

**2006 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**

November 2006

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.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report is being submitted in fulfillment of the U.S. Economic Development Administration's (U.S. EDA's) requirement of an annual Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Report from all designated Districts. The members within the seven county district represented in this report have indicated their intention of utilizing the Region's Annual Report for their planning needs and designation obligations during the coming year. 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.

The last five-year update of the document was performed in 2003. While we update the CEDS every year, every five years we perform a more comprehensive update that includes additional information and allows for further reflection on the actual process. Changes to the 2003 - 2006 CEDS documents included:

- Additional Census information and other demographic information was added in 2003 for each of the counties, the Region, and Michigan (for comparison purposes).
- The separation of projects into two categories occurred in 2004. The intent of this breakdown is to encourage communities and other organizations to submit a wide variety of projects, but to also acknowledge that many are more in-line with EDA's goals.
- Revised criteria for ranking projects in 2003, reflecting projects typically submitted.
- Revised goals, which generally change every year to reflect community desires.
- Removed "Special Impact Area" for Central Kent County in 2006 since Kent County now qualifies for EDA programs.

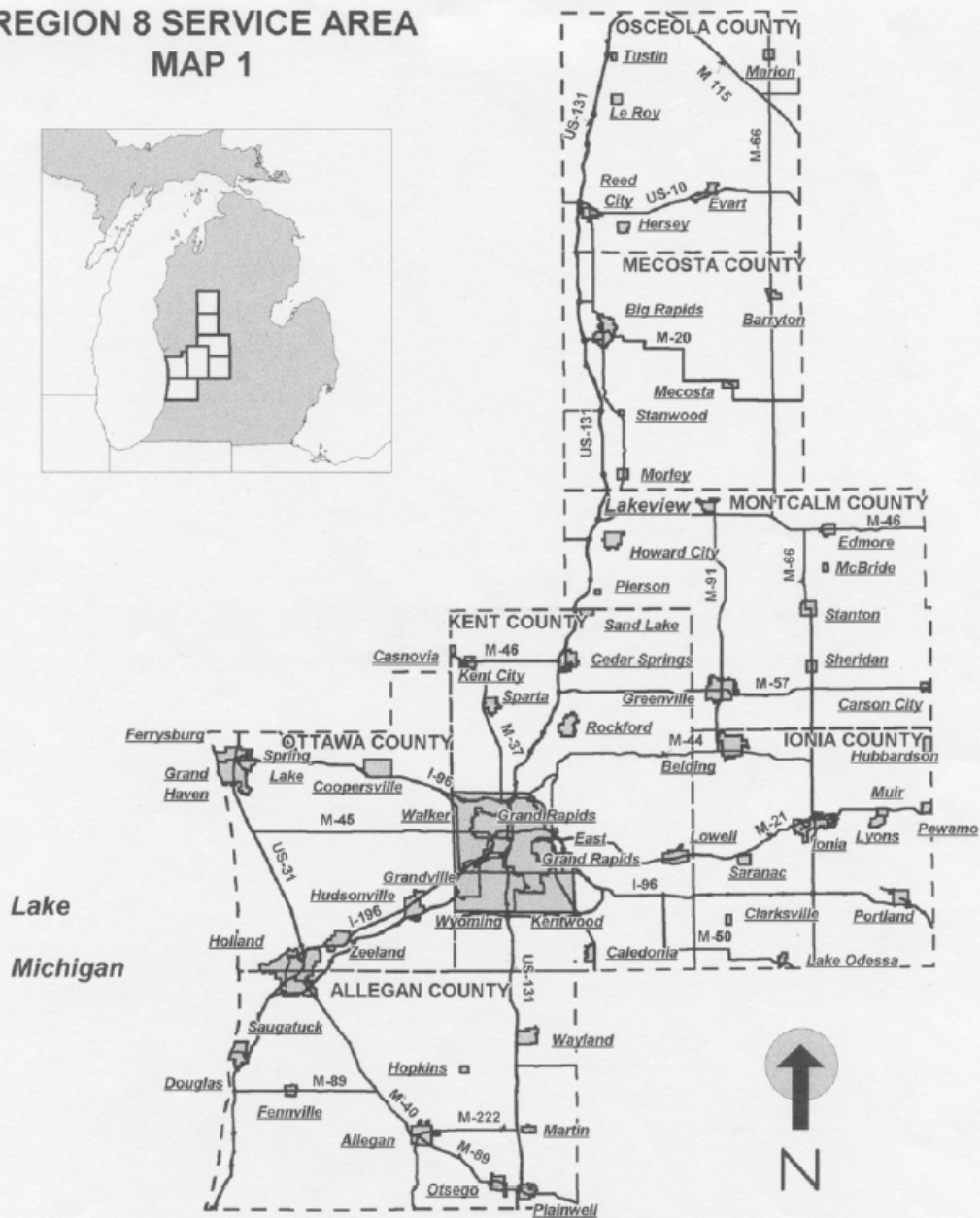
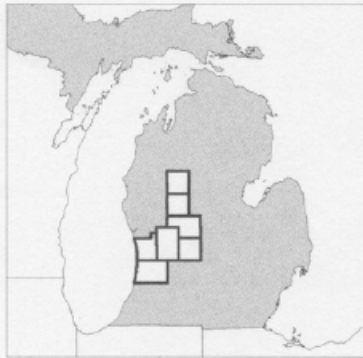
Our 2003, 2004, and 2005 CEDS were approved by the U.S. EDA with no changes required.

The 2006 CEDS is an "Annual Report," required for each of the intervening four years between the major updates. The annual report serves to 1) summarize and assess a given year's CEDS activities, and 2) present new or modified program strategies and projects.

The West Michigan Regional Planning Commission would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the members of the CEDS Committee. Their efforts make it possible for communities to submit projects, develop this report, and bring projects to the implementation phase with the assistance of the U.S. EDA.

With the submission of this 2006 CEDS Annual Report, the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) completes its thirty-fourth year as an Economic Development District.

REGION 8 SERVICE AREA MAP 1



Source: Michigan CGI Framework

West Michigan Regional Planning Commission

II. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This section reports any changes in the composition of the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) Board and CEDS Committee. New operating procedures are also noted.

A. WMRPC Board

The WMRPC Board is comprised of elected and appointed officials from throughout Region 8 who focus on issues and programs which are common to its 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 governments and agencies.

The WMRPC Board currently has a 23-member policy board, which includes two representatives designated by each member community and three at-large Board member spaces reserved to assure broad representation of the community, including minority representation as required by EDA. There are also three alternate representatives designated by member communities. The current list of board members is provided 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 will increase the size of the Board to 30 members – creating the appropriate ratio of public and private sector representatives. Additionally, there are three non-voting members from the City of Cedar Springs. The WMRPC also adopted a set of CEDS Guidelines that will 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, 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 offers assistance to communities on planning, project implementation, and grant writing. In addition, at any given time, the WMRPC is engaged in special projects, which may be 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-104 in Ottawa County, and M-66 in Ionia County. The WMRPC is also assisting in two transit studies and is developing a map of non-motorized facilities for an eight-county area. The Region is working on a land use plan for Sherman Township. The Region is also developing Shoreline Land Use Studies in Ottawa County and Allegan County.

WMRPC staff consists of a full-time director, planner, and administrative assistant.

West Michigan Regional Planning Commission Board of Directors

Name	Address	Telephone
Steve McNeal (Allegan County)	5544 – 141st Avenue Holland, MI 49423	(616) 990-1089
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
Jerry Homminga (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
James Jendrasiak (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
Joe Marhofer (Ionia County)	8408 Krupp Road Belding, MI 48809	(616) 794-1264
Charles Luteran (Mecosta County)	8959 Jenny Lane Stanwood, MI 49346	(231) 796-0637
John Todd (Mecosta County)	22870 – 22 Mile Road Paris, MI 49338	(231) 832-5944
John Johansen (Montcalm County)	3474 Monroe Road Greenville, MI 48838	(616) 754-5375
Marcia Walker (Montcalm County)	610 S. Franklin Street Greenville, MI 48838	(616) 754-8236
Elmo Hoaglund (Osceola County)	19020 – 130th Avenue Tustin, MI 49688	(231) 829-3540
Paul Thibodeau (Osceola County)	21654 Apache Pass Reed City, MI 49677	(231) 832-2572
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

Name	Address	Telephone
L. Charles Mulholland* (At-Large Member)	4685 N. Bailey Road Coral, MI 49322	(231) 354-6325
Regina Davis* (At-Large Member)	West MI Fair Housing Center 1514 Wealthy SE – Suite 226 Grand Rapids, MI 49506	(616) 451-2980
Tammy Holt* (At-Large Member)	1460 S. Saxony Drive Grand Rapids, MI 49508	
Tom Lindeman* (Montcalm County)	P.O. Box 96 Greenville, MI 48838	(616) 754-4918
Ray Steinke (Alternate) (Mecosta County)	19207 W. Jefferson, Box 141 Morley, MI 49336	(231) 856-7090

*Represents Private Sector Representative

2006 Executive Committee

- Charles Mulholland, Chair
- Vice Chair – Tim Cochran
- Ed Berghorst, Treasurer
- John Todd, Member

B. 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 16-member committee comprised of two 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.

**WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)
 COMMITTEE**

NAME	RESIDENCE	AFFILIATION
Chuck Birr	At-Large	City of Fennville
Edward Berghorst	Ottawa County	County Commissioner Ottawa County
Diane Smith **	Ionia County	Director Ionia County Economic Alliance
Julianne Burns	Ionia County	Grants Coordinator
Dan Petersen	Montcalm County	County Commissioner Montcalm County
Tim Cochran	Kent County	Wyoming Planning Department
Mike Fleitman	Mecosta County	Executive Director Mecosta County Development Corporation
Susan Shannon	Kent County	Grand Rapids – Business Advocate
Larry “Casey” Jones *	Allegan County	County Commissioner Allegan County
Dorothy Ravell	At-Large	Growth Finance Corporation
Dan Massy	Osceola County	Osceola Economic Alliance
Larry Morlock	Osceola County	Osceola Economic Alliance
Cindy Plautz	Mecosta County	City of Big Rapids Neighborhood Services Coordinator
Ken Rizzio	Ottawa County	Executive Director Ottawa County Economic Development Office
Donald Smucker	Montcalm County	Montcalm County

** Chairperson * Vice-Chairperson

C. 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:

- Michael Leon, Economic Development Specialist, Michigan Department of Transportation
- Greg Northrup, President, West Michigan Strategic Alliance, WIRED Initiative
- Kara Wood, Community Assistance Team, Michigan State Housing Development Authority
- Jeff Meyer, Executive Director, Van Andel Global Trade Center

The Region's 2006 CEDS Update was prepared with assistance from all WMRPC staff including Dave Bee (Director), Steven Stepek (Planner), and Nancy Murphy (Administrative Assistance). 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 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.

III. PAST YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

A. Accomplishments

The following is a list of accomplishments of the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) under its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) during the 2005/06 program year:

- Identified and ranked economic development projects for Region 8, performed economic research, reviewed the goals and strategies of the Region's CEDS Program, and prepared an Annual Report as required by the U.S. EDA.
- Prepared summary reports on the economic development successes and concerns over the past several years for each county within the Region. These reports are contained within the 2006 CEDS Update and are handed out individually to inform local officials, state and federal representatives, and the general public regarding economic development needs and opportunities within West Michigan.
- Educated local officials regarding the CEDS process, and the availability of EDA grants and services via telephone, mail, e-mail, newsletters, site visits, and presentations. Provided technical assistance to communities working on potential EDA projects. Evaluated eligibility of local projects for EDA grants.
- Performed an inventory and analysis of economic development programs and opportunities in West Michigan. The planning process was completed June 30, 2006.
- Worked with EDA to implement "Interim Rule Changes" set by EDA. The Director set three meetings between EDA and Michigan's Economic Development Districts to provide EDA opportunities to work with regions to move forward with the rule changes.
- Maintained and distributed "Grant and Loan Opportunities for Local Community Development" that lists 172 opportunities for programs related to economic development, transportation, water and sewer improvements, parks and recreation, environment, housing, community facilities, cultural, and others. Information for each program includes information related to the provider, contacts, telephone numbers, e-mail address, due dates, amounts, eligibility, required matches, and a complete description of the programs.
- Through its CEDS Committee and other contacts, maintained a regional network of professionals, which can respond effectively to economic opportunities as they arise. The Committee members shared ideas and information on common economic concerns and changing technologies and policies. The Committee also provided direction to WMRPC staff on local technical assistance needs throughout the District. Topics of discussion included programs and opportunities with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, EDA, The Right Place Program, USDA Rural Development, transportation issues, Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center, and many other issues related to economic and community development.
- Provided "Data Center" services in response to economic and demographic requests from government, educational, private, and non-profit organizations and individuals in West Michigan. Continued on-going process of updating existing in-house data and seeking additional data sources, specifically through the use of the Internet and of CD ROMs available from various state and federal agencies.
- Continued to provide support services to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) through our annual work program, through the support of two corridor studies, and

supporting the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Program. Other MDOT projects include two ongoing transit studies and the creation of a map of non-motorized facilities across an eight-county area.

- Supporting several local projects including two land use plans, two recreation plans, and a community-wide survey.
- Provided 2000 Census information, and other resources, to those requesting such information, and analyzed Census information specific to the Region. Incorporated 2000 Census information into a variety of plans and studies.
- Continued to function as the regional clearinghouse for most state and federally funded programs. During January through December of 2005, 53 projects in our District were reviewed under the Federal Project Review System for communities seeking federal assistance.
- Continued to expand WMRPC's in-house GIS mapping capabilities. Staff continues to research GIS technologies, import various digital data files obtained from local, state and federal agencies, and coordinate with efforts of the Michigan Information Center to create a statewide GIS framework.
- Continued publishing the WMRPC's newsletter entitled "Region 8 Notes" every other month. The newsletter was mailed to all local units and many economic development organizations in the Region and contained information on a variety of topics including economic development, planning issues, resources, ongoing projects, and technical assistance.
- Supported and participated in local economic and community development initiatives and events occurring throughout our Region, including attendance at economic development meetings, meeting with local officials to discuss local planning needs, and other initiatives related to local economic and community development.
- Continued to strengthen partnerships with various agencies and organizations involved with economic development such as United Growth for Kent County, USDA Rural Development, the Michigan Rural Development Council, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP), the Michigan Association of Regions (MAR), the West Michigan Strategic Alliance, and local universities. Director serves on the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council and was Secretariat for MAR from 2004 through 2006.
- WMRPC organized the statewide Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) conference held in Grand Rapids in July 2006. The MAR Conference was again held jointly with the annual statewide "MTPA Conference," the association of metropolitan transportation planning organizations. The Director and Chair were very active in MAR activities throughout 2006 – including the Chair was President of MAR and the Director was Secretariat.
- The WMRPC has tracked a number of evolving state and federal policies on a variety of programs affecting our region such as the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council. The WMRPC continuously searches for additional resources and opportunities to benefit the District.

B. Assessment of Program

In November of 2005, the WMRPC Executive Committee examined the Commission's achievements during 2005. In January 2006 the Board of Directors reviewed and commented on the information. Each year we reflect on our successes and shortcomings and set the course for the following year. The following lists the progress towards last year's focus areas, other significant WMRPC events in 2005, and the focus areas for 2006.

