



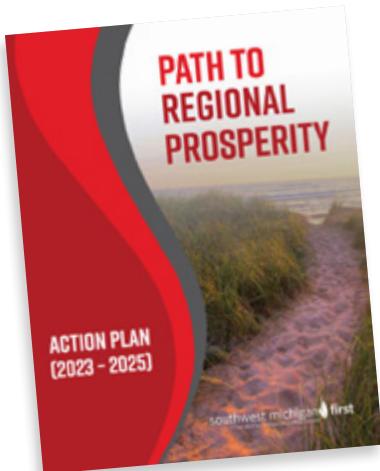
2022 ANNUAL REPORT



OUR MISSION IS TO **INCREASE
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY FOR ALL
IN SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN**

SOUTHWESTMICHIGANFIRST.COM
269.553.9588

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE



At Southwest Michigan First, we see a clear path to a more prosperous future for everyone who calls our region home. The path starts with successful businesses and meaningful job creation; it leads to flourishing communities, thriving industries, improved quality of life, and enhanced prosperity and opportunity for all.

In order to advance along a more prosperous path, we know catalytic change is required and we believe ***the greatest force for change is a job.***

We have developed an action plan that operationalizes and builds upon the Pillars of Work established by our Board of Directors in 2021. Through a series of synergistic focus areas, strategies, and tactics, the action plan — ***Path to Regional Prosperity*** — is designed to guide the effective delivery of our existing work while illuminating the path ahead.

You won't find much fluff or ambiguity in its pages. Instead, you'll find a clear outline of what we intend to accomplish, along with resulting performance measures, and revised organizational structures to guide implementation.

**There's a clear path to a more prosperous future
for everyone who calls our region home.**

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it leads to flourishing communities, thriving industries, improved quality of life,
and enhanced prosperity and opportunity for all.**

**In order to advance along a more prosperous path, we know catalytic change
is required, and we believe ***the greatest force for change is a job.*****



MISSION

**Our mission is to increase economic prosperity
for all in Southwest Michigan.**

We pursue our mission by collaboratively advancing regional strategies and catalytic initiatives in the following areas:



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Retaining, Expanding,
and Attracting
Businesses*



