

MICHIGAN'S GREAT SOUTHWEST
IS A VIBRANT AND PROSPEROUS
REGION TO LIVE, LEARN, WORK, INVEST,
GROW, PLAY AND RETIRE FOR
EVERYONE



**DRIVE
GREATNESS**

MICHIGAN'S GREAT
SOUTHWEST
STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP
COUNCIL



OUR VISION

Unsurpassed Quality of Life for all distinguishes Michigan's Great Southwest. Growing local businesses and our job market will help enable us to fulfill that vision. Developing world-class talent from our communities and expanding our tax base is all about ensuring that individuals have the skills needed and linking them to opportunities in the region. Best practice governance is needed in a time of profound change to best guarantee that we have efficient and effective means to deliver needed public services in the area.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are a transparent, inclusive, inspirational, data-driven, results-oriented and reality-based Collective Impact organization.

We acknowledge our interdependencies and promote collaboration over competition. We agree on shared goals, pool our talent and our resources, and use innovative thinking and strategies to add value to our communities.

OUR INTENDED OUTCOMES

We will attract new investments, create new jobs and increase prosperity in our region, grow our population and tax base, provide great education and government services for all, offer greater access to outstanding medical care, and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve family-sustaining employment and fully engage in community life.



OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

By concentrating on our work in these four Strategic Focus Areas, we will ensure that Michigan's Great Southwest is a vibrant and prosperous region to live, learn, work, invest, grow, play, and retire for *everyone*.

WORLD CLASS EDUCATION & TALENT

We will ensure that all of our residents are academically, vocationally and culturally prepared for a productive life in our community.

Opportunity for Everyone Employment Readiness Group, Mainstream Employment Readiness Group, Graduation Readiness Group, Kindergarten Readiness Group

BUSINESS & JOBS GROWTH

We will build a vibrant local economy with opportunity for everyone.

Economic Development & Real Estate Group, Employee Recruitment & Retention Group

UNSURPASSED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL

We will distinguish Michigan's Great Southwest by creating unsurpassed quality of life for all.

Transportation Group, Health Group, Housing Group, Livable Communities Group

BEST PRACTICE GOVERNANCE

We will ensure better service for our community through increased cooperation and trust.

Taxpayer Value Working Group, Best Practices Committee



PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYONE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



SHIRLEY

Opportunity for Everyone
Graduate

Opportunity for Everyone is a collaborative effort to improve job readiness and employment retention across Berrien County. Jobs for Life, the classroom component of the program, is taught by Mosaic Christian Community Development Association. The course prepares students by addressing barriers to employment and connecting them with volunteer mentors. Graduates have the opportunity to gain hands-on job experience and obtain their High School diploma, GED, vocational training with the support of Kinexus and/or job certifications from Lake Michigan College. Once placed with local employers, graduates continue to receive on-site job support.

Jobs for Life classes have trained more than 340 students since launching in 2014, and we are now working toward the goal of graduating 1,000 individuals between 2017 and 2023. In the past year, 45 graduates have trained at social enterprises and 23 graduates were placed with other local employers.

Shirley joined Opportunity for Everyone at age 44, very discouraged that she could not get her life on track. Jobs for Life gave her the boost that she needed. After graduating, she worked for Mosaic Resale, one of the social enterprises that supports Opportunity for Everyone graduates. Because she distinguished herself as a hard worker, Mosaic staff recommended her for a job as a First Shift Operator at Kruger Plastics. She was hired as a temporary employee, but her boss was so impressed that he hired Shirley as a permanent shift employee. Mosaic helped her to find a vehicle and in partnership with local nonprofit 100 Women Strong helped her obtain car insurance so she could regularly commute to Bridgman. Now Shirley is proud to be considered one of Kruger Plastic's most valuable shift employees and is working toward home ownership.

LEADERSHIP ACCELERATOR PROGRAM



TRACY
Leadership Accelerator
Graduate

For emerging leaders from Berrien County, this intensive leadership development program is designed as a transformational journey begins with individual development and ends with a focus on community leadership. For ten months, participants meet monthly for full-day workshops that bolster their management abilities, strategic thinking and collaboration. In these workshops, we are developing the next generation of leaders needed to transform Southwest Michigan into a vibrant and prosperous region where all residents have a high quality of life.

Tracy Jennings is the former Executive Director of Emergency Shelter Services in Benton Harbor and a 2017 graduate of Leadership Accelerator. She was inspired to increase her involvement with the Leadership Council and in the community during her ten months in the program. "Social justice and equality are important to me," she explains, "and when we discussed how to move the needle forward in Berrien County, we were given a lot of tools. We learned how to get further involved in our community, how to join a nonprofit Board of Directors or a School Board, and different ways to give of our time and talents."

"I really appreciated how they allowed space for exploration of how we can each personally bring back what we've learned to this community," says Tracy. "After the program, there are so many opportunities to become more involved in any of the Leadership Council's Strategic Focus Areas, like creating Opportunity for Everyone by working in business and jobs growth, or by joining the education or transportation groups. Now I am more involved with the Leadership Council and I am really excited to serve as a Leadership Accelerator Alumni Coach for the new class because I understand how important it is for leaders to walk alongside each other in close proximity."