Progress Towards WMRPC 2005 Focus Areas

Economic Development

- Maintain the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) program and continue CEDS Committee activities. *We completed the CEDS and forwarded complete CEDS to 75 organizations including EDA, MEDC, USDA, U.S. Legislators, members, and others. The CEDS Committee met four times and received training from Ron Steiner (MSU Value Added Agriculture Agent) and Birgit Klohs (President, Right Place Inc.). Performed a strategic plan to set new directions for CEDS process.*
- Work closely with communities, the CEDS Committee, entrepreneurs, and EDA to identify and promote EDA projects within Region 8. *Distributed solicitation materials to all communities in Region 8 inviting participation with EDA & Region 8 (CEDS List). Met with several communities and County Boards of Commissioners to provide information about the program. The WMRPC wrote the preliminary EDA grant application for Grand Rapids (Health Hill Wet Lab Incubator). Met with EDA through MAR to learn about EDA's rule change and the effects of John Peck's retirement in September 2005.*
- Work closely with EDA to develop a process that addresses changes to EDA's vision of how regional planning organizations promote economic development. *Worked with EDA in December 2004/January 2005 to develop a suitable grant application and work program. Performed a strategic plan to identify new directions. Followed Rule Changes in EDA and WMRPC Board passed a resolution detailing issues with new rules related to Board representation, match requirements, etc. Mailed letters and resolution to all of our U.S. legislators.*
- Work with CEDS Committee and EDA to evaluate economic development facilities, programs, and opportunities across the region. *Grant approved by EDA and work progressing on study. We have completed surveys, inventories, and interviews.*
- Recruit new at-large members for the CEDS Committee and encourage member participation. *No progress at this time in recruitment efforts. We are encouraging member participation through continuous communication and through the normal CEDS process, the expanded EDA program (additional \$8,000), and the Economic Development Inventory and Analysis.*
- Review and strengthen relationship between communities, businesses, the CEDS Committee, and the WMRPC Board. *Efforts made through strategic plan and the Economic Development Inventory and Analysis.*

Transportation

- Maintain our Transportation Planning program under MDOT. *We had a very productive year with MDOT and worked very closely with both the regional MDOT offices and those in Lansing. Continued to work with local groups on two corridor studies (M-40/M-89 and M-66) and finalized work with Ottawa County on the M-104 corridor study. Worked with MDOT to continue the Transportation Asset Management Program and completed the physical inventory and evaluation of all federally funded roads in Region 8. Dave Bee served on the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council. Steve Stepek improved the Region's Transportation Asset Management Program. Held a Rural Safety Transportation Forum in September. Began developing work program for a map of non-motorized facilities in MDOT's Grand Region (eight counties).*
- Continue Transportation Asset Management Program in Region 8. *One of the first regions to complete the 2005 inventory of federally funded roads in Michigan. Assisted with a variety of training and coordinated efforts between the Asset Management Council, county road commissions, and communities across Region 8. Prepared report of 2004 results.*
- Serve on the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council. *Dave Bee continues to serve on the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council and attends the monthly meetings in Lansing.*
- Continue to participate in the M40/M89 and M66 Corridor Committees. *Continue to coordinate the M40/M89 Committee (includes mailings, agendas, and taking minutes). Continue to serve on the M66 Corridor Committee. Both groups meet quarterly.*
- Expand rural opportunities with MDOT Regions. *Coordinated Rural Safety Forum in September. Continued to involve all road commission in Asset Management Program. Currently working with MDOT to expand traffic count program.*
- With the assistance of members, identify, and seek funding for, a 2006 transportation project. *Working with MDOT to develop a map of non-motorized facilities in MDOT's Grand Region. This project, along with Asset Management and the expanded traffic count program will occupy all of our time in 2006.*

Coastal Management

- Work with Allegan County and Ottawa County to complete "Phase III" of the Shoreline Study and begin working with counties on Phase IV. *Completed Phase III and started on Phase IV.*
- Continue to work with MDEQ's Coastal Management Program to identify planning opportunities in Region 8. *Submitted grant application to determine the feasibility of placing wind turbine generators in agricultural areas and publicly owned spaces to provide alternative energy resources and income for farmers and local government units.*

Hazard Mitigation

- Work with the Emergency Management Division of the Michigan State Police to finish Hazard Mitigation Plans for Montcalm County, Osceola County, Mecosta County, Ionia County, and the City of Ionia. *Determine feasibility of creating an ongoing program. Completed all plans. Still working on approval process.*

Land Use

- Complete Big Rapids Township Land Use Plan. *Completed plan. Going through local approval process.*
- Serve on Grand Rapids Pattern Book Advisory Committee. *Continue to serve on Committee.*
- Continue to follow the progress of the 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. *Serving on United Growth for Kent County's Legislative Committee to promote Commerce Centers, which was one of the Council's recommendations.*
- Assist with Montcalm County's Land Use Plan whenever appropriate. *Attended "futuring session" in April with County's Planning Commission. Offered assistance and continue to review information forwarded to the Region (County forwarded copy of Fact Book).*

Associations and Outside Organizations

- Participate with Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) on activities to increase the visibility of regions statewide. Perform duties associated with secretary/treasurer of MAR. *Charles Mulholland, Dave Bee, and Steve Stepek attended the 2005 MAR Conference in Traverse City in July. Charles Mulholland elected MAR President for fourth term and Dave Bee appointed Secretariat for second year.*
- Attend (staff and members of the Board) the annual MAR Conference. Attend the Michigan Society of Planning Conference (Director/Planner), and the EDA Conference in Chicago (Director). *Attended MAR Conference. There was no EDA Conference and sent Steve Stepek to MAR Conference instead of MSP (now MAP) Conference due to expense of Mackinac Island and to show more support for MAR. MSP Conference also conflicted with WMRPC Board Meeting.*
- Continue to support MSU's United Growth for Kent County. *Dave Bee continues to serve on the Coalition and several committees. WMRPC is a member of United Growth (\$100 annual dues).*
- Perform cost/benefit analysis of NARC/NADO membership. *We have not done this, but did look into joint membership with MAR (not possible). NADO was/is a very valuable resource during the EDA rule change process. Membership is \$2,000 annually.*

Cooperation and Coordination

- Continue to function as the Regional Clearinghouse Review Agency for federal funding programs. *This is an ongoing process.*
- Maintain our "Information Center" to meet the needs of local units of government in Region 8. *This is an ongoing process. Additionally, using additional EDA funds to gather land use plans for library.*
- 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 and update our website. *Published six newsletters that were distributed to communities and organizations across Region 8. Conducted many site visits related to EDA and Economic Development Inventory and Analysis. Nancy Murphy updated website.*

- Host Regional Event(s). Transportation Forum, recreation workshops, and others. *Hosted Rural Safety Transportation Forum in September and Asset Management Training in June. Using additional EDA funds to develop template for recreation plans. Initiated “restarting” of the CVB initiative in Barry, Ionia, and Montcalm counties. Held an Open House in June.*
- Promote membership in additional Kent County Communities. *Sent letters to each member of Kent County Board of Commissioners detailing the benefits of membership and a letter addressing issues related to dues. Discussed issue with individual community members as opportunities arose.*

Capacity Building

- Continue to build our GIS (Geographic Information System) capabilities. *This is an ongoing process. Steve Stepek continues to attend Michigan’s GIS Users Group monthly and seeks to keep our equipment and software up-to-date. We have assembled a “capital improvements schedule” for computer and mapping equipment.*
- Continue to expand Technical Assistance to Local Entities in the areas of planning, project development, grants, and implementation. Pursue funding or fees to support these activities. *Provided technical assistance for Big Rapids Township. Also provided many services to members at no charge (community profiles and specific data requests). Did not actively pursue new opportunities due to existing quantity of work.*
- Bring information to the Board using speakers and other resources. All five Board Meetings had speakers. *Speakers included George Erickcek from the Upjohn Institute, Julie Stoneman from the Land Conservancy of West Michigan, Cheryl Mendoza from the Lake Michigan Federation, and Dave Guikema from MSU Extension. Additionally, the June meeting had a panel of experts that included: Steve Redmond from MDOT, Catherine Ballard from MDEQ, Charamy Cleary and Rich Harlow from MDA, Aileen Waldron from USDA, and Brian Waters from DLEG.*
- Continue to upgrade web site and include additional reports. *Nancy Murphy updated the web site and we acquired software to allow more reports to be placed on the site.*

Other Significant WMRPC Events in 2005

- John Peck retired from EDA in September.
- Bill Hoyt retired from the City of Grand Rapids’ Planning Department in October and left the Board of the WMRPC after many years of service.
- Bill Sikkell left the Board of the WMRPC after many years of service.
- Jonathan Scott (CEDS Chair) left Mecosta County in October.
- Hired new Auditor.

WMRPC 2006 Focus Areas

Economic Development

- Maintain and improve the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) program and continue CEDS Committee activities.
- Follow changes to EDA and keep members up-to-date on issues related to changes.
- 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 promote economic development.
- Work with CEDS Committee and EDA to evaluate economic development facilities, programs, and opportunities across the region. Complete Inventory and Analysis Study.
- Recruit new at-large members for the CEDS Committee with assistance from members and CEDS Committee, and encourage member participation.
- Review and strengthen relationship between communities, businesses, 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 Regions through Asset Management, Traffic Count program, and other MDOT initiatives.
- Work with MDOT and the West Michigan Regional Shoreline Development Commission (Region 14) to develop a map of non-motorized facilities in MDOT's Grand Region.
- With the assistance of members, identify, and seek funding for, a 2007 transportation project.

Coastal Management

- Work with Allegan County and Ottawa County to complete "Phase IV" of the Shoreline Study.
- Continue to work with MDEQ's Coastal Management Program to identify planning opportunities in Region 8.

Hazard Mitigation

- Work with the Emergency Management Division of the Michigan State Police to finish Hazard Mitigation Plans for Montcalm County, Osceola County, Mecosta County, Ionia County, and the City of Ionia.

Land Use

- Complete Big Rapids Township Land Use Plan.
- Continue to serve on Grand Rapids Pattern Book Advisory Committee.
- Continue to follow the progress of the 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.
- Assist with Montcalm County's Land Use Plan whenever appropriate.

Associations and Outside Organizations

- Participate with Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) on activities to increase the visibility of regions statewide. Perform duties associated with secretariat of MAR.
- Attend (staff and members of the Board) the annual MAR Conference. Assist in organizing MAR Conference since it is in Grand Rapids this year. Attend the Michigan Association of Planning Conference (Director/Planner)
- Continue to support MSU's United Growth for Kent County.

Cooperation and Coordination

- Continue to function as the Regional Clearinghouse Review Agency for federal funding programs.
- Maintain our "Information Center" to meet the needs of local units of government in Region 8.
- 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.
- Continue to expand Technical Assistance to Local Entities in the areas of planning, project development, grants, and implementation. Pursue funding or fees to support these activities.
- Bring information to the Board using speakers and other resources.
- Continue to upgrade web site and include additional reports.

Administration

- Update Personnel Policy, employee benefits package, and job descriptions

IV. CHANGES IN AREA'S ECONOMY

A. Overview of Region 8's Economy

Michigan continues to have a higher unemployment rate than the rest of the country due to the State's transition away from manufacturing-related jobs. Increases in productivity, and jobs leaving Michigan for other parts of the country and world, have had a negative impact on the amount of good paying jobs that Michigan's employers provided. During the past five years the unemployment rate in Region 8 went from 4.6 percent in 2001 (lower than Michigan's rate of 5.2 percent or the U.S. annual average of 4.7 percent) to a high of 6.9 percent in 2003 (still lower than Michigan's annual average, but slightly higher than the U.S. average for 2003). In 2004, Region 8's unemployment dropped to 6.6 percent – but the national average dropped to 5.5 percent. Finally, in 2005 the Region's unemployment rate decreased to 5.8 percent – which was still lower than Michigan's rate of 6.7 percent, but higher than the U.S. average of 5.1 percent.

For the seven counties in Region 8 covered by this CEDS Report, the 2005 Annual Average unemployment rates were as follows – EDA Distress Levels for FY 2007 are also listed:

- U.S. Average – 5.1 percent
- Michigan Average – 6.7 percent
- Region 8 Average – 5.8 percent
- Allegan County Average – 6.1 percent (Considerable)
- Ionia County Average – 7.1 percent (Considerable)
- Kent County Average – 5.7 percent (Considerable)
- Mecosta County Average – 6.9 percent (Considerable)
- Montcalm County Average – 8.4 percent (Substantial)
- Osceola County Average – 7.3 percent (Substantial)
- Ottawa County Average – 5.8 percent (EDA ineligible)

B. Updates by County

While preparing this 2006 CEDS Report, economic developers from each of the seven counties in Region 8 were contacted for an update on what has happened during the past year in their respective counties. The county reports are included on the following pages. Below are some of the re-occurring themes from these reports:

- Many communities lost jobs due to layoffs or business closings. Many are related to manufacturers' decisions to relocate outside the United States or to other areas in the United States. The Region has been hard hit due to the higher percentage of employment related to manufacturing that has fueled the Region's (and Michigan's) growth for decades. Between January 2000 and August 2004 Michigan lost 238,800 jobs, including 142,600 manufacturing jobs. "Job losses in Michigan represent 26 percent of the 917,000 U.S. jobs lost in the same period" (Grand Rapids Press, October 18, 2004).
- Most communities in Region 8 are facing budget issues and looking for creative ways to fund programs and projects. Many communities are interested in planning, but lack the resources to develop plans.
- While local funding is facing challenges, there is still the need for new government facilities

which are being built at every level of government. Many counties are building new administrative and court buildings and the need for new jail space continues to be an issue.

- The relationship of the health of cities and farmland preservation is key in West Michigan and is a set of issues that continues to grow as cities lose population while the surrounding townships grow. Farmland preservation programs, such as purchase of development rights (PDR) programs are gaining a footing in many Michigan communities. Several counties in West Michigan have PDR programs and others are investigating such programs.
- Three counties in Region 8 are investigating the demand for additional transit services to address the aging population and increasing cost of travel.
- Michigan is recognizing the demand for road maintenance projects is greater than the available resources and is addressing this issue through the Michigan Transportation Asset Management program – that is working towards creating a comprehensive inventory and analysis of transportation systems and models to help identify the “best fix at the best time.” The effort is supported by Michigan’s regions and county road commissions as well as a growing number of communities.
- West Michigan continues to face the issue of air quality related to the “transport” of pollutants across Lake Michigan from Chicago, Gary, and Milwaukee. At the present time, the EPA is not penalizing any of West Michigan’s Counties for non-attainment status – recognizing the issue of transport.
- There is a growing recognition in Michigan that cooperation between communities is essential to make the most of limited resources. More communities will plan together and work together to provide effective and affordable services to residents.
- Between 1990 and 2000 the overall region’s population increased by 158,403 people to reach 1,104,848. This represents a 16.7 percent increase and accounts for 24.6 percent of the total population growth in Michigan. Between 2000 and 2005 this rate of growth has slowed considerably necessitating the need to revise population projections for counties in Region 8.
- Members are realizing the importance of planning and are developing or updating countywide plans. Osceola and Ionia counties developed countywide plans in 2002. Mecosta County adopted their countywide plan in 2001 and Allegan County adopted a new plan in 2000. Additionally, the City of Grand Rapids updated its master plan in 2002 for the first time since 1963 and the City of Wyoming updated its plan in 2005/06. Montcalm County was the only county in Region 8 without a countywide plan, and they adopted a Countywide General Land Use Plan in 2006.
- Planning was also brought to the forefront with the efforts of the Michigan Land Use Council’s 2003 Recommendations that detail what actions Michigan needs to take to address land use issues. Topics included strengthening regional planning and many of the Council’s recommendations have already been implemented and others continue to move forward.
- The need for transportation improvements (roads, bridges, public transit, etc.) remains critical. MDOT’s current program focuses on maintaining our existing system of roads before building new roads.
- There are many ongoing transportation studies occurring across the Region related to access management, bypasses, and other corridor issues. Most large transportation projects are on-hold due to budget constraints.
- While most large MDOT projects are on-hold, M-6 (the South Beltline) opened in late 2004. This project stretches from eastern Kent County to eastern Ottawa County and opens up a large area of land for additional development – while shortening the travel time between Mid-Michigan and the Holland Area.

