provide an improved and expanded suite of business assistance services through a variety of county and local entities, including but not limited to:
    - Responding to inquiries from people about business opportunities in the region;
    - Connecting existing businesses to a range of business services by many nonprofit providers; and
    - Helping resolve red tape problems.
    - Coordinating all business assistance entities in the region (e.g. chambers of commerce, DDAs, county economic development entities, etc.).
    - Linking businesses to resources for training and market diversification.
- **Business acceleration**
  - Identify the regional elements of, and pursue the further development of a recreation/tourism cluster (integrated geographic marketing—day trips, etc. and integrate with arts and culture).
  - Market unique cultural and recreational resources in the Region.
  - Identify growth industries in the region and develop specific strategies for further growth and job creation.
  - Analyze the needs of regional businesses for IT and the existing seeds of an IT economy and develop and implement strategies to advance the information economy in the Region.

3

- **Business attraction**
  - Develop a detailed inventory of existing industrial sites in the region, and make it available on a web-based marketing tool.
  - Complete an analysis of how existing regional clusters can expand using available sites (target industries that can be competitive).

- **Cluster Enhancement**
  - Work with businesses in existing clusters to identify strategies for enhancing those clusters. Existing clusters to target
    - Food innovation.
    - Forestry and wood products.
    - Engineering, technology, and design.
    - Supply chain logistics.
    - Arts and culture.

Increasing Capital Funding

- Seek avenues to pursue and facilitate local capital development and attraction
  - Increase access to capital for business startups, expansion, and diversification.

Creating an Entrepreneurial Culture

- **Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Capital Attraction**
  - Develop economic gardening and entrepreneurial support programs
  - Engage in region-wide dialogue among business and government leaders to promote the entrepreneurial spirit.

Advancing Innovation & Technology

- Provide support for business innovation
  - Engage in region-wide dialogue among business and government leaders to solicit ideas for, and to support economic innovation.

Educating our Future Workforce

- Encourage career laddering within the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) system.

Retooling our Existing Workforce

- **Workforce Development and Higher Education**
  - Identify business needs for workforce development across the region..

October 3, 2010

- o Work with community colleges, and private and public colleges and universities to match business needs for workforce development with programs to meet those needs.
    - Develop workforce and education strategies to increase educational levels, high wage jobs, and promote business retention/expansion to retain our graduating students.

Attracting & Retaining Talent

- **Population and Talent Retention and Attraction**
    - o Engage regional business and government leaders in developing strategies to retain people already living in the region
    - o Engage regional business and government leaders in developing strategies to attract people to the region
    - o Open our communities to immigration and welcome diversity.
    - o Engage regional business and government leaders in developing strategies to retain the highly educated, skilled, creative and talented already living in the region
    - o Engage regional business and government leaders in developing strategies to attract highly educated, skilled, creative and talented people
        - Develop a capital improvements program (CIP) for the amenities that attract well-educated retirees.
        - Develop a capital improvements program (CIP) for the development of amenities that attract young professionals.

Marketing Each Region

- **Regional Identity and Image**
    - o Define a positive identity for the region based on existing assets, and refine it as necessary over time.
    - o Promote the region's positive identity and the identity of sub-regions.
        - Encourage advertising campaigns for the various populated areas listed above.
    - o Where the region's identify may need improvement, work with regional leaders to identify strategies for improvement, and then promote those attributes as they develop
        - Encourage the creation/improvement of the images of the various populated areas listed above.
    - o Work with regional business and government leaders to develop a friendly welcoming attitude
    - o Improve entryway aesthetics and way finding
        - Encourage local communities and the populated areas listed above to improve the visual quality their entrances and the clarity of directional signs.