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

*Enhancing, Preparing,
and Aligning our
Workforce*



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

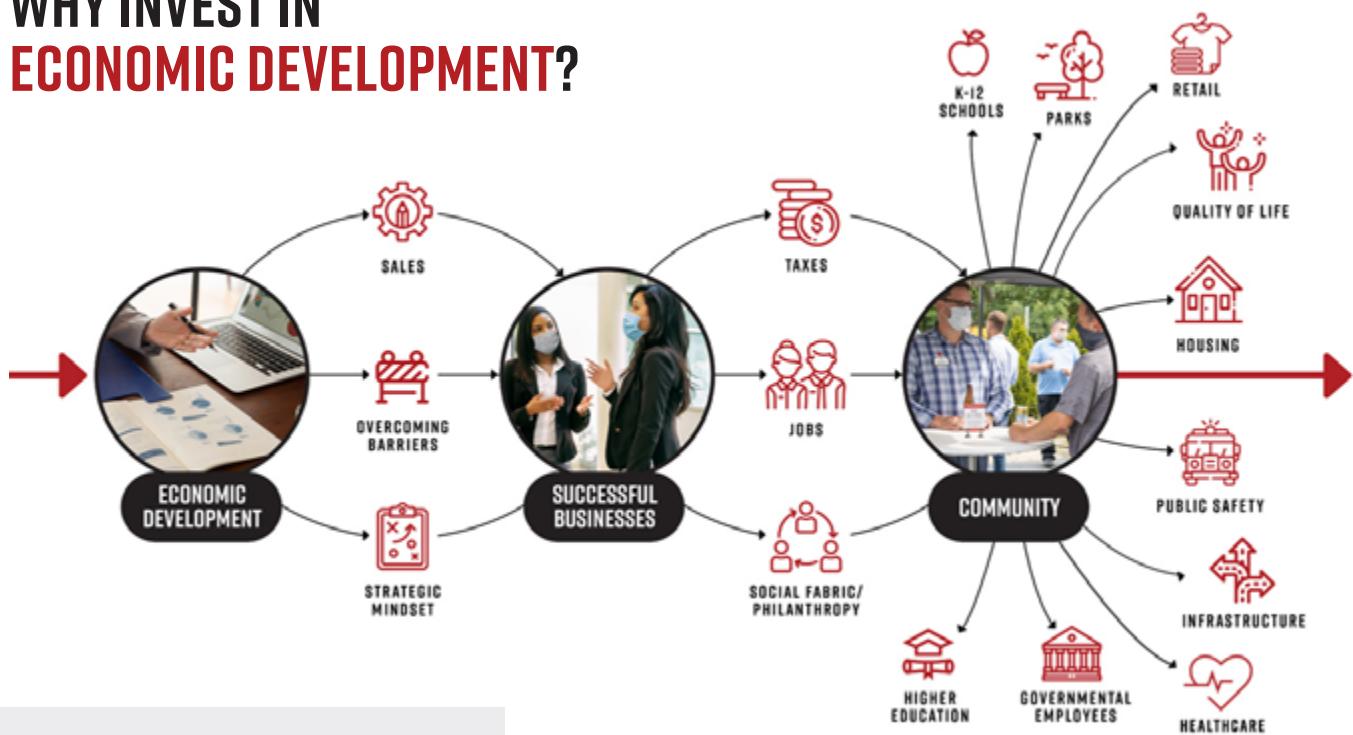
*Advocating For, Enhancing,
and Promoting Vibrant
Business Environments and
Communities*

VISION

We envision Southwest Michigan as one of the most economically prosperous regions in Michigan and the United States.



WHY INVEST IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?



STRATEGIC SHIFTS, MILESTONES, AND ADVANCEMENTS

Through our Action Plan, we'll make the following strategic shifts:



Reposition Southwest Michigan First as a Community and Economic Development Organization



Unite Regional Partners Around Shared Goals and Strategies



Enhance and Align Regional Workforce Development Efforts



Integrate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within all Focus Areas



Position Southwest Michigan First as the Regional Convener of Catalyst Projects and Big Ideas



Revise Organizational Structure to Drive Results through Internal Focus Areas and Divisions

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

As Southwest Michigan's regional economic development organization, we are committed to fulfilling our mission to increase economic prosperity for all in our communities through inclusive and equitable actions that support businesses, entrepreneurs, and residents of all races, ethnicities, ages, sexual orientations, gender identifications, beliefs, disabilities, and backgrounds. When we feel free to be ourselves, we all thrive.

We will support these ongoing efforts by actively working to:

- Increase wealth creation opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and other historically underserved communities through our programming and community engagement.
- Integrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within all areas of the Southwest Michigan First organization and its work.
- Provide equitable access to economic growth opportunities for all who live and work in Southwest Michigan.
- Strengthen and support partner organizations who share similar commitments.

Our work will continue to evolve as we listen, learn, measure, and collaborate with our regional communities to increase economic prosperity for all.

DIVERSITY ACTION COUNCIL (DAC) ACHIEVEMENTS

- Finalized a DEI values statement for the organization
- Integrating DEI into the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan including specific goals and metrics
- New programming:
 - Southwest Michigan Buyer-Supplier Meet & Match
 - Workforce Blueprint Program
 - Black & Brown Mixers
 - First Path

350+ IMPACTFUL EVENTS

CHAMBER

- Black & Brown Mixers
- Business Breakfast Roundtables
- Chamber Connects
- Coffee/Cocktails with Clarence
- Community Townhalls
- Connect for a Cause
- Ribbon Cuttings

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Business First Series
- Existing Industry Consultations
- First Path
- Groundbreakings
- Regional Partner Meetings
- Site Consultant Events
- Supplier Summit
- Sustainability Discussion