- People increasingly see "economic development" as something beyond the traditional business retention and attraction activities. Projects are now often tied to education, transportation, health, housing, the environment, and public service systems.
- Growth and land use issues continue to be top concerns. Efforts to preserve open space are on-going in several areas across the Region. One cause is the agricultural industry, which has not been profitable for many farmers in recent years. Meanwhile, as the demand for urban services grows, so does the push for annexations of township lands into city jurisdictions.
- Steady progress toward implementing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) at the local and county levels continues throughout Region 8.
- The sudden change in the Country's economy in 2001 caused many local businesses to begin reducing workforces. Each of the seven counties was affected by layoffs since 2001.
- Communities across the Region are undertaking major improvement to recreation facilities including parks and pathways. There is also an increase in recreation planning.

In addition to the Success and Concerns/Opportunities reported by communities, the CEDS contains demographic information for each of the seven counties. Each County has information comparing the county to Region 8 and Michigan. While this creates some repetition, it allows counties to easily compare their situations without referring to other parts of the document.

Allegan County 2006 CEDS Report

Successes

- In Allegan County, the quality of life has contributed to a continual growth in population. The 2000 Census indicates the County's population was 105,665, which is a 14.2 percent increase from 1990. 2005 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 113,174 which is a 7.1 percent increase over five years. Projections indicate the population will reach 122,993 by 2010.
- The M-40/M-89 Steering Committee continues to meet quarterly to maintain a network of individuals, communities, and organizations. The group also formalized its organizational structure by adopting bylaws and electing officers. One of the initial goals of the Committee is to encourage all of the communities along the corridor to develop access management ordinances. This follows several years of planning efforts including an Access Management Study completed in December 2001. Committee participants include representatives from the Allegan County Road Commission, MDOT, the WMRPC, the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, and the 12 communities along the corridor.
- The WMRPC continued to work with the Michigan Coastal Management Program to develop a study that looks at growth in Allegan County's shoreline communities. The study looks at existing and future land uses, current plans and ordinances, and includes a "build-out" analysis. Phase IV started in June 2005 will include developing uniform land use categories and other tools to make comparisons between communities easier.

Allegan County built a new county government facility several years ago and continues to relocate departments to the facility. The project includes a new county government complex on Dumont Lake Road. Also constructed was a Family Independence Agency building that shares the property. The County must determine whether or not to move all offices to the new location or to retain some at their current offices in the City of Allegan's downtown (which is a concern of the City's since maintaining employees and those using the County services downtown is a benefit). The County is also considering a new jail and will request funding from the voters in 2006 or 2007.

- Allegan County's MSU Extension hired a new Director that has extensive economic development experience in Michigan. One of the proposed projects, in cooperation with the planning coordinator, will be to develop and evaluate a comprehensive growth plan for the US-131 Corridor.
- Allegan County is one of two sites being considered for a major distribution center.

Concerns/Opportunities

- The County's unemployment rate was consistently lower than Region 8's and Michigan's unemployment rates until 2004 when it rose above the Region's average, but remained lower than Michigan.
- Allegan County is looking for a full-time county planning coordinator to act on county initiatives, manage project, maintain information, pursue funding, and serve as a resource professional in support of identified county-wide planning and economic development needs and goals.
- The Gun Lake Band of the Pottawatomi is still interested in starting a casino in West Michigan at the intersection of 129th Avenue and US-131, just south of the City of Wayland.

The community is divided between the positive aspects (economic development opportunities) of a casino – and the possibility of excessive growth and other issues that can accompany a casino.

- The City of Plainwell is interested in purchasing the 35-acre site of Plainwell Paper, which left several years ago. They are considering a variety of uses for the site including using an existing building for City offices.
- The cities of Plainwell and Otsego, and the townships of Gunplain and Otsego, are interested in improving a partial interchange (US-131 and 106th Avenue) to ease traffic congestion and provide trucks easier access to industrial sites. Currently, the interchange only provides access to northbound US-131, and egress from southbound US-131.
- Rapid development throughout Allegan County is leading to increasing congestion along area roadways. MDOT, the Allegan County Road Commission, and local jurisdictions are looking at improvements that will increase the capacity of existing roads. However, as the M-40/M-89 Corridor Steering Committee is finding, developing longer-term solutions to meet the demands of a growing population and strong economy will not be easy. Traffic will continue to present tough challenges for the County, requiring careful planning, coordination, and bold decisions in the years ahead.

Demographic Profile

Allegan County’s population increased by 29.6 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 105,665 (Table 3). Region 8’s population increased by 31.9 percent during the same 20-year period to reach 1,104,848. Both the Region and Allegan County grew at a much greater rate than Michigan as-a-whole, which increased by 7.3 percent. Projections indicate Allegan County’s population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 144,266. 2005 Census estimates show the County’s population increased to 113,174, which is a 7.1 percent increase over five years. Projections indicate Region 8’s population will reach 1,564,894 by 2020.

Table 3 – Population Trends & 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

Allegan County’s age distribution (Table 4) is similar to Michigan’s and Region 8’s distribution. The County’s median age is 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 fall outside of the two comparison groups’ ranges include the 5-17 group, which is slightly higher; the 18-24 group, which is lower; the 25-34 group, which is lower; and the 35-44 group, which is higher. The distribution of males and females in Allegan County 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 4 – 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

Allegan County has a higher proportion of family households (74.4 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 5). The County has a lower proportion of one-parent households than the two comparison areas. Since the County has a high proportion of family household, it follows that it has 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 is similar to the comparison areas.

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		
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

Between 2001 and 2005 the County’s labor force decreased. While the labor force decreased, the number of employed decreased at a greater rate causing the unemployment rate to reach 6.5 percent in 2004 (Table 6). In 2005 the figures improved. The labor force was 54,517 people in 2005, with an annual average of 51,174 employed and 3,343 unemployed. The County’s unemployment rate was consistently lower than Region 8’s and Michigan’s unemployment rates until 2005 when it rose above the Region’s average, but remained lower than Michigan.

Table 6 – Employment Trends

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Allegan County					
Labor Force	57,635	55,063	53,181	53,622	54,517
Employment	55,191	51,974	49,699	50,129	51,174
Unemployment	2,444	3,089	3,482	3,493	3,343
Unemployment Rate	4.2	5.6	6.5	6.5	6.1
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	4.6	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	5.2	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7
United States					
Unemployment Rate	4.7	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Table 7 shows that Allegan County has 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 is double the Region's percentage. Manufacturing accounts 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 accounts 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 has an unusual distribution of employment, the top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) are the same in the County, Region, and State.

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

Table 7 – 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

Table 8 – 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

Table 9 shows that Allegan County has a higher percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan. The County also has a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County has 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 is similar to the Region and State.

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
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

Ionia County 2006 CEDS Report

Successes

- In Ionia County, the quality of life contributed to a continual growth in population. The 2000 Census indicates the County's population was 61,518, which is a 7.9 percent increase from 1990. 2005 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 64,608, which is a 5.0 percent increase over five years. Projections indicate the population will reach 70,879 by 2010.
- The Heartland Enterprise Loan Program is now serving business needs across four counties. Ionia County worked with Osceola, Mecosta, and Montcalm counties; and Growth Finance Corp. to develop a Regional Revolving Loan Fund. Funding was obtained from each of the counties, Growth Finance, and USDA's Rural Development program (\$99,000 from USDA). This program is currently on-hold to address administrative changes.
- Belding's quality of life continues to increase with its designation as a "Tree City USA" in 2004 and the continuing construction of the Silk City Nature Trail. Additionally, the City updated its Pathway Master Plan with goals of linking to Lowell and Greenville.
- Six years ago, the WMRPC, in conjunction with the Ionia County Road Commission, and the Ionia County Economic Alliance (ICEA) received a grant from MDOT to conduct a corridor study of M-66 Corridor from I-96 to the Grand River just south of the City of Ionia. The study identified issues and made recommendations related to access management, growth and safety issues. The process continues with the establishment of the M-66 Corridor Committee that meets quarterly to discuss issues related to development along the Corridor (which now covers the full length of M-66 in Ionia County). The study provided many ideas that are benefiting the County today as development along the corridor is tremendous (see below).
- Development along M-66, between the City of Ionia and I-96 took off in 2004 and continues into 2006. Wal-Mart and Meijer opened new stores and many other smaller stores and restaurants are already built or are in progress including Lowe's, a GM Auto Dealership, Applebee's, Menard's, TSC, 5/3 Bank, a large strip mall, and a Taco Bell. The M-66 Corridor Committee influenced this process by working to develop access roads parallel to M-66 to allow shoppers access between businesses without having to access M-66. New development provided 300 jobs, with another 200-300 expected.
- The City of Ionia received several grants to assist in planning efforts and over the past couple years has made many improvements to the downtown to provide a great base from businesses to work. The City received a "Cool Cities" designation and a "Blueprint" status (State of Michigan programs that promote communities through available grant programs). City has hired a new Downtown Development Authority Director. The City is seeking funds to upgrade the historic Ionia Theatre.
- Ionia City recently completed a successful site clean up and renewal of the former GenCorp facility. With \$13 million of private investment, the 26-acre site in the middle of the City has been converted to office, retail, and light industrial uses. The refurbished complex is expected to generate 170 jobs. Funding from Economic Development CDBG Grant for the upgrade of Steele and Adams streets; includes the extension of Adams Street. This is based on a proposed expansion of Brown Corp.
- To date, Ionia City has made notable progress in brownfield redevelopment. A total of 18 sites have been redeveloped within the city limits, second only to Detroit in Michigan. The

City is working with Ionia County Economic Alliance and the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority of Ionia County to identify and conduct Phase I tests on several downtown area sites.

- The City of Ionia is establishing a comprehensive housing program that will offer, in conjunction with local banks, mortgage loan opportunities for rehabilitation of homes. Also, exploring a rental rehabilitation program for downtown second floor properties.
- The City of Portland revised their Zoning Ordinance in 2004 to implement their 2003 Master Plan. The Master Plan includes plans for a new traditional neighborhood development that will include commercial and a variety of types of residential uses including single-family, townhouses, apartments, and senior housing. The City is in a public-private partnership that has extended water and sewer. Additionally, the City installed a new water tower in 2005. The City also reconstructed roads, curbs, and gutters as well as upgraded water and sewer to several new areas in the City.
- The Arts Council obtained grant funding and has begun renovation of two buildings at the Portland Dam to use as an Art Center.
- The City of Portland was one of four Michigan communities chosen to participate in a downtown planning process, the “Main Street Program.” The City will work with the MEDC and a consultant to identify changes needed to improve the City’s downtown. The City also received designation as one of Michigan’s “Cool Cities” and hopes to tie many projects together using this program. The City has additional plans to expand infrastructure and its trail system.
- The Village of Muir developed a new park.
- Keystone Automotive Industries bought a vacant manufacturing plant in the Village of Saranac.
- Ionia County gained a better understanding of its need for internet connection for communication and public outreach through a countywide study.
- The Village of Lake Odessa expanded their water and sewer capacity to meet the needs of Sunny Fresh.

Concerns/Opportunities

- The County’s unemployment rate is consistently higher than Region 8’s, Michigan’s, or the nation’s unemployment rates.
- Zoning is still a major issue in Ionia County where only five townships have zoning ordinances in effect. The lack of long-term land use planning is especially troublesome when developers propose large-scale projects that have a major influence on the area’s transportation network, schools and other public services. The Ionia County Planning Commission adopted a Land Use Plan in 2003, but zoning was voted down by the County in 2004.
- Ionia County is home to several Animal Feeding Operations (AFOs). These facilities can create odor problems and may pose a hazard to water quality if there are no restrictions or standards in place. The lack of zoning ordinances also compounds problems with the Right-To-Farm Act that will reduce local control techniques.

Demographic Profile

Ionia County's population increased by 20.7 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 61,518 (Table 10). Region 8's population increased by 31.9 percent during the same 20-year period to reach 1,104,848. Both the Region and Ionia County grew at a much greater rate than Michigan as-a-whole, which increased by 7.3 percent. 2005 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 64,608, which is a 5.0 percent increase over five years. Projections indicate the population will reach 70,879 by 2010. Projections indicate Ionia County's population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 82,269. Projections indicate Region 8's population will reach 1,564,894 by 2020.

Ionia County's age distribution (Table 11) differs from Michigan's and Region 8's distribution. The County's median age of 32.9 is 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 fall outside of the two comparison groups' ranges include the 5-17 group, which is slightly higher; the 18-24 group, which is lower; the 25-34 group, which is higher; the 35-44 group, which is higher; and the 85+ group, which is lower. The distribution of males and females in the County shows the effects of prisons with male populations.

Table 10 – Population Trends & 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

Table 11 – 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

Ionia County has a higher proportion of family households (73.5 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 12). The County

has a higher proportion of one-parent households than the two comparison areas. Since the County has a high proportion of family households, it follows that it has 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 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		
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

Between 2001 and 2005 the County experienced a labor force that decreased in 2002 and 2003 before increasing in 2004 and again in 2005. The number of employed followed this same pattern and the unemployment rate climbed for the first four years before dropping from a high in 2004 of 7.8 percent to 7.1 percent in 2005 (Table 13). The labor force reached 31,239 people in 2005, with an annual average of 29,035 employed and 2,204 unemployed. The County's unemployment rate is consistently higher than Region 8's, Michigan's, or the nation's unemployment rates.

Table 13 – Employment Trends

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Ionia County					
Labor Force	30,094	29,765	29,597	30,635	31,239
Employment	28,579	27,898	27,503	28,238	29,035
Unemployment	1,515	1,867	2,094	2,397	2,204
Unemployment Rate	5.0	6.3	7.1	7.8	7.1
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	4.6	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	5.2	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7
United States					
Unemployment Rate	4.7	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Table 14 shows that Ionia County has 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 is double the Region's percentage. Manufacturing accounts for 26.9 percent of the population's employment. Construction accounts for 7.4 percent of the population's employment. Finance, at 5.5 percent is only slightly higher. Public Administration, due partially to the prisons in Ionia

County, account 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.

Table 14 – 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

Ionia County's median household income of \$43,074 is less than Region 8's figure of \$45,915 and Michigan's median of \$44,667 (Table 15). The County's per capita income of \$17,451 is lower than the Region and the State. Ionia County has 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
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

Table 16 shows that Ionia County has a similar percentage of traditional single family homes as Region 8 or Michigan. The County has a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County has a low proportion of multiple family housing. Ionia County's occupancy rate of 93.6 percent is higher than Region 8 or Michigan. The median value of owner-occupied housing in Ionia County was lower than the Region and State.

