



Southwest Michigan First Services

HOW OUR TEAM CAN ASSIST YOUR PROJECT NEEDS

Southwest Michigan First was created for one singular purpose: To assist companies in growing jobs.

We believe a job makes a positive impact for generations to come. Our community's future depends on our local companies' ability to grow, be competitive and change with the times.

Our experience in working with companies of all sizes—from Fortune 500 companies to eight-person tool-and-die shops and bioscience R&D labs to local makers—has proven invaluable time and time again. Our commitment is to growing companies, just like yours, because we believe you are the future. From our inception in 1999 to 2020, Southwest Michigan First has worked on 739 regional projects that have resulted in the announcement of 19,941 direct jobs, 29,912 indirect jobs and \$2.4 billion in private investment.

From project ideation to ribbon cutting, Southwest Michigan First will serve as your one-stop-shop for all site selection services, including demographic and workforce comparative analysis, site review and comparison, incentives, workforce assistance, municipal support and more. Our goal is to make your project as competitive as possible, which often means leveraging incentive dollars, tax abatements, working with local partners and optimizing your workforce to strengthen your project in the region.

On the following pages you will find examples of how we can support your continued growth.



GRANTS, INCENTIVES AND TAX RELIEF

Understanding the implications of grants, incentives and tax relief on your business can seem overwhelming at times. Let our team of knowledgeable professionals share their expertise in incentives—for both companies and communities.

MICHIGAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (MBDP)

This incentive program, available from the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) in partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), provides performance-based grants and loans to competitive projects in the state based on investment, job creation and industry.

FREIGHT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

A Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) grant program, it is intended to help expanding or new businesses connect to Michigan's rail system by covering up to 50% of costs associated with rail infrastructure.

MICHIGAN NEW JOBS TRAINING PROGRAM (MNJTP)

This program captures employer-paid employee taxes on new jobs in the state to reimburse employer-specific tailored training programs for employees through local community colleges.

GOING PRO TALENT FUND

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) created this talent fund to address skill shortages by reskilling and upskilling, ensure employers have the talent required to compete and accelerate and support employees' growth opportunities. Up to \$1,500 per employee in grant assistance is available to employers that provide credentialed training programs to employees.

MICHIGAN'S STATE TRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM (MI-STEP)

This program offers financial assistance for exporting activities to eligible Michigan small businesses, enabling access to global markets and buyers through a 75% reimbursement up to \$15,000 of eligible expenses.

UTILITY REBATES AND RATE RIDER DISCOUNTS

Through our close connections with the economic development teams at area utility providers, we can help your business leverage rebates and rate rider discounts where applicable.

INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT (PA 198)

This incentive reduces the ongoing tax burden for eligible businesses making new investment in the state by abating 50% of net new real taxes on site developments for up to 12 years.

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PA 381)

This incentive serves to implement brownfield plans and develop brownfield properties. It leverages Tax Increment Financing (TIF) which captures net new taxes on a redevelopment to reimburse the developer for eligible costs.



PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF IN DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES (PA 328)

This exemption is for all new personal property for specific businesses located within eligible distressed communities.

OBSOLETE PROPERTY REHABILITATION ACT (PA 146)

This program affords property tax exemptions for up to a period of 12 years on commercial and commercial housing properties that are rehabilitated and meet certain requirements of the act.



COMMERCIAL REHABILITATION ACT (PA 210)

For up to a period of 10 years, this program affords a tax incentive for the rehabilitation of commercial property for the primary purpose and use of a commercial business or multi-family residential facility.

STATE EDUCATION TAX (SET) ABATEMENT

The state can abate half or all the 6-mill State Education Tax (SET) on new investment when the project presents significant economic benefit to Michigan.

STATE ESSENTIAL SERVICES ASSESSMENT (SESA) EXEMPTION

The SESA exemption is another program leveraged through the MEDC for companies investing more than \$25 million in personal property, where the exemption is equal to 100% of the SESA amount for a period of up to 12 years. Alternative SESAs are equal to a 50% exemption for a period of years.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

Available to both business and communities through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), this federal grant program can be used for various infrastructure and development projects.

MICHIGAN COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (MCRP)

This community-specific program administered by the MEDC on behalf of the MSF offers communities access to real estate development gap financing for innovative and/or impactful placemaking, historical redevelopment and/or job growth in targeted sectors.

TRANSPORTATION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND (TEDF)

Another MDOT program targeting communities, the TEDF seeks to promote increased economic potential and job creation in the state through offsetting construction costs related to transportation projects.

PARTNERS AND CONNECTIONS



OUR NETWORK

Leveraging our relationships with existing employers, small businesses, Board of Directors and Chamber members, our team has the local business connections to ensure your success.

LOCAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Our team maintains close relationships with leadership at Western Michigan University (WMU), Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) and Glen Oaks Community College to support and promote collaboration between businesses and educational institutions.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Our public policy team and long-standing bonds with elected officials make Southwest Michigan First the perfect partner to help local units of government support and efficiently work with your business for everything from zoning and approvals to tax abatements.

MICHIGAN MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY CENTER (MMTC) | THE CENTER

The Center is an organization focused on supporting small and mid-sized Michigan manufacturers work smarter and grow through their tailored training programs, onsite consulting and industry-leading technology implementations.



MICHIGAN WORKS! SOUTHWEST

The region is served by two Michigan Works! divisions. These state workforce agencies will assist your company in screening job candidates, conducting on-the-job training and will provide other workforce resources at no cost to you.

MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MEDC)

In our efforts to serve you and your expansion needs as a growing business, we often work closely with the MEDC to ensure that the appropriate resources are brought to the table to make sure your project is competitive in the state and region.





CAPITAL ACQUISITION

Gaining access to capital—whether traditional, equity, angel, microloan or government funding—can be daunting. Our relationships and guidance can help you get the resources you need to succeed.

LOAN PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

Through federal dollars accessible under the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), this program enables companies to acquire the necessary financing for expansion or diversification projects that may otherwise be unavailable due to cash flow shortages, according to a lender's analysis.

KAZOO ANGELS

KaZoo Angels is a regionally active investment organization that can offer capital and business expertise to entrepreneurs and emerging businesses.

CAPITAL ACCESS PROGRAM

Similar to a loan loss reserve fund, the bank, the borrower and the MEDC pay a small premium into a reserve that makes it possible for the borrower to receive this type of financing.

COLLATERAL SUPPORT PROGRAM

Also funded through SSBCI dollars, this program helps businesses access financing that may be unavailable due to a collateral shortfall following a lender's analysis.

OTHER RESOURCES



FOREIGN TRADE ZONE (FTZ) #43

Most of Southwest Michigan is covered by FTZ #43, an inland U.S. Customs Port of Entry and Foreign Trade Zone that allows foreign and domestic merchandise to be admitted for storage, exhibition, assembly, manufacture, production and processing without formal customs entry procedures, the payment of customs duties or the payment of federal excise taxes.



PURE MICHIGAN BUSINESS CONNECT (PMBC)

This MEDC portal offers businesses opportunities to fulfill the procurement needs of other business in the state. The PMBC team also provides matchmaking services at no cost to the company.



DATA

Customized to your business needs, our team at Southwest Michigan First has the tools and capabilities to provide you with accurate and up-to-date information on wages, labor availability, industry and occupational trends, job postings and other relevant information.

To start your relationship with our team, contact us at **269.553.9588** or go to **southwestmichiganfirst.com**.