BY MID-2018, LEADERSHIP ACCELERATOR WILL HAVE GRADUATED 95 EMERGING LEADERS WHO HAVE TAKEN MORE ACTIVE ROLES IN OUR WORKING GROUPS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NONPROFIT BOARDS AND CIVIC GROUPS.



OTHER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

INCREMENTAL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Partnering with Incremental Development Alliance, our Real Estate Development Initiative trains local officials, small business owners and community members in small-scale and mixed-use development. These strategies will grow and diversify housing and retail in our region. Our 2017 Incremental Development Seminar trained community members from seven Berrien County municipalities. Three municipalities are now preparing to begin the Small Incremental Development process by the end of 2018. We are also forming a regional partnership with Kalamazoo and South Bend, holding workshops throughout several counties.

REDEVELOPMENT READY INITIATIVE


In partnership with Cornerstone Alliance, our Economic Development & Real Estate Working Group is currently supporting seven Berrien County communities as they go through Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Redevelopment Ready Communities process. Communities engage in identifying assets and opportunities, planning for new investment and reinvestment, and learning how to focus and leverage limited local resources. This process streamlines a community's development approval process and prepares our municipalities to attract new investors, businesses and residents.

BERRIEN COUNTY HEALTH INITIATIVES

Our Health Working Group takes a systems approach to address barriers to health across our region, including limited access to health care, nutritious food and recreational facilities. This Group is involved in efforts to build a sustainable regional food system, establish a coordinated network of senior services, and unite Lakeland Health, Be Healthy Berrien, Andrews University, the Berrien County Health Department, and other local organizations for a countywide multi-component health initiative.

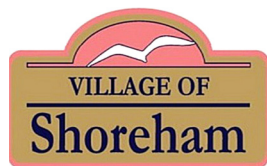
EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

We are building the Berrien College Access Network, with cradle-to-career educational supports that help residents prepare for success in elementary, high school, college and the workforce. We support early childhood development and school readiness by distributing our Get Ready Guide for parents of children entering kindergarten, and we are producing a Get Ready Guide in Spanish. Our Recruitment & Retention Group is working with Lake Michigan College to coordinate the region's first countywide career fair, and we also support access to Developmental Education and Career & Technical Education classes in our county.





PARTNER COMMUNITIES



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| 1st Church of God | Kinexus (Michigan Works) |
| 1st Source Bank | Kruger Plastic Products |
| Abonmarche | Lake Michigan College |
| Alexa Claire Boutique and Tux Shop | Lake Michigan Mailers |
| American Electric Power | Lakeland Health |
| Area Agency on Aging | Lakeshore Schools |
| B&L Information Systems | Larks & Sons BBQ |
| Be Healthy Berrien | Lake Michigan College Foundation |
| Benton Harbor Area Schools | Lory's Place |
| Benton Harbor Boys & Girls Club | Magnate Capital Partners, LLC |
| Benton Harbor Downtown Development Authority | Michigan Pizza Hut, Inc. |
| Benton Harbor Housing Commission | MI's Great Southwest Sustainability Forum |
| Benton Harbor Promise Foundation | Mosaic Christian Community Development Association |
| Benton Harbor Sunrise Rotary | Niles School Board |
| Berrien Community Foundation | NTAA |
| Berrien County Courts | Pearson Construction |
| Berrien County Health Department | Plante Moran |
| Berrien County Human Services Coordinating Council | PNC Bank |
| Berrien Regional Education Service Agency | Prairie Real Estate Development |
| Big Brothers Big Sisters | Readiness Center, Inc. |
| Brammall Supply | Red Tie Concierge |
| Bridge Academy | Regal Finishing |



PARTNERS

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| Burritt Consulting | Regional Prosperity Initiative |
| Business Leaders of Michigan | Royalton Township |
| Charter Capital Partners | Schools of Justice |
| Chemical Bank | SCORE |
| Competitive Edge | Second Baptist Church |
| Cook Nuclear | SJPS Foundation |
| Cornerstone Alliance | SMEGA |
| Creative Financial Services | Smith Dahmer & Associates, LLC |
| Edgewater Bank | Southshore Companies |
| Edward Jones | Southwest Michigan Planning Commission |
| Elwood Staffing | Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra |
| Express Employment Professionals | Stonegate Designs |
| Fifth Third Bank | Senior PGA |
| First Tee of Benton Harbor | St. Joseph Today |
| Frederick S. Upton Foundation | St. Joseph-Benton Harbor Rotary Club |
| Freedom Finishing | St. Joseph Public Schools |
| Freshman 50 | Sunset Tool |
| Garey Roofing | The Political Company |
| Great Start Collaborative Berrien County | United Federal Credit Union |
| Hanson Logistics, LLC | United Way of Southwest Michigan |
| Hanson Mold | Vail Rubber |
| Harbor Habitat for Humanity | Wales & Associates |
| Harbor Shine | Whirlpool Corporation |
| Harbor Shores | Wightman & Associates |
| Healthy Berrien Consortium | Wood Employment |
| Honor Credit Union | Wood Wenham & Henderson Consultants |
| Horizon Bank | WWTP Joint Board |
| Hospice at Home | YMCA |
| Junior Achievement | YoungLife Southwest Michigan |