Table 16 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	<u>Total</u>	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

Kent County 2006 CEDS Report

Successes

- The 2000 Census indicates the County's population is 574,335, which is a 14.7 percent increase from 1990. 2005 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 596,666 is a 3.9 percent increase over five years. Projections indicate the population will reach 662,496 by 2010.
- Health services and research are helping redefine Kent County's economy and image. In Grand Rapids, many initiatives related to health care, research, and training are in progress on "Health Hill." The Van Andel Institute (VAI) was dedicated in May 2000 and has encouraged additional nearby development. The VAI, adjacent to Spectrum's Downtown (Butterworth) Campus, houses state of the art research facilities to study the link between cancer and genetics. The Institute is a world renowned cancer research center with a staff of over 100 scientists and support staff. Also, adjacent to the Butterworth Campus is the West Michigan Science & Technology Initiative, housed in Grand Valley State University's Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences. The Initiative provides many opportunities related to training and research including an entire floor of "wet-lab" space that is operated like a business incubator. Also, in 2004 the Fred and Lena Meijer Heart Center opened (part of the Spectrum Butterworth Campus) to provide a state-of-the-art facility for treating heart disease. The City was also recently designated a "Smart Zone" to encourage additional medical-related development in the downtown. The WMRPC and EDA met with Grand Rapids in 2003 and 2004 to discuss possible Smart Zone projects and the WMRPC assembled a grant application for the Smart Zone in 2005. Currently, a massive project is underway on Michigan Street that includes offices and parking garages for new health-related initiatives.
- Michigan State University is relocating its medical school to Grand Rapids. A phased approach is underway that will eventually bring most of the MSU faculty (currently located in East Lansing, Michigan) and students to a Grand Rapids location.
- The City of Wyoming is nearing completion of an update to its Master Plan.
- Metropolitan Hospital is constructing a 448,000 square foot facility at the northeast corner of M-6 and Byron Center Avenue. The campus covers over 170 acres and will include commercial, office and service businesses. It is anticipated that up to 1,500 people will be employed within the campus (which is relocating from Grand Rapids). Construction began on the \$150 million facility in mid-2003 but was halted for a year while financing issues were refined. The hospital is scheduled to open in 2007. Two unique features of the hospital include its environmentally conscience design and its accessible facilities. The current site of the hospital, in the City of Grand Rapids, will present many opportunities for redevelopment for the City.
- The new Grand Rapids Convention Center opened ahead of schedule in 2003 and is considered a great success. There is currently a new luxury hotel being built on a brownfield site (the old Israel's Furniture Store) to accommodate the additional (and larger) conferences. The hotel, being developed by Alticor, will open in 2007.
- Construction of the new Grand Rapids Art Museum is underway. Demolition of older buildings was necessary for the new facility. The existing site will be used by Ferris State University (Kendall School of Design) as part of Ferris's expanded presence in Grand Rapids.

- It was announced in March 2005 that the long awaited second tower for Bridgewater Place (one of Grand Rapids' tallest buildings) will be built. The "Riverhouse Project" will include residential space.
- Grand Rapids is seeking proposals from developers for a 16 acre site on the Grand River. The process generated a lot of excitement and continues to provide exciting news and bring new ideas to the City. Currently three principle developers are competing for the most innovative and complete development.
- Proposals for a key site in Grand Rapids' downtown were taken last year and one developer was chosen to create a multi-use development near the City's center.
- Over the past five years, North Monroe Avenue experienced many positive changes. A multi-story condominium complex is under construction for the area on a former foundry site. Recently completed mixed-use buildings include Monroe Terrace (formerly known as the Ammerman Building), Landmark Lofts (formerly known as the DeVries Building) and The Boardwalk (formerly known as the Berkey-Gay Furniture Building). The restoration of these historic structures added over 300 new residential units and about 100,000 square feet of new office and restaurant uses in the Grand Rapids Smart Zone. In addition to apartments and condominiums, the area is filled with offices, restaurants, and other businesses. Additionally, interest has occurred on the west side of the Grand River with the renovation of the former American Seating factory to apartments and a restaurant, and the relocation of Israel's Furniture Store to the area.
- In the past five years, Grand Valley State University expanded its presence in downtown Grand Rapids (SWAN Neighborhood). Recent additions to the downtown Robert Pew campus include the Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center State headquarters, Keller School of Engineering, and the DeVos Center hosting a variety of learning facilities for both graduate and undergraduate students. On-campus housing was developed and brought hundreds of students to the City's downtown. A new parking ramp was also completed in 2004 to accommodate the school's expansion. The expansion is changing the Fulton Street Corridor, including the leasing of office space to GVSU in renovated buildings.
- Cooley Law School opened a facility in Grand Rapids' Downtown. The school's first phase opened in 2004, with the complete 100,000 square foot facility opening in 2006. The school gained accreditation to teach classes in 2006.
- The City of Grand Rapids' Renaissance Zone is composed of ten districts. Businesses in the zones pay no property taxes, no state single business tax and no state or local income tax. The city has recorded 106 new businesses or expansion in the zone since the law took effect January 1, 1997. To date, there has been \$236,000,000 invested in Grand Rapids' Renaissance Zone, which includes both industrial and commercial property. The zones include a Downtown Zone to focus on housing and main floor commercial.
- The City of Grand Rapids completed its Master Plan (which was last updated in 1963) in 2002. The process involved hundreds of neighborhood meetings and many other forms of citizen participation. The plan focuses on "walkability" and uses many new urbanism planning techniques. The WMRPC has reviewed the document for potential EDA funded implementation projects. Currently the City is developing a completely new "form-based" zoning ordinance.
- Recreation and tourism opportunities are numerous in and around Grand Rapids. The convention center in downtown increased the ability of Grand Rapids to host larger conventions. Millenium Park, which is a joint venture between several communities is larger

than New York City's Central Park and provides many tourism and recreation opportunities for the area. Another joint venture is the White Pine Trail, which extends into Grand Rapids at Riverside Park. The trail extends north to Cadillac and involves local units of government and the MDNR.

Concerns/Opportunities

- In March 2005 Steelcase announced that it will vacate the last of their manufacturing sites remaining in Grand Rapids. This will mean the loss of 600 jobs in the City and will leave a huge vacant building/site available for redevelopment.
- There are 1,100 acres of underutilized industrial areas/brownfield opportunities in the "Grand-Walk" area (an area where the City of Grand Rapids and the City of Walker both share). The cities and the Right Place Inc. are developing plans for sustainable redevelopment.
- The boundaries of the MSA, which included Kent, Allegan, Ottawa, and Muskegon counties, were redrawn in 2003. Kent County is now linked with Barry, Ionia, and Newaygo counties. Kent is also part of a Consolidated Service Area (CSA) that includes Kent, Barry, Ionia, Allegan, Muskegon, Ottawa and Newaygo counties.
- Kent County's economy kept unemployment rates lower than state and national averages until 2002 when the County's unemployment rate increased to 7.2 percent. The unemployment rate decreased in 2004 and again in 2005 to reach 5.7 percent. Kent County's unemployment rate began the five year period below the state and national average but ended above the national average but below the Michigan average unemployment rate.
- Completion of the new South Beltline freeway presents many challenges for communities affected by the expressway. Challenges include increased demand for development along the entire corridor in Kent and Ottawa counties as well as along US-131 in Kent and Allegan counties. Many communities are worried that the new expressway and development will create further disinvestment in the urban center and other developed areas (especially 28th Street). The final portion of the expressway opened in 2004.
- A primary concern for Kent County is how to control growth in outlying areas, while revitalizing properties in older urban core areas. The City of Grand Rapids' population increased by 4.6 percent between 1990 and 2000 while Kent County's population increased by 14.7 percent during the same period. The City of Wyoming's population increased by 8.6 percent. Many of the townships surrounding the County's urban core increased by as much as 52 percent during the ten-year period. In 2002 Kent County approved a Purchase of Development Rights program that will strive to preserve 25,000 acres of farmland by working with local communities and farmers. The project lacks local funding to address requests to participate in the program.
- While growth in the rural areas is a concern, the issue of redevelopment in the City of Grand Rapids presents concerns to many of the neighborhoods' residents and businesses adjacent to redevelopment areas. Many neighborhoods fear the success of recent projects could influence the future boundaries between residential and other areas and cause the loss of housing. Additionally, the recent conversion of warehouses to residential areas has not focused on providing affordable housing options, but has brought many people back to the urban center.
- Grand Rapids' downtown is thriving, and many of the smaller neighborhood business districts are now organized and have become members of the City's Neighborhood Business

Alliance – which is facing reorganization challenges. The City’s master planning process presented opportunities to identify and address many of the neighborhood business issues.

Demographic Profile

Kent County’s population increased by 29.2 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 574,335 (Table 17). 2004 Census estimates show the County’s population increased to 593,898, which is a 3.4 percent increase over four years. Kent County grew at a much greater rate than Michigan as-a-whole, which increased by 7.3 percent between 1980 and 2000. Projections indicate Kent County’s population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 772,201.

Table 17 – Population Trends & 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

Kent County’s age distribution (Table 18) is similar to Michigan’s and Region 8’s distribution. The County’s median age is lower than Michigan’s median age of 35.5 and Region 8’s median of 33.0. The County’s only age groups that fall outside of the two comparison groups’ ranges include the under 5 group, which is slightly higher; the 25-34 group, which is higher; and the 55-84 groups, which are lower. The County’s male-female distribution is similar to the State’s distribution.

Table 18 – 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	
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

Kent County has a lower proportion of family households (67.7 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan (Table 19). The percentage of married couple households is between the two comparison areas. The County has a higher proportion of one-parent households than the two

comparison areas. Since the County has a low proportion of family households, it follows that it has 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 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		
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

Between 2001 and 2005 the County experienced a labor force that decreased in 2002 and 2003 before increasing in 2004 and 2005. The number of employed followed this same trend (Table 20). The unemployment rate increased between 2001 and 2003, when it peaked at 7.3 percent. The unemployment rate decreased in 2004 and again in 2005 to reach 5.7 percent. Kent County's unemployment rate began the five year period below the state and national average but ended above the national average but below the Michigan average unemployment rate.

Table 20 – Employment Trends

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kent County					
Labor Force	321,527	315,551	314,720	319,403	324,999
Employment	306,625	296,343	291,747	298,111	306,529
Unemployment	14,902	19,208	22,973	21,292	18,470
Unemployment Rate	4.6	6.1	7.3	6.7	5.7
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	4.6	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	5.2	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7
United States					
Unemployment Rate	4.7	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Table 21 shows that Kent County has 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 located within Kent County.

The top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) are the same in the County, Region, and State.

Table 21 – 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

Kent County's median household income of \$45,980 is higher than Region 8's figure of \$45,915 and Michigan's median of \$44,667 (Table 22). The County's per capita income of \$21,629 is between the Region and the State. Kent County has a lower percentage of people living below the poverty level than the State, but a higher proportion than Region 8.

Table 22 – 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

Table 23 shows that Kent County has a lower percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan. The County also has a lower percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County has a higher proportion of multiple family housing. Kent County's occupancy rate of 95.0 percent is higher than Region 8 or Michigan. The median value of owner-occupied in Kent County is similar to the Region and State.

Table 23 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	<u>Total</u>	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

Mecosta County 2006 CEDS Report

Successes

- In Mecosta County, the quality of life and has contributed to a steady growth in population. The 2000 Census indicates the County's population was 40,553, which is an 8.7 percent increase from 1990. 2005 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 42,391, which is a 4.5 percent increase since 2000. Projections indicate the population will reach 46,296 by 2010.
- The Mecosta-Osceola Transit Authority is working with the WMRPC and MDOT to determine the need for expanded transit services in the two-county area.
- The Heartland Enterprise Loan Program is now serving business across four counties. Mecosta County worked with Osceola, Ionia, and Montcalm counties; and Growth Finance Corp. to develop a Regional Revolving Loan Fund. Funding was obtained from each of the counties, Growth Finance, and USDA's Rural Development program (\$99,000 from USDA). This program is currently on-hold to address administrative changes.
- Big Rapids Township worked with the WMRPC and Michigan State University (MSU) to develop a Land Use Plan.
- In 2002, Mecosta County received designation as a Michigan Renaissance Zone. The County made a joint application with four other counties and after discussions with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to establish the Zone, Mecosta County's Airport Industrial Park was awarded one of the Zones.
- The development of the Big Rapids Airport Industrial Park is a collaboration between Big Rapids Township, the Big Rapids Industrial Development Corporation, Mecosta County Development Corporation, and the City of Big Rapids. They worked with MEDC and MDOT to secure funding for construction of an all-weather road, 220th and 18 Mile, a service road for the Industrial Park, power, and natural gas. EDA awarded the project a grant to complete water, sewer, and streets within the park. Construction was completed in 2006.
- The manufacturing sector continues to prosper in Mecosta County. Retail businesses are expanding with the ongoing construction of a new Country Inn & Suites Hotel, and the recent expansion of Wal-Mart in Big Rapids Township, the construction of a Lowe's that opened in 2005, a Menard's that opened in 2006, Big Rapids Medical Professional Center, and many other smaller businesses and restaurants. Several multiple family housing projects, oriented towards students, are also completed or underway in Big Rapids Township.
- The Big Rapids Housing Commission completed the revitalization of two historic properties with retail and residential uses. The Nisbett and Fairman buildings are in downtown Big Rapids. The housing units include housing for the elderly. The Commission also constructed a 3,300 square foot child-care center and applied to MSHDA for a grant to purchase and rehabilitate 4-5 homes located in the City.
- The City of Big Rapids received grants for various infrastructure projects. A \$100,000 grant from MDNR for park improvements was used to complete the first phase of a 4,400-foot trail along the Muskegon River, which connects the Northend Riverside Park to the White Pine Trails State Park. The City has received a \$163,000 grant for the second phase of the project, which was completed in the summer of 2001. A \$142,000 grant was obtained from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to convert a retention pond into a detention pond in the City's eastside industrial park. All of these projects are completed. The City of Big Rapids also recently received a \$500,000 MDNR grant to develop Phase I of the River

Walk along the Muskegon River, which was completed in 2003. Phase II of the trail was approved by the MDNR.

- Ferris State University (FSU) has undertaken many major projects at its main campus in Big Rapids over the past several years. In addition, the University continues to expand its programs in downtown Grand Rapids through partnerships with the Kendall School of Design and Grand Rapids Community College.
- The Big Rapids Public Schools have taken on an entirely new look. Significant improvements were made to the four existing elementary schools and the middle school, and a new high school was added to the school district. The recently established Charter Schools has added a high school addition and purchased the public school’s football complex.
- The Mecosta County General Hospital has expanded its occupational wellness and physical therapy services. The hospital also now offers home health care. A new millage enabled the Hospital to upgrade its main entrance and emergency room that was completed in 2005.

Concerns/Opportunities

- Between 2001 and 2005 the County experienced a slower rate in growth of employed, resulting in an increasing unemployment rate. The labor force reached 20,181 people in 2005, with an annual average of 18,783 employed and 1,398 unemployed. In 2005, Mecosta County’s unemployment rate of 6.9 percent was higher than the state, regional, and national averages.
- Deteriorating roads and increasing traffic continue to be a concern throughout the County, raising the need for study. A study of possible alternate routes for M-20 (east/west corridor through Mecosta) was recently completed and recommendations from the Michigan Department of Transportation have been implemented.
- There is an opportunity to further develop tourism in Mecosta County. Trail enthusiasts can now use more than 14 miles of the newly paved, state rails-to-trails corridor running from Mecosta to Osceola County. Development at Northend Riverside Park has provided one staging area for the White Pine State Park Trailway. The Big Rapids Riverwalk provides a destination along the trail and gives users a chance to enjoy the Muskegon River.