5

Strengthening Quality of Place

- **Placemaking Improvements**
  - Target catalytic investments in key urban, suburban and rural places
    - Improve wayfinding and accessibility to culturally significant places such as historic sites/districts; major parks and green spaces; museums, libraries, other cultural institutions through the deployment of clear, consistent and distinctive signs.
    - Integrate indigenous arts and culture with cities and small towns, including encouraging the further development of the Armory Arts Village in Jackson.
    - Ensure indigenous building integrity especially of historic structures.
    - Redevelop our Region's Brownfield properties and encourage the use of SmartGrowth tenets for future development.
  - Maintain close access to green spaces in key urban places
    - Regional units of government along with business leaders collaborate on the continued planning and development of local park and green space networks.
  - Promote mixed-use development that creates districts with vibrant economic activity.
    - Regional units of government adopt mixed use planning elements and zoning ordinances (such as form-based zoning).
    - Regional units of government develop planning elements and zoning ordinance elements to preserve waterfront access and encourage its presence alongside complimentary uses.
    - Regional units of government develop planning elements and zoning ordinance elements to create pedestrian and bike friendly infrastructure which connect people to parks and other destinations.
  - Regional units of government and business leaders develop and promote design guidelines that serve to link urban to rural areas visually, functionally and culturally
    - Include surrounding rural communities in placemaking efforts whenever possible.
  - Identify regional assets that serve to maximize 4 seasons as a tool to attract and maintain both a year around population and tourists
    - Promote winter activities such as cross-county skiing, skating, sledding and make parks available for those activities.
    - Promote area lakes for recreational and sporting activities.

- **Cultural and Creative Assets**
  - Local units of government, business leaders and arts and cultural organizations initiate joint and cross-advertising of activities between arts and cultural organizations
    - Support the effort of the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Jackson County and similar efforts in Hillsdale and Lenawee Counties to

coordinate the planning and promotion of cultural events and encourage the expansion of the effort region wide.

- o Inventory the location or clustering of key cultural facilities and activities and develop joint business opportunities and market those facilities and activities.
    - Identify unique cultural and recreational resources and promote the development of trails and recreational opportunities in the Region.
- o Create day trip advertising of tourist, cultural and shopping activities

Seizing Green Opportunities

- **Green Economy and Sustainability**
    - o Engage business owners, university researchers, workforce development agencies and colleges, industry and entrepreneurs on how to leverage regional assets to create green businesses and jobs
    - o Alternative energy
        - Encourage amendments to local ordinances which allow and reasonably regulate wind and solar energy generation.
    - o Energy efficiency
        - Develop residential and commercial energy efficiency programs.
    - o LEED certification
        - Become a leader in promotion of LEED certified buildings.

Optimizing Infrastructure Investment

- **Infrastructure Improvements**
    - o Maintain and improve regional infrastructure
        - Identify existing infrastructure maintenance and repair needs and develop a regional capital improvements plan (CIP) to implement that maintenance.
        - Develop a regional capital improvements plan (CIP) to implement improvements and expansion of infrastructure (e.g. sewer, water, electric and gas utilities, broadband, digital) where appropriate throughout the entire Region.
        - Encourage expansion of the electric distribution grid and upgrade it to a "smart grid" to accommodate wind energy farms.
        - Encourage improvement of cellular service.

Enhancing Transportation Connections

- **Significantly expand transit-related infrastructure.**
    - o Explore options for alternative transportation modes between population centers.
    - o Market the potential for a Jackson stop along the potential Detroit to Chicago High Speed Rail Line.

7

- o Market the potential for a Jackson stop on the proposed Ann Arbor-Detroit Commuter Rail Line.
- o Regional units of government with the support of business leaders create and maintain a public transit system including a dial-a-ride service where economically feasible
  - Regional units of government cooperatively plan for transit-oriented development and implement zoning ordinances to encourage TOD.
  - Work with the Jackson Transit Authority and the other transit providers to expand public transit services.
  - Promote local efforts to convert the Jackson Amtrak Depot into an intermodal station for various rail, intercity bus, and transit services.

Shaping Responsive Government

- **Regional Planning and Collaboration**
  - o Coordination and collaboration of public services
    - Prepare, adopt and annually update a regional strategic growth plan with the involvement of local economic development groups and other local stakeholders and coordinate implementation of the Plan through local economic development groups; state, regional and local governments; and local non profit organizations.
      - ❖ Proactively collaborate region-wide to advance the mission, goals, and objectives of the CEDs.
  - o Engage in capacity building activities to improve leadership and service quality across the region
    - Insure complete region-wide data gathering and sharing.
    - Seek funding for a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development financed through a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program.
    - Continue to promote joint planning efforts.