Demographic Profile

Mecosta County’s population increased by 9.7 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 40,553 (Table 24). Region 8’s population increased by 31.9 percent during the same 20-year period to reach 1,104,848. Both the Region and Mecosta County grew at a much greater rate than Michigan as-a-whole, which increased by 7.3 percent. 2004 Census estimates show the County’s population increased to 42,394, which is a 4.5 percent increase over four years. Projections indicate Mecosta County’s population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 55,762. Projections indicate Region 8’s population will reach 1,564,894 by 2020.

Table 24 – Population Trends & 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

Mecosta County's age distribution (Table 25) differs from Michigan's and Region 8's distribution. The County's median age of 31.9 is lower than Michigan's median age of 35.5 and Region 8's median of 33.0. The County has three age groups that are greater than the comparison areas' distribution, so create many categories that are lower than the comparison areas'. The 18-24 age group accounts for 19.8 percent of the County's population and is high due to the presence of Ferris State University. Additionally, the age groups between 55 and 84 are larger due to the large amount of retirement-oriented communities. The distribution of males and females in Mecosta County is unique since there are slightly more males than females.

Table 25 – 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

Mecosta County has a lower proportion of family households (66.3 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan (Table 26). The proportion of married couple family households falls between the two comparison areas. The County has a similar proportion of one-parent households as the two comparison areas. Since the County has a lower proportion of family household, it follows that it has 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 is also similar to the comparison areas.

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		
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

Between 2001 and 2005 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 27). The labor force reached 20,181 people in 2005, with an annual average of 18,783 employed and 1,398 unemployed. In 2005, Mecosta County’s unemployment rate was higher than the state, regional, and national averages.

Table 27 – Employment Trends

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Mecosta County					
Labor Force	19,145	19,122	19,865	20,051	20,181
Employment	18,123	17,984	18,548	18,654	18,783
Unemployment	1,022	1,138	1,317	1,397	1,398
Unemployment Rate	5.3	5.6	6.6	7.0	6.9
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	4.6	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	5.2	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7
United States					
Unemployment Rate	4.7	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Table 28 shows that Mecosta County has 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 accounts 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.

Mecosta County’s median household income of \$33,849 is much lower than Region 8’s figure of \$45,915 or Michigan’s median of \$44,667 (Table 29). The County’s per capita income of \$16,372 is also lower than the Region and the State. Mecosta County has a higher percentage of people living below the poverty level than the Region or State.

Table 28 – 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

Table 29 – 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

Table 30 shows that Mecosta County has a lower percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan. The County has a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County has a low proportion of multiple family housing. Mecosta County's occupancy rate of 76.1 percent indicates that there is a considerable amount of seasonal housing. The median value of owner-occupied in Mecosta County is lower than the Region or 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
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

Montcalm County 2006 CEDS Report

Successes

- In Montcalm County, the quality of life has contributed to a steady growth in population. The 2000 Census indicates the County's population is 61,266, which is a 15.5 percent increase from 1990. 2005 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 63,893, which is a 4.3 percent increase over five years. Projections indicate the population will reach 71,719 by 2010.
- The County established a Planning Commission in 2003 to help guide the County's progress. The Planning Commission worked with a consultant to develop a countywide general land use plan, which was adopted in 2006, and a comprehensive "Fact Book" of Montcalm County – both documents available at www.montcalm.org.
- A new 281 acre Renaissance Zone, located in Greenville, was approved by the Michigan Legislature in 2004 and established in 2006. Grants from EDA and MEDC were provided to fund the installation of needed infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer).
- United Solar Ovonic announced plans to locate in Greenville's new Renaissance Zone. The company will construct a \$132 million solar cell manufacturing facility employing 563 people. The company will also attract additional companies and jobs to the City and Renaissance Zone.
- Spectrum Health United Memorial began construction of a new 48,000 square foot, \$17 million addition to the Greenville United Hospital that was completed in 2006.
- The Heartland Enterprise Loan Program is now serving business across four counties. Montcalm County worked with Osceola, Ionia, and Mecosta counties; and Growth Finance Corp. to develop a Regional Revolving Loan Fund. Funding was obtained from each of the counties, Growth Finance, and USDA's Rural Development program (\$99,000 from USDA). This program is currently on-hold to address administrative changes.
- Non-motorized trails in Montcalm County continue to expand and offer residents and visitors a variety of recreational opportunities. Trails include the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail (FMHT), Fred Meijer Flat River Trail (FMFRT), Greenville's Flat River Trail, and the White Pine Trail State Park (recently renamed by the Michigan Legislature the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail). Recent improvements, as well as planned improvements, are making Montcalm County a destination for such activities. Final 5.5 miles of right of way purchased from CSX Railroad extending FMGT from Edmore to Alma. 2006 construction will include Phase II and III of FMFRT and 3.5 miles from McBride to Edmore of the FMHT.
- New job creating businesses continue to open in Howard City's Renaissance Zone, located in the Village of Howard City, Reynolds Township, and Pierson Township. Wolverine Worldwide made a significant expansion of their Howard City facility in 2005 that added 30 jobs.
- Active efforts are underway to develop a reuse plan for the 150,000 square foot vacated Meijers building, located on M-91 on the north side of Greenville. The probable package will include multiple users both private and public including a one-stop "no wrong door" human services center. Meijers will donate the building and land if the project becomes a reality.
- The underutilized "Ora Ida" complex located in Montcalm Township, just north of Greenville along with 40 acres of "greenfield" was added as a Renaissance Zone effective January 2002 and aggressive marketing is underway to develop this site.

- Just southwest of the high school in Greenville, the Montcalm Community College has opened the new Stanley & Blanche Ash Technology & Learning Center, which offers skills and technical training to area workers. Classes started in late summer of 2001 and have been expanded through 2005. The facility continues to be well utilized especially during this period of plant closings by Electrolux, Tower, and others.
- Greenville Community Center is proposing a \$9 million expansion and the area is proposing a \$12 million indoor/outdoor sports complex. Preliminary design is complete and interest groups are planning a financing strategy to move forward.
- In Edmore, the development of several small businesses, a truck stop, and a credit union has been completed along the M-46 corridor. The construction of a new outpatient surgical facility for Gratiot Hospital is also complete. “The Depot,” a convenience store/restaurant/car wash and day care center opened in 2002 along M-46 in front of the new 51 room Maxfield’s Motel. A new Renaissance Zone has been created effective January 1, 2002 contiguous to the Village’s industrial park on its southern boundary.
- The City of Greenville has several housing projects under construction that will add hundreds of homes to the City. Greenville’s small-town atmosphere, many local amenities, well-run government, and proximity to Grand Rapids make it a destination for many households.
- Discussions continue with Hitachi regarding the reuse of the vacant 65 acre complex in Edmore.
- Montcalm County is moving forward with the establishment of a countywide Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.
- An ad-hoc committee has been formed to pursue the establishment of a countywide public transportation system. Recommendations will be made to the County Board of Commissioners by the end of 2006.
- A \$15 million expansion of the Carson City Hospital complex is underway. It should be completed by the end of 2006.
- A bio-diesel plant to be located in the Carson City Renaissance Zone is under discussion.
- Construction of an 82 bed nursing home began in 2006 in Carson City. It will create 80 to 100 new jobs.

Concerns/Opportunities

- The annual average unemployment rate for Montcalm County in 2005 was 8.4 percent, the highest in Region 8.
- Greenville received news in 2003 that Electrolux was considering closing its Greenville facility that employs 2,700 people from across a five-county area. A task force of local, regional, state, and federal interests was assembled to create an incentive package to persuade Electrolux to remain. The City made national and international news with its efforts, but Electrolux decided to relocate its operations to Mexico and North Carolina in 2005. Several suppliers of Electrolux, as well as Tower Automotive, announced significant layoffs in 2004/05. The last employees of Electrolux left in early 2006. Tower also announced it would be closing in 2006. Major efforts are underway to attract new industry to the area.
- Hitachi, in the Village of Edmore, closed its operation effective March 2005. Efforts are underway to identify potential users for the vacated facility.
- Transportation and the need for road improvements are critical issues in Montcalm County. The City of Greenville and the four townships bordering M-57 are exploring the possibility

of a joint transportation study of the highway from US-131 to Greenville. Traffic congestion and fatal accidents are of increasing concern along this segment of M-57. However, funding for the study cannot be identified.

Demographic Profile

Montcalm County’s population increased by 28.8 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 61,266 (Table 31). Region 8’s population increased by 31.9 percent during the same 20-year period to reach 1,104,848. Both the Region and Montcalm County grew at a much greater rate than Michigan as-a-whole, which increased by 7.3 percent. 2004 Census estimates show the County’s population increased to 63,627, which is a 3.9 percent increase over four years. Projections indicate Montcalm County’s population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 85,191.

Table 31 – Population Trends & 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

Montcalm County’s age distribution (Table 32) is similar to Michigan’s and Region 8’s distribution. The County’s median age of 35.6 is 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 fall outside of the two comparison groups’ ranges include the under 5 group, which is lower; the 18-24 group, which is slightly lower; the 35-44 group, which is higher; and the 55-64 group, which is higher. The distribution of males and females in Montcalm County reflects the all male prison in Carson City.

Montcalm County has a higher proportion of family households (73.3 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 33). The County has a similar proportion of one-parent households as the two comparison areas. Since the County has a high proportion of family households, it follows that it has 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 is similar to the comparison areas.

Between 2001 and 2005 the County experienced a fairly stable labor force, but at the same time experienced a decreasing number of employed, resulting in an increased unemployment rate that decreased slightly in 2004 (Table 34) before peaking in 2005 at 8.4 percent. The labor force was 29,588 people in 2005, with an annual average of 27,089 employed and 2,499 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 32 – 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

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		
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

Table 34 – Employment Trends

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Montcalm County					
Labor Force	30,336	29,343	29,434	29,832	29,588
Employment	28,493	27,156	27,095	27,485	27,089
Unemployment	1,843	2,187	2,339	2,347	2,499
Unemployment Rate	6.1	7.5	7.9	7.9	8.4
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	4.6	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	5.2	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7
United States					
Unemployment Rate	4.7	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Table 35 shows that Montcalm County has a higher proportion of its population employed in the manufacturing, agriculture, public administration, and construction sectors than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. Manufacturing accounts 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 indicate the County's residents' types of employment and do not represent jobs located within Montcalm County. While Montcalm County has a different distribution of employment, the top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) are the same in the County, Region, and State.

Table 35 – 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

Montcalm County's median household income of \$37,218 falls below Region 8's figure of \$45,915 and Michigan's median of \$44,667 (Table 36). The County's per capita income of \$16,183 is lower than the Region and the State. Montcalm County has 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
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

Table 37 shows that Montcalm County has a slightly higher percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan. The County has a much higher percentage of mobile homes than either of the two comparison areas and a low proportion of multiple family housing. Montcalm County's occupancy rate of 85.2 percent indicates that there is a considerable amount of seasonal housing. The median value of owner-occupied in Montcalm County is much lower than the Region and 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
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

Osceola County 2006 CEDS Report

Successes

- The 2000 Census indicates the County's population was 23,197, which is a 15.1 percent increase from 1990. 2005 Census estimates show the County's population increased to 23,750, which is a 2.4 percent increase over five years. Projections indicate the population will reach 26,896 by 2010.
- Osceola County received a \$1.4 million scrap tire clean-up grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Clean-up of the tires will remove an environmental and health hazard as well as an economic development obstacle.
- Osceola County is in the process of creating a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. To date the Authority has yet to appoint members, hold meetings, establish bylaws, etc. The Authority needs to begin operations so that projects can begin taking place.
- Osceola County built a new \$700,000 Health and Human Services building in 2005-06. Operations began in the facility in March 2006. The facility houses the Health Department, Environmental Services, Building Inspections, Electrical and Plumbing Permit/Inspection Services, and Soil and Sedimentation.
- In 2004, the Reed City School District passed a bond issue for improvements to area schools. The school district completed construction of a new elementary school and renovation of the high school in 2005.
- The Mecosta-Osceola Transit Authority is working with the WMRPC and MDOT to determine the need for expanded transit services in the two-county area.
- The Reed City Chamber of Commerce completed a comprehensive multi-session planning effort. As a result, the Chamber has increased its membership, developed a web presence (reedcitycrossroads.com), publishes a quarterly newsletter, and is resurrecting the City's annual festival. Membership increased significantly.
- The Reed City Area Chamber's Collaborative Efforts Committee has created two groups: one to manage the Great American Crossroads Celebration, the other to develop and disseminate marketing and promotional information about the Reed City Area.
- The Heartland Enterprise Loan Program is now serving business across four counties. Osceola County worked with Mecosta, Ionia, and Montcalm counties; and Growth Finance Corp. to develop a Regional Revolving Loan Fund. Funding was obtained from each of the counties, Growth Finance, and USDA's Rural Development program (\$99,000 from USDA). This program is currently on-hold to address administrative changes.
- The Heart of Michigan Planning Group completed its "Link Michigan" initiative that identifies ways to improve the area's telecommunications infrastructure.
- Osceola County received a Homeowner Assistance grant from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. The County now has \$175,000 to assist county residents with incomes of less than 50 percent of the County's median income.
- Over the last six years, Yoplaith has doubled both its financial investment and its employment. The Reed City Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) has undergone a several million dollar upgrade in order to keep pace with Yoplaith's growth. Both General Mills and the City of Reed City committed \$1 million each in a partnership to improve the WWTP and allow plant production to increase.
- The Osceola County Road Commission built two new service garages to replace four existing facilities. The Road Commission plans to sell the former sites.

Concerns/Opportunities

- Between 2001 and 2005 the County experienced a decreasing labor force – decreasing from 11,180 in 2001 to 10,461 in 2005. 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. The County’s unemployment rate is consistently higher than rates in Region 8, Michigan, or the national unemployment rates.
- Osceola County continues to offer sites in its LeRoy Township Industrial Renaissance Zone.
- Deterioration of local roads is a problem in communities throughout the County. Streets and sidewalks are also in need of reconstruction to address both aesthetics and public safety. The City of Reed City has adopted a capital improvement program that addresses streets and has established a sidewalk program.

Demographic Profile

Osceola County’s population increased by 22.6 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 23,197 (Table 38). Region 8’s population increased by 31.9 percent during the same 20-year period to reach 1,104,848. Both the Region and Osceola County grew at a much greater rate than Michigan as-a-whole, which increased by 7.3 percent. 2004 Census estimates show the County’s population increased to 23,842, which is a 2.8 percent increase over four years. Projections indicate Osceola County’s population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 31,563. Projections indicate Region 8’s population will reach 1,564,894 by 2020.

Table 38 – Population Trends & 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

Osceola County’s age distribution (Table 39) is different than Michigan’s and Region 8’s distribution. The County’s median age of 37.6 is higher than Michigan’s median age of 35.5 and Region 8’s median of 33.0. The County’s age groups that fall outside of the two comparison groups’ ranges include the under 5 group, which is lower; the 5-17 group, which is higher; the 18-44 groups, which are lower; and the 55-84 groups, which are higher. The distribution of males and females in Osceola County is similar to the comparison areas.

Table 39 – 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

Osceola County has a higher proportion of family households (72.4 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 40). The County has a similar proportion of one-parent households as the two comparison areas. Since the County has a high proportion of family households, it follows that it has 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 is 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		
Osceola County	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

Between 2001 and 2005 the County experienced a decreasing labor force – decreasing from 11,180 in 2001 to 10,461 in 2005. 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 41). The County’s unemployment rate is consistently higher than rates in Region 8, Michigan, or the national unemployment rates.

Table 41 – Employment Trends

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Osceola County					
Labor Force	11,180	10,978	10,890	10,544	10,461
Employment	10,435	10,219	10,018	9,639	9,697
Unemployment	745	759	872	905	764
Unemployment Rate	6.7	6.9	8.0	8.6	7.3
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	4.6	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	5.2	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7
United States					
Unemployment Rate	4.7	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Table 42 shows that Osceola County has a higher proportion of its population employed in the manufacturing and agriculture sectors than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. The proportion of people employed in agriculture is over double the Region's percentage. Manufacturing accounts 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 has an unusual distribution of employment, the top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) are the same in the County, Region, and State.

Table 42 – 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

Osceola County’s median household income of \$34,102 is lower than Region 8’s figure of \$45,915 or Michigan’s median of \$44,667 (Table 43). The County’s per capita income of \$15,632 is lower than the Region and the State. Osceola County has a higher percentage of people living below the poverty level than the Region or State.

Table 43 – 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

Table 44 shows that Osceola County has a lower percentage of traditional single family homes than Region 8 or Michigan. The County also has a much higher percentage of mobile homes than the two comparison areas. The County has a very low proportion of multiple family housing. 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 is much lower than the Region and State.

Table 44 – Housing Information in 2000

Area	1 Unit	2 Unit	3 or more	Mobile Home	Other	<u>Total</u>	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

Ottawa County 2006 CEDS Report

Successes

- Between 2001 and 2005 the County experienced a labor force that decreased in 2002 before beginning a steady climb to peak at 136,841 in 2005. At the same time the number of employed decreased in 2002 before beginning a steady increase to reach 130,016 in 2005. The County's unemployment rate peaked at 5.9 percent in 2003 and fell to 5.0 percent by 2005. 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.
- During 2005, Ottawa County consistently posted monthly unemployment rates well below the State of Michigan averages. Ottawa County's unemployment rate was always under the State rate by between 1.5 and 2 percentage points. The annual average unemployment rate of Ottawa County for 2005 was 5.0 percent. By comparison, the annual averages for the nation and State were 5.1 and 6.7 percent, respectively. During the year, the number of persons employed in Ottawa County, increased by 5,424 reaching 131,497 in December 2005. The number of persons who were unemployed decreased by 1,509 over the year. The year ended having 6,478 persons out of work and seeking jobs. Over the 12 months, the unemployment rate dropped from 6.0 percent in January to 4.7 percent in December 2005. In Ottawa County, it has been four years in a row that the annual average unemployment rate was in the 5 percent range. The 2005 figure was lower than the previous three yearly averages. Ottawa County's unemployment rate in January 2006 (5.1 percent) was the second lowest rate among Michigan's 14 labor market areas.
- Concerning the composition of Ottawa County's workforce, its largest concentration of workers continues to be in manufacturing. For the year 2005, the annual average number of manufacturing workers represented approximately 38 percent of the total private sector employment. The next largest sector was services with about 35 percent of the workforce, followed by the trades (retail & wholesale) at a distant third accounting for about 15 percent of the County's private employment. Government workers at all levels comprised about 14 percent of the County's total non-farm employment. Ottawa County's stronghold of manufacturing employment more than doubled the State of Michigan's average of 18 percent for 2005.
- While there has been a gradual fall off of industrial workers recently in Ottawa County, there has been no curtailment in planned investments in new and expanded facilities and new machinery & equipment by Ottawa County's manufacturers. In 2005, more industrial tax abatement certificates were issued for expansion projects in Ottawa County than in any other County in Michigan. Of the statewide total of 700 issued certificates, 71 were for projects in Ottawa County. The collective value of all those investments was \$267.9 million. Those projects are expected to create 1,077 new jobs over the next two years. In addition to the 71 projects in Ottawa County, there were 12 expansion projects located in the Allegan County portion of the City of Holland. These projects combined accounted for investments of about \$28.6 million and the creation of 354 new jobs. This was the second year in a row that Ottawa County has led all other counties in Michigan in the number of industrial tax abatement certificates.
- Some of the larger industrial expansion projects include Johnson Controls' \$62.9 million auto seat components project which will retain 544 jobs in Holland Township; Gentex

Corporation's \$59.8 million new manufacturing/technology center for auto mirrors in the City of Zeeland which will create 250 jobs; Boar's Head Provisions' \$19.2 million new distribution center and food processing plant renovation in Holland Township to create 115 jobs; Nicholas Plastics' \$14.2 million plant addition for auto extruded plastics in Allendale Township to create 75 new jobs; Tiara Yacht's \$12 million power boat plant expansion which will create 150 new jobs in the City of Holland; Mead Johnson's \$11.4 million expansion to its infant formula & nutritionals plant in the City of Zeeland; and Request Foods' \$10.7 million expansion to its food processing facility in Holland Township.

- Another significant industrial expansion project in Ottawa County that was announced late in 2005 and is currently under construction is the \$85 million expansion of the Leprino Foods mozzarella cheese plant in Allendale Township. This project consists of constructing an 86,000 square foot plant addition to house new cheese making machinery and equipment (Phase I) and renovating a portion of the existing 175,000 square foot cheese plant with updated technology (Phase II). The first phase will be completed in September 2006; the second in May 2007. Combined, these phases will create at least 53 new jobs.
- There are also a number of new industrial expansion projects in Ottawa County that are just being announced, including a \$7.2 million expansion to create 25 jobs by J.B. Laboratories in Holland Township; Agape Plastics in Tallmadge Township with a \$3.8 million 30,000 square foot plant addition to create 50 jobs; Apex Spring & Stamping in Tallmadge Township also with a 30,000 square foot building addition valued at \$2.2 million; DeWys Manufacturing in Wright Township with a \$1.6 million machinery & equipment upgrade in its metal fabrication shop which will create 10 new jobs; and Plascore in the City of Zeeland with a proposed \$2.8 million new 50,000 square foot plastics manufacturing plant to create 50 new jobs.
- The characteristics that have contributed to a relatively healthy economy in Ottawa County include a spirit of entrepreneurship, pro-business attitudes, local governmental cooperation, innovation, high productivity and a strong work ethic. Another characteristic of Ottawa County's economy contributing to its economic health is diversification, both across sectors and within the manufacturing sector.
- In addition to having a strong manufacturing base, Ottawa County's economy is also based in agriculture and tourism & recreation. Ottawa County has the distinction of being ranked as the number one county in the State of Michigan in terms of the market value of all agricultural products sold. Tourism and recreation thrives largely because of Ottawa County's many miles of Lake Michigan shoreline and ports in the Grand Haven and Holland areas.
- A couple of large new commercial development projects are also on the horizon in Ottawa County. Proposed last summer is the razing of an older manufacturing facility, formerly occupied by General Electric, along U.S. 31 and 16th Street in the City of Holland to make room for a new major retailer and several smaller retail/service businesses. Another vacant manufacturing facility (formerly owned by Baker Furniture) in Holland will be renovated as Baker Lofts for mixed use redevelopment including residential condominiums, office, restaurant, and service uses. In Holland Township, a new Meijer store opened in early 2005. A new Wal-Mart Super Store was proposed for a location along U.S. 31 in Grand Haven Township.
- Also in the City of Holland, Hope College completed the Martha Miller Center for Communication, branch offices for Macatawa Bank are under construction, and there are several senior housing projects underway.

- Several other large capital expenditure projects in Ottawa County include the new \$36 million Zeeland Community Hospital located along Chicago Drive. This new 57-bed hospital is 114,000 square feet in size and opened in 2006. In the City of Holland, the Holland Hospital is currently undergoing a \$45 million remodeling/expansion project to expand the emergency department, add a new critical care unit and add more private rooms. This hospital is the second largest non-manufacturing employer in Ottawa County. Elsewhere in Holland, Hope College completed the \$22 million DeVos Fieldhouse on the former Western Foundry site. On the north side of Holland, Macatawa Legends is under construction. This private project will feature a new 18-hole championship golf course surrounded by a residential community of up to 1,000 new housing units on a 950-acre site.
- As Ottawa County's population has grown, so has its housing stock, especially over the last few years. According to the Census, there were 86,858 total housing units located throughout Ottawa County in 2000. Fueled by low mortgage rates, approximately 8,348 single-family units and 2,599 multiple-family units were constructed between 2000 and 2004. The estimated value of this new residential development in Ottawa County was over \$ 1.4 billion.

Concerns/Opportunities

- Since 2000, manufacturing employment has been declining in Ottawa County. The overall decrease in the manufacturing base has been approximately 5,855 jobs from a high of approximately 43,357 workers in 2000 to 37,502 in 2005. Overall, the number of industrial workers decreased by about 400 in 2005. A similar decline has also occurred in the first few months of 2006. Ottawa County's auto components manufacturers reduced their workforces by about 500 jobs in 2005. The County's furniture manufacturers held their workforces steady throughout 2005. Manufacturers have been downsizing workforces and making significant improvements in productivity to remain competitive in a global marketplace.
- Productivity gains work against job growth. As the manufacturing sector employment has declined, those economic sectors that have added workers during this period in Ottawa County include services (especially education and health), government, and natural resources.
- According to one published economic forecast, Ottawa County's total employment is expected to grow by only one percent in both 2006 and 2007. Manufacturing employment will remain nearly constant both years. Employment in the services sector is forecasted to grow by nearly two percent.
- Having a large, relatively diversified manufacturing base has been a strength of Ottawa County's economy. There are several looming unknowns in the year ahead that will make it very difficult to predict what this sector's health will be into 2007. If workers at the Delphi plant in the City of Coopersville go on strike, what are the implications on auto production in Michigan? If workers strike at all of the Michigan Delphi plants, will these actions force the prolonged shutdown of GM? Could an extended shutdown of GM result in the company filing for bankruptcy as Delphi did in October 2005? These unknowns will have impacts on many of the auto components manufacturers located in Ottawa County.
- What is known is that of the 328 manufacturers in Michigan that directly supply components to one or more Delphi plant, ten are manufacturers located in Ottawa County. These firms are being impacted the most from Delphi's actions. Automotive component manufacturers that exclusively supply Delphi and GM will be impacted the greatest. Firms that supply

components to foreign automakers as well should fair better. At the start of 2006, there were approximately 650 hourly and salaried employees at the Coopersville Delphi Plant. There are no suppliers in Ottawa County providing components to this plant. The finished fuel injectors are shipped out of Ottawa County. Delphi has announced the closure of the Coopersville plant by the end of 2008. A viable option for Delphi (that will received local support) will be to sell all of the assets to another auto components manufacturer and continue production at this facility.

Demographic Profile

Ottawa County’s population increased by 51.6 percent between 1980 and 2000 to reach a total of 238,314 (Table 45). Region 8’s population increased by 31.9 percent during the same 20-year period to reach 1,104,848. Both the Region and Ottawa County grew at a much greater rate than Michigan as-a-whole, which increased by 7.3 percent. Projections indicate Ottawa County’s population will continue to grow and by 2020 will reach 393,642. Projections indicate Region 8’s population will reach 1,564,894 by 2020. 2004 Census estimates show the County’s population increased to 252,351, which is a 5.9 percent increase over four years.

Table 45 – Population Trends & 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

Ottawa County’s age distribution (Table 46) is different than Michigan’s and Region 8’s distribution. The County’s median age of 32.3 is lower than Michigan’s median age of 35.5 and Region 8’s median of 33.0. The County’s age groups that fall outside of the two comparison groups’ ranges include the three groups under 25, which are higher; and the groups between 25 and 84, which are lower. Ottawa County’s male-female ratio is similar to the comparison areas.

Ottawa County has a higher proportion of family households (75.1 percent) than Region 8 or Michigan, including a higher proportion of married couple households (Table 47). The County has a lower proportion of one-parent households than the two comparison areas. Since the County has a high proportion of family household, it follows that it has 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 is similar to the comparison areas.

Table 46 – 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

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		
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

Between 2001 and 2005 the County experienced a labor force that decreased in 2002 before beginning a steady climb to peak at 136,841 in 2005. At the same time the number of employed decreased in 2002 before beginning a steady increase to reach 130,016 in 2005. The County's unemployment rate peaked at 5.9 percent in 2003 and fell to 5.0 percent by 2005 (Table 48). 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.

Table 49 shows that Ottawa County has a higher proportion of its population employed in the manufacturing, agriculture, and other service sectors than the population in Region 8 or Michigan. Manufacturing accounts 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 has an unusual distribution of employment, the top three job categories (Manufacturing, Education, and Retail) are the same in the County, Region, and State.

Table 48 – Employment Trends

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Ottawa County					
Labor Force	134,294	130,201	131,742	133,955	136,841
Employment	128,790	123,177	123,949	126,610	130,016
Unemployment	5,504	7,024	7,793	7,345	6,825
Unemployment Rate	4.1	5.4	5.9	5.5	5.0
Region 8					
Unemployment Rate	4.6	6.0	6.9	6.6	5.8
Michigan					
Unemployment Rate	5.2	6.2	7.1	7.0	6.7
United States					
Unemployment Rate	4.7	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development, Labor Market Information

Table 49 – 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

Ottawa County's median household income of \$52,347 is much higher than Region 8's figure of \$45,915 or Michigan's median of \$44,667 (Table 50). The County's per capita income of \$21,676 is higher. Ottawa County has a lower 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
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

Table 51 shows that Ottawa County has a higher percentage of traditional single family homes than the Region 8 or Michigan. The County has 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 indicates is higher than either comparison area. The median value of owner-occupied in Ottawa County is higher 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
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

V. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

A. Review of CEDS Goals and Objectives

In early 2005, and again throughout the year, the CEDS Committee reviewed the goals and objectives for the Region 8 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the goal statements as written generally remained appropriate for the 2006 program year.

The overall intent of the following CEDS goals/objectives is to emphasize the need for a holistic, sustainable approach to community and economic development throughout Region 8. Growth and economic development decisions should lead to a balanced use of land, protection of natural resources and local aesthetic characteristics, and an enhanced quality of life for local residents. The following goals are not intended to be mutually exclusive, but rather should be considered together as a whole.

Goal I: Improve communication and coordination between, and act as a clearinghouse for, organizations throughout Region 8, which are involved in economic and community development.

- Organize forums at which common economic/community development concerns can be identified and addressed.
- Provide referrals for communities to available resources for zoning expertise and appropriate organizations.
- Work with members to identify plant closings/losses of employment and notify the EDA of such occurrences. Expand capacity to provide EDA with current information.
- Provide technical assistance and/or referrals to local units of government and community organizations which are essential to economic and community development efforts such as data collection and analysis, dissemination of information, support of local geographic information systems (GIS), grants preparation, and master planning and community visioning assistance. Promote the availability of these technical resources and data.
- Establish partnerships between local units of government, community organizations, and the private sector needed to support a collaborative community development approach to economic/community development.
- Promote the education of practitioners and the general public in economic/community development issues and techniques.
- Build a network of local, state, and federal technical experts and contacts (related to economic development), which are able to understand and respond effectively to economic/community development opportunities as they arise.
- Eliminate barriers to regional solutions to economic/community development.

Goal II: Encourage the improvement and expansion of the physical infrastructure needed to support community economic development.

- Encourage the provision of adequate capacity in water delivery and sewage treatment

systems.

- Encourage the provision of efficient multi-modal transportation systems to enhance economic growth potential including roads, public transit, air, rail, maritime, non-motorized systems, etc.
- Encourage the development of advanced privately owned utilities in both urban and rural areas of Region 8 including communication technologies, natural gas, and electricity.
- Promote sub-regional land use planning and coordination to encourage the orderly growth of development, compatible use of land, and efficient delivery of services.
- Encourage the provision of quality housing and community services and facilities throughout the Region including schools, health services, recreation facilities, police and fire services, and solid waste management systems.
- Encourage an appropriate level of industrial park land with adequate infrastructure.
- Maximize use of existing investment.

Goal III: Promote and support local activities, which result in sustainable economic and community development. Such activities include:

- Job creation and labor force development.
- Retention, attraction, and diversification of local business and industry.
- Revitalization of older industrial properties and commercial business districts.
- Growth and expansion of small businesses; fostering of business start-ups and the entrepreneurial spirit.
- Promotion of tourism, agri-tourism and recreation as an important economic/community development strategy for West Michigan.
- Promotion and assistance in the development of existing renaissance zones, enterprise communities, empowerment zones and other established zones.
- Promotion and further development of the agricultural and forestry sectors.
- Expansion of market opportunities.
- Expansion of human and financial resources (such as targeted re-lending programs).

Goal IV: Address environmental constraints and natural resource limitations, which impact economic/community development. Such efforts include:

- Support the revitalization of existing brownfield sites.
- Improve air and water quality throughout West Michigan.
- Preserve and enhance valuable natural resources including farmland, timberland, minerals, fish and wildlife.
- Identify implementation strategies to assist local communities meet environmental standards.
- Maintain a healthy environment and protect natural amenities, which enhance the area's quality of life.

B. Update of Development Strategies

The economic development program developed for Region 8's 2006 CEDS Annual Report consists of proposed planning and development projects, any of which, if implemented, would help to fulfill one or more of the goals and objectives of the Region.

Project Selection Process

In November 2005, a call for projects to be included in Region 8's 2006 CEDS Annual Report was issued to all local units of government (cities, villages, and townships), counties, road commissions and economic development organizations within the Region 8 District. The information requested included the organization involved, project location and general description, total project cost, funding sources, job creation, and project readiness. Our standard form (Table 52) was used to evaluate submitted projects.

TABLE 52
CEDS PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria were used by Region 8's CEDS Committee to rank all projects submitted for inclusion in the 2006 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, ISTE, 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)	

For the past several years, the Region 8 CEDS Committee invited communities to submit economic development planning projects for inclusion in the CEDS Report. The Committee has noted an increased availability in funds from various funding entities for planning activities in recent years. In addition, the Committee recognizes the importance of good planning for the successful implementation of quality projects. "Planning" includes all of the information gathering, research, feasibility studies, and other preliminary processes associated with the implementation of an economic development project.

Fortunately, over the past year, some of the projects that were listed in the 2005 CEDS Report 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 Region 8's 2006 CEDS.

Each of the projects received for the 2006 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 2006 CEDS Report were prioritized utilizing the ranking criteria and point system presented in Table 52. These criteria are used to assist the CEDS Committee 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 42 to a low of 8. The highest possible score is 50 points.

Appendix A to this report provides the 2006 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.

Appendix C to this report provides the 2006 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.

2006 is the fourth 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.

C. Update of CEDS Implementation Activities

In early 2006, the CEDS Committee reviewed the "Implementation Strategies" for Region 8's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the implementation strategies remained, for the most part, appropriate for the 2006 program year with some revisions. The updated implementation strategies are as follows:

1. **CEDS Maintenance and Document Update.** The WMRPC will continue to keep the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) up-to-date and will follow an annual process of review and approval of its goals, objectives, strategies, work programs, and projects. Other agencies involved in economic development throughout the Region will be consulted for input and advice. 2006 is the first year with an adjusted schedule, shifting the entire process to the calendar year instead of the previously utilized October-September cycle.

The WMRPC will continuously strive to improve its CEDS program and document. This will include the on-going updating and analysis of social and economic data, mapping to illustrate information in geographic form, and on-going identification of economic potentials and needs both for the entire region and within specific counties.

2. **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 in economic development planning and project implementation --particularly in the areas of water and sewer development, transportation improvements, industrial site development, land use considerations, and community facilities development. Specific activities will include the following:

- **CEDS Project Implementation.** Every effort will be made by WMRPC staff to encourage and assist project sponsors to take concrete action toward project implementation. Such efforts may include searching for funding sources, providing statistical data and other information needed in filling out applications, attending pre-application conferences, making state and federal elected officials aware of the need for these very important projects, and monitoring the progress of project implementation. In addition, the WMRPC will provide feedback regarding the status of CEDS progress to participating communities and organizations.
- **Information Clearinghouse.** The WMRPC will strive to become a clearinghouse for economic development agencies throughout its Region, providing timely information regarding economic development trends, changes in federal and state regulations and programs, and availability of various resources needed for implementation of local economic development projects. The WMRPC will also try to make local practitioners aware of opportunities for coordination or collaboration amongst various agencies within the Region.
- **Federal and State Project Review.** The WMRPC has project review functions under the Federal Project Review System in Michigan. As such, the WMRPC has an opportunity to review and comment, as well as solicit comments from area officials and agencies, on all economic related applications in the district. This activity also allows the

WMRPC to develop a comprehensive list of all pending and approved applications for federal and state assistance in the Region.

3. **Maintenance of a Data Center.** The WMRPC is a designated local affiliate under the Michigan Information Center (MIC), which is associated with the U.S. Census Bureau's nationwide State Data Center Program. On a day-to-day basis, we provide census, economic, fiscal, and social data to a variety of users including local units of government, public agencies, schools, businesses, consultants, and students. Information is provided via telephone, FAX, mail, e-mail, the "Region 8 Notes" newsletter, and other published materials. The WMRPC can offer the additional service of providing the data in a mapped format.
4. **Network of Local Economic Development Organizations.** The District's CEDS process will continue to act as a forum to foster on-going communication among economic development organizations throughout Region 8. Today, each of our seven counties has an economic development office. An important objective is to maintain a regional network of technical experts and contacts, which can share information and ideas and respond effectively to economic opportunities as they arise. In addition, there may be opportunities to build new partnerships and seek creative ways to leverage for outside funding and resources.
5. **Region 8 Conference/Workshops.** There is continued need in Region 8 to educate practitioners and local officials in economic development issues and techniques. To further encourage coordination among economic development agencies throughout the District, to educate local government officials regarding the CEDS process, and to provide training in economic development activities; the WMRPC will sponsor regional conferences/workshops for the Region 8 District as needs are identified.

The WMRPC has coordinated training programs on grant writing, transportation, capital improvements programming, and recreation planning.

6. **Identification of Additional Resources.** During past years, through its CEDS program, the WMRPC has established a network of economic development contacts throughout Region 8; and through this network, identifies gaps in local economic development efforts on an on-going basis. In response to these needs, the WMRPC provides technical assistance by disseminating information and data and keeping local officials up-to-date on changing state and federal policies that impact economic development efforts.

There is, however, opportunity for the WMRPC to provide much more in-depth economic development assistance to communities throughout Region 8. Resources to accomplish such tasks are very limited in many communities, and there is very little funding for planning available through state and federal programs. The CEDS Committee, therefore, has identified the on-going need to search for additional resources that would give the WMRPC greater capacity to provide more in-depth technical assistance to local communities, and to implement broader economic development objectives for the Region. Greater capacity might be achieved through coordinated efforts with other organizations, identifying funding for

additional staff, utilizing the talents of college faculty or retired professionals, obtaining the services of professionals on "loan" from the corporations, or other means.

7. **Environmental Protection.** As needed, the WMRPC will partner with other agencies and organizations to maintain environmental protection efforts; including improving and updating the District's environmental profile and preparing environmental impact assessments for economic development projects as required by EDA. In-house environmental information will be updated regarding surface waters, floodplains, wetlands, groundwater, farmland and open space preservation areas, and contaminated sites.

In addition, there is increased opportunity to assist local communities in brownfield redevelopment. The Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act allows municipalities to develop plans to capture state and local property taxes from a site of environmental contamination (tax increment financing) in order to conduct clean-up activities.

8. **Plant Closure Data.** The District will be responsible for supplying EDA's Michigan 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. This will allow EDA to identify areas, which are eligible for sudden economic distress assistance.
9. **Special Projects: Research and Planning for Region 8.** In past years, the WMRPC has been involved in a number of research and planning studies specific to Region 8 such as a labor survey, utility survey, population projections, preparation of maps, etc. These activities provide useful support data needed for local economic development projects throughout the District. Many local communities do not have the staff or financial resources to assemble such information, yet such information is often vital to implementing a project or competing for grant dollars. This activity was added as a CEDS Implementation Strategy in 1995 to acknowledge the continued need for economic research and planning studies based on data specific to Region 8 communities. The CEDS committee will continue to act as advisory committee to the WMRPC Board with regard to the types of research and planning studies that are needed.

VI. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

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 standards that will be used to measure progress toward each of the major work program activities during 2005. This section was added to the Region's CEDS document in compliance with the EDA's re-authorization legislation passed by the U.S. Congress in October 1998.

1. **CEDS Maintenance and Document Update.** The WMRPC will identify and rank economic development projects for Region 8 (approximately 100 projects each year), track economic trends, review the goals and strategies of the CEDS Program, and prepared an Annual CEDS Report as required by the U.S. EDA. As a part of this effort, summary reports on the economic development successes and concerns over the past year for each county within the Region 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.
2. **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.

- 3. 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.

We will also provide assistance to and coordinate with local units of government which are establishing GIS/data programs.

- 4. 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.
- 5. 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.
- 6. 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.

- 7. 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.
- 8. Plant Closure Data.** The WMRPC will supply EDA's Economic Development Representatives (EDRs) 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.
- 9. 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.

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

2006 EDA TARGETED COMMUNITY PROJECTS LIST DESCRIPTIONS

**WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2006 CEDS LIST – EDA TARGETED COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

ALLEGAN COUNTY

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 3000 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: \$1.65 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

Charlotte Highway / Cutler Road Reconstruction. This project will reconstruct Charlotte Highway between Grand River Avenue and Cutler Road, including water main replacement and sanitary sewer repairs. Also reconstruct Cutler road between Charlotte Highway and Grand River Avenue. Estimated cost: \$1.7 million

City of Portland

Divine Highway Reconstruction. Reconstruct Divine Highway from Maynard Road to City limits and mill and overlay from Grand River Avenue to Maynard Road. Includes installation of water main and sanitary sewer. Estimated cost: \$2.4 million

City of Portland

Maple Street Reconstruction / Streetscape. Reconstruct Maple Street from Grand River Avenue to Academy Street. Project involves replacement of water main and sanitary sewer, and includes parking improvements and streetscape items like lighting, trees, and sidewalk improvements. Estimated cost: \$1.1 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: \$24.0 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, 255,000

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 1100 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

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: \$1.5 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

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

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: \$3.5 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 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 Wyoming

Wyoming Industrial Center Rehabilitation. Project involves spot clearance of 551,650 square feet of buildings in the 35-acre former Reynolds Metals property and includes spot replacement of utility lines. This project will result in more land available for new development. Estimated cost: \$1.0 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

Creeks Edge Water Main Extension. The City currently needs to improve the flow between two elevated water storage tanks serving the south pressure district. First, the water main will be extended to serve an existing apartment complex that is currently supplied by on-site wells. The main will then be extended west to 205th Avenue and north to 15 Mile Road to connect to the existing transmission main. The loop will improve fire flows, improve residual pressures in the area, and provide an alternate source of water to the apartment complex. The project also enables future expansion to provide water to development in Big Rapids Township. Estimated cost: \$763,000

Mecosta County Development Corporation

Stanwood Community Planning and Downtown Improvement. Community planning and revitalization. Based on a community planning meeting, the community decided to begin the process to revitalize their downtown area and has identified needed actions and moved into the initial planning phase. Assistance is needed with planning. Estimated cost: \$25,000

City of Big Rapids

Darwin Avenue Reconstruction. This project would finance needed reconstruction of Darwin Avenue from Olaf to Mechanic. The water main would also be replaced in order to facilitate a larger volume of water to the Industrial Park and the underdeveloped areas of the City's east side. Estimated cost: \$850,000

City of Big Rapids

South Water Main Crossing. This project would replace and expand old, inadequate water pipes serving the southeast area of town and the industrial park area on the east side of the Muskegon River. The improved water main loop will significantly increase water pressure for fire protection. The improved flows will also decrease the residence time in the water mains and thereby improve the area's water quality. This project was completed in August 2005. Estimated cost: \$997,500

City of Big Rapids

Bjornson Street Reconstruction. This project would involve major reconstruction to Bjornson Street, which provides access to the northeast section of the City, including the Big Rapids Industrial Park. Work would include blacktop, shoulder, curb and gutter, storm sewer, and water main. Upgraded water main will improve flows and pressure to the Industrial Park area. The project would also add sanitary sewer from Speer Street to Harding Drive and prevent potential problems that could result from failed septic systems. Estimated cost: \$975,000

City of Big Rapids

Fuller Street Water Main Extension. Construct a 12-inch diameter water main from the booster pumping station to Escott Street. The new main will improve flows and pressures to the Perry Street tower, which will enhance service to the west side of town that is served by this tower. Fire flows will be increased, leading to improved protection for public health, safety, and welfare. The project will also include reconstruction of Fuller Street from State to Escott. Estimated cost: \$325,000

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

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

City of Big Rapids

Waste Water Plant Engineering Study, Phase II. Phase I of this project evaluated the existing plant and recommended improvements that include the following: new aeration/digester tank; convert anaerobic digesters, demolish outdated facilities; replace blowers; instrumentation/SCADA upgrade; replace emergency generator; new maintenance building; upgrade electrical system; equalization basin modifications, and new UV building. Estimated cost: \$4.3 million

City of Big Rapids

Ferris Drive Water Main. This project will replace an undersized water main with a 12-inch diameter main that will improve flows between two elevated water tanks, thus improving fire flows on the Ferris State University campus. Estimated cost: \$400,000 (\$285,000 water main and \$115,000 reconstruction)

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

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 U.S.-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

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: \$3,157,000

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

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

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: \$50,000

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

Osceola Economic Alliance

Brownfield Redevelopment Fund. Osceola County is forming a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. After the Authority has been established, they will need funding to conduct an inventory of contaminated properties and to establish a revolving loan fund for clean up operations. Estimated cost: \$700,000

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

2006 COMMUNITY PROJECTS LIST DESCRIPTIONS

**WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2006 CEDS LIST – COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

ALLEGAN COUNTY

No projects.

IONIA COUNTY

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 new water master plan is needed to accommodate commercial and residential development in the City of Ionia and the townships of Easton, Ionia, Berlin, and Orange. A first phase in the water plan is currently taking place with the completion of a reliability study. The next phase will be the hydraulic modeling. 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.

Kent Street Boardwalk. Construct elevated boardwalk along the Grand River on the back side of 100 block Kent Street buildings. Estimated cost: \$800,000

City of Portland

Arts Council Buildings at Portland Dam. Estimated cost: \$200,000

City of Portland

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

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

KENT COUNTY

City of Grand Rapids

Joint Regional Biosolids Management. This project will collect primary and secondary treated residuals produced by the Wyoming Clean Water Plant and the Grand Rapids Wastewater Treatment Plant; storage to be converted in the future to secondary digesters; and contract dewatering operation with land application/landfill disposal. Estimated cost: \$13.2 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: \$1.0 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

Menards Water Main Extension. The City was asked to provide water to the site of the proposed \$8.0 million Menards project located in Big Rapids Township. Extending water mains to the site will require about 1500 feet of 16-inch water main and 2500 feet of 12-inch water main. The larger main is necessary to provide fire flows to the area. Estimated cost: \$400,000

City of Big Rapids

Culvert Repair – Hemlock Street. The City needs to replace the existing culvert with a larger structure that can accommodate a large increase of water from Mitchell Creek. Estimated cost: \$660,000

City of Big Rapids

Installation of New Storm Sewers. An inflow infiltration engineering study recommended that the City install new storm sewers throughout the City between Finley and Fuller from State to Escott. The new storm sewers will bring the city into compliance with discharge elimination and water quality standards. Estimated cost: \$1.0 million

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

Airport Lighting Replacement. The lighting system at the Robin Hood Airport is aging and in need of replacement. Funded – to be replaced in 2006. Replacement of lighting system: \$425,000

City of Big Rapids

Ives Stream Bank Stabilization / Protection of Sewer Main. Uncontrolled storm water runoff, particularly for Ferris State University, has caused severe erosion of the stream banks that may expose the city's 18" sanitary sewer main, causing the main to fail. These banks must be stabilized in order to prevent an environmental disaster. This project will stabilize the stream bank for 3200 feet from Ives Avenue to the Muskegon River. Estimated cost: \$711,198

City of Big Rapids

Street Paving. The streets in the northwest quadrant of the City are unpaved and need to be updated with paving, curbs, and gutters. Underground utilities will be evaluated and improvements made where warranted, especially when fire flows can be improved. Estimated cost: \$500,000

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

Storm Sewer Northeast City. Currently storm water outfall exists on private property in this section of town. The City wants to alleviate this problem by extending the existing storm sewer outfall north to the City detention pond. The extension would consist of 750 linear feet of 15-inch pipe. Estimated cost: \$75,000

City of Big Rapids

Riverwalk Phase III Bridge Extension. The Riverwalk will run along the Muskegon River from the City's Northend Riverside Park to Hemlock Park and connect 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 will include accessible fishing platforms. Phase I is complete and Phase II is scheduled to begin construction in mid-2004. 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

Hunt Street Water Main. Install a 12-inch water main in the Hunt Street Right-of-Way. The main is needed to improve flows and pressures to the area of Mechanic Street. Estimated cost: \$100,000

City of Big Rapids

Installation of Storm Water Pipe. The volume of water produced by a rainstorm exceeds the capacity of the existing system and results in temporary flooding. The City proposes to install a 36-inch diameter storm water pipe from River Street to the river to accommodate potential storm water volumes. This project will continue the City's effort to improve river water quality as recommended by the MDEQ/MDNR. Estimated cost: \$140,000

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

Airport Fuel. More businesses require the use of jets and the newly created Airport Industrial Park is trying to attract new business to the area. The airport needs to upgrade its services to serve these new businesses. The airport needs to install a 12,000 gallon fuel tank to provide additional storage for Jet A Fuel. Estimated cost: \$60,000

City of Big Rapids

Major Street Repair. Resurface / reconstruct the following major streets: Michigan Avenue – Maple to Cedar; Stewart Avenue – Maple to Linden; Ferris Drive – South State to 215th; Dekraft; Milton. Estimated cost: \$330,000

City of Big Rapids

Ridgeview Water Main Replacement. The area of Ridgeview, Bailey, and Dexter is subject to frequent water main breaks and the City intends to alleviate the problem by replacing the old 6-inch diameter water main with an 8-inch ductile iron main properly imbedded in sand. The street will also need reconstruction after this replacement. Estimated cost: \$325,000 (\$177,000 water main and \$148,000 street)

City of Big Rapids

Water Main Replacement. This project would replace old 4-inch diameter water main pipes throughout the city with new 8-inch diameter pipes. All residents will benefit from improved health and safety and significantly increased water flows and pressures available for fire protection. Estimated cost: \$1.0 million

City of Big Rapids

Winter/Chestnut Water Main. The old cast iron water main in the area of Winter and Chestnut is subject to frequent breaks and needs to be replaced. The streets would also need to be

restored/upgraded after the water main replacement. Estimated cost: \$250,000 (\$110,000 water main and \$140,000 street)

City of Big Rapids

Ives / South Streets Water Main Replacement. Replace old water main on Ives and South Streets with new 12-inch ductile iron mains and rebuild the street. Estimated cost: \$900,000 (\$570,000 water main and \$330,000 street)

City of Big Rapids

Middle School Water Main. Replace a 4-inch diameter water main with an 8-inch diameter water main to improve flows and pressures to the Big Rapids Middle School. Estimated cost: \$150,000 (\$35,000 water main and \$115,000 reconstruction)

City of Big Rapids

Mill Street Water Main. Replace a 4-inch diameter water main with an 8-inch diameter water main to improve fire flow and pressures and also upgrade the street. Estimated cost: \$210,000 (\$90,000 water main and \$120,000 street)

City of Big Rapids

Northend Riverside Park Development. Phases I and II of the Northend Riverside Park Master Plan have been completed. Northend Riverside Park is connected to the White Pine Trail State Park by a non-motorized trail and serves as a resting and picnicking location as well as an access to the Muskegon River. The remaining phase will include non-motorized trails through the southern end of the park and will feature the park's historic sites. Estimated cost: \$300,000

City of Big Rapids

Division Storm Sewer Replacement. Replace 4 blocks of old undersized storm sewer in Division Street and rebuild the street. Estimated cost: \$250,000

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 U.S. 131, north to 19 Mile Road. Estimated cost: \$100,000

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 4300 to 5001 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

Local Street Reconstruction. Reconstruct Mill, Rust, Sanborn. Provide better storm water drainage, make water and sanitary sewer replacements. Estimated cost: \$500,000

City of Big Rapids

Cedar Street Storm Water System Upgrade. The Cedar Street storm water system is in need of replacement due to the increase of run-off from the southwest quarter of the City. This increase is due primarily to new construction at Ferris State University. Estimated cost: \$500,000

City of Big Rapids

Water Main Replacement (Campus). Replace 8-inch cast iron water main located on Ferris State University campus, south of Ferris Drive and north of Ice Arena. The main will be replaced with a 12" water main that will improve circulation to the water towers that serve the area. Estimated cost: \$144,000

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

OSCEOLA COUNTY

City of Reed City

Trails Marketing Study. The White Pine State Park Trail and the Pere Marquette State Forest Trail cross in downtown Reed City and could be an opportunity for the City to become a part of a profitable recreation industry in the area. Project work would generate marketing and promotional strategies designed to increase visitors to the City who are interested in using the trails and who would also patronize local businesses. Estimated cost: \$80,000

Osceola County

Kettunen Center Road Paving. The Kettunen Center is a complete conference facility owned and operated by the Michigan 4-H Foundation. The 4600 feet of road leading into the facility is in very poor condition, which has led to safety issues. The economic potential available to the community cannot be fully realized without these road improvements. Estimated cost: \$180,000

Osceola County

Housing Rehabilitation. A well-maintained housing stock is critical to the economic development of a community. As compared to the state, Osceola County has a higher percentage of homes built before 1939. Additionally, household income is 27.3% less. As a result, the County has a need to establish homeowner assistance programs. Estimated cost: \$250,000

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

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

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), readily overload the system and have caused problems for park users. This project is designed to meet both current and future demands. Estimated cost: \$80,000

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: \$30,000

Village of Marion

Veteran’s Memorial Park Pavilion. The current pavilion at Veteran’s Memorial Park is used to capacity during most of the summer. The pavilion is in need of major repairs and is too far away from the restrooms (more than 100 yards). A new pavilion is needed. Estimated cost: \$80,000

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 for use for community events, community recreation, and multi-purpose trade and community shows. Estimated cost: \$8.0 million

Appendix D

2006 EDA TARGETED COMMUNITY PROJECTS LIST

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2006)
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	3	42
City of Cedar Springs (Kent) West Street Extension and Industrial Park	0	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	8	3	41
City of Belding (Ionia) Storm and Sanitary Sewer Improvements	0	5	3	3	5	3	5	5	8	3	40
City of Greenville (Montcalm) Consumers Energy Substation Relocation Downtown Riverfront	0	5	0	5	5	0	5	5	10	5	40
Osceola County PP Countywide Tourism Study	0	5	5	3	0	5	5	5	5	5	38
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) East Side Combined Sewer Overflow Improvements	5	5	3	5	5	0	5	5	0	3	36
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Grand Walk Sustainable Business Park	5	0	3	5	5	3	5	5	0	3	34
City of Ionia (Ionia) Southside River Development	0	5	5	3	0	3	5	5	3	3	32
Mecosta County Development Corporation/Morton Township (Mecosta) PP Mid State Industrial Park Promotions	5	0	0	3	3	0	5	3	10	3	32
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) New Water Supply Line to Franklin Reservoir	5	5	3	0	5	0	5	5	0	3	31

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2006)
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 Big Rapids (Mecosta) Creeks Edge Water Main Extension	0	5	3	5	0	0	5	5	5	3	31
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Urban Land Assembly	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	5	6	3	29
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Steelcase Redevelopment Project	5	0	0	5	0	3	5	5	3	3	29
Mecosta County Dev. Corp. PP Stanwood Community Planning and Downtown Improvement	5	5	0	0	1	0	5	0	10	3	29
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Seward Avenue Extension	3	0	3	5	5	0	5	5	0	3	29
Howard City (Montcalm) Ensley Street/Federal Road Improvement	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	3	6	5	29
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Darwin Avenue Reconstruction	0	0	5	0	5	0	5	5	5	3	28
Pierson Township (Montcalm) Amy School Road Industrial Park	0	0	3	1	1	3	2	5	8	5	28
City of Greenville (Montcalm) Waste Water Treatment Plant and Waste Water System Upgrades	0	0	0	5	0	5	5	5	3	5	28
City of Reed City (Osceola) PP Industrial Park Feasibility Study	1	5	0	1	0	0	5	5	5	5	27

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2006)
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) Madison Square, South Town Redevelopment Project	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	5	3	3	26
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) South Water Main Crossing	0	5	5	1	0	0	5	5	1	3	25
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Bjornson Street Reconstruction	0	0	0	1	5	0	5	5	6	3	25
City of Greenville (Montcalm) Consumers Energy Substation Relocation – Industrial Park	0	0	0	5	0	5	5	0	5	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) Wealthy Jefferson Initiative	5	0	3	1	1	0	5	5	0	3	23
City of Wyoming (Kent) Chicago Drive Industrial Rehabilitation	0	0	0	5	1	0	5	5	4	3	23
City of Wyoming (Kent) Wyoming Industrial Center Rehabilitation	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	5	5	3	23
Pierson Township (Montcalm) Renaissance Zone	0	0	5	1	0	0	4	5	3	5	23
City of Reed City (Osceola) PP Industrial Park	0	5	0	1	0	0	5	5	1	5	22

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2006)
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) Delphi Industrial Redevelopment	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	5	3	3	21
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Fuller Street Water Main Extension	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
Mecosta County Dev. Corp. High Speed Rural Telecom. Infrastructure	0	0	0	3	0	0	5	3	5	3	19
Pierson Township (Montcalm) Henkle Road Improvement	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	5	4	5	19
City of Otsego (Allegan) Water System Program	0	5	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	18
Mecosta County Dev. Corp. PP Value-Added Agriculture Research	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	3	5	3	17
City of Portland (Ionia) Charlotte Highway / Cutler Road Reconstruction	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	16
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Wastewater Plant Engineering Study – Phase II	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	16
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Relocation of Amtrak Station to The Rapid's Central Station	5	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	0	3	14

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2006)
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 Portland (Ionia) Divine Highway Reconstruction	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Portland (Ionia) Maple Street Reconstruction	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Ferris Drive Water Main	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
Osceola Economic Alliance PP Brownfield Redevelopment Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	10

Appendix E

2006 COMMUNITY PROJECTS LIST

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2006)
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 Belding (Ionia) Downtown Business District Revitalization	0	5	3	1	5	3	5	5	4	3	34
City of Reed City (Osceola) PP Trails Marketing Study	1	5	0	1	1	0	5	5	10	5	33
City of Ionia (Ionia) PP Ionia Regional Water Master Plan	0	5	3	5	0	0	5	5	5	3	31
Osceola County Kettunen Center Road Paving	0	5	5	1	1	5	1	0	8	5	31
City of Belding (Ionia) Central Riverside Park Improvements	0	5	3	1	1	3	5	5	4	3	30
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Menards Water Main Extension	5	0	0	3	3	0	5	5	2	3	26
Osceola County Housing Rehabilitation	0	5	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	23
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Joint Regional Biosolids Management	5	0	3	1	0	0	5	5	0	3	22
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Culvert Repair – Hemlock	0	5	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	21
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Installation of New Storm Sewers	3	0	5	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	21

CEDS PROJECT RANKING (September 2006)
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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) Habitat for Humanity Infrastructure Improvement	0	0	3	0	0	5	5	5	0	3	21
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Airport Lighting Replacement	0	5	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	21
Osceola County Rose Lake Park Road Paving Project	0	5	0	0	0	3	3	5	0	5	21
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Ives Stream Bank Stabilization / Protection of Sewer Main	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	19
Osceola County Two Mile Road Upgrade	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	5	4	5	19
Osceola County Rose Lake Park Electric Project	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	5	0	5	18
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Street Paving	0	0	5	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	18
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) River Street Park Improvement	0	0	5	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	18
Osceola County Crittenden Park Electric Project	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	5	0	5	18
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Greening Infrastructure Project	5	0	3	0	0	0	5	0	0	3	16

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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) Storm Sewer NE City	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	16
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Riverwalk Phase III Bridge Extension	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	16
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Hunt Street Water Main	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	16
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Installation of Stormwater Pipe	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	16
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Railroad Depot Restoration	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	5	0	3	16
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Airport Fuel	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	16
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Major Street Repair	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	16
Village of Marion (Osceola) Veterans' Memorial Park Pavilion	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	15
City of Grand Rapids (Kent) Public Works Center for Leaf Composting	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	0	2	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Ridgeview Water Main Replacement	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13

City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Water Main Replacement	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Winter/Chestnut Water Main	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Ives/South Streets Water Main Replacement	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Middle School Water Main	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Mill Street Water Main	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Northend Riverside Park Development	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Division Storm Sewer Replacement	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Utility Master Plan	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Portland (Ionia) Kent Street Boardwalk	0	0	5	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Portland (Ionia) Arts Council Buildings at Portland Dam	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Portland (Ionia) Grand River Boardwalk	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Portland (Ionia) Pedestrian Trail Loop Completion	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Airport Runway Extension	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	3	13

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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 Holland (Ottawa) Holland Civic Center Renovation/Expansion	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	5	0	0	12
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Local Street Reconstruction	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	0	0	3	11
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Cedar Street Storm Water System Upgrade	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	0	0	3	11
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) Water Main Replacement (Campus)	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	3	8
City of Portland (Ionia) Rowe Avenue Reconstruction	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	3	8
City of Big Rapids (Mecosta) New Street Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	3	8