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Catalyst University
- Internship Mixers
- Leadership Kalamazoo
- Leadership Kalamazoo Alumni Events
- MIX
- Private Leadership Contracts

INVESTOR ENGAGEMENT

- Council of 100 Celebration
- First & Foremost
- Small Group Lunches

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Event Center Workgroups
- Legislative Updates
- The Future of Energy Delivery

DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY OF LEADERS

Southwest Michigan First believes that at our community's core, the ultimate catalyst for growth is the ability to identify, engage, and empower the right people. We must take a bold approach to develop the human capital required for a sustainable future. Southwest Michigan First has been the community leadership development resource for the seven-county region, providing unique opportunities for a diverse group of current and emerging community leaders to learn and work together.

Catalyst University has built up 15,000 existing and emerging leaders over the last 13 years to carry our organizations and community into the future. This conference is designed to spark fresh ideas and motivate you to new heights. The team at Southwest Michigan First thoughtfully curates a speaker lineup that ignites a leadership evolution. This two-day event is filled to the brim with innovation, action plans, energy, leadership takeaways, motivation, excitement, and so much more.



Leadership Kalamazoo is a dynamic, interactive, and intensive program that gathers participants through interactive training sessions, shared experiences, community tours and networking opportunities. The program consists of an orientation, a retreat, community tours, and training sessions over the span of 11 months. We bring together experienced professionals, a world-class faculty, and a dynamic curriculum in a setting where the common denominator is a shared commitment to accelerating leadership and impact. The result is a lasting transformational leadership experience.

First Path is a ten-week journey to help entrepreneurs decide which direction to take their business idea. Not only is the cohort introduced to a community of support, but they also get a chance to workshop their ideas. Participants learn from leading social entrepreneurs and have the opportunity to give and receive feedback from peers throughout First Path.



MIX Southwest Michigan believes in the power of creativity in our community. We bring together local creators and innovators for mixers, seminars, and workshops. Let's mix together to grow the creative future of Southwest Michigan.



LET'S MAKE BUSINESS BETTER TOGETHER



The **Southwest Michigan First Chamber** strives to promote the quality and breadth of businesses in our region. Working closely with our members, we aim to grow and link our region's business community and activate high-impact leaders and their teams. The ultimate goal is to improve the business environment and the quality of life for everyone throughout Kalamazoo County.

So, what exactly is the Chamber?

The Southwest Michigan First Chamber is the most comprehensive business resource and number one business cheerleader for Kalamazoo County. Your membership with the Chamber supports our efforts to strengthen the vitality and impact of the business community. When businesses thrive and our economy is strong, our entire community has the best opportunity to succeed.

We do this by:

- Working with business and industry professionals to develop an understanding of challenges, concerns, and opportunities businesses in our region face.
- Creating a climate of community that focuses on the strength of all to increase our region's competitiveness, making us a more attractive place to live, work, and play.
- Fostering community engagement for our business members through educational, networking, and service opportunities.
- Actively engaging in legislative issues and initiatives along with local, regional, and state elected officials to ensure a pro-business environment.
- Developing and supporting programs that strengthen the skills and increase the impact of business leaders and their teams.
- Bringing together powerful local and regional partnerships that leverage the talents and resources of the member businesses we serve — of every size and industry sector — for the benefit of all.



REGIONAL VIEWS. NATIONAL NEWS.

Kalamazoo is “One of the Best Places to Live in America.”

U.S. News & World Report, May 2022

The Kalamazoo-Portage MSA offers the lowest cost of living in the U.S.

Cost of Living Index, June 2022

Kalamazoo is #8 of the “10 Best Cities for High Salaries and Low Cost of Living in the Midwest.”

The Ascent, February 2021

Southwest Michigan is “One of the World’s Top 50 Places to Travel.”

Travel & Leisure, 2022

JOB CREATION WINS IN 2022

Southwest Michigan First believes the greatest force for change is a job and we are on a mission to drive job growth and shared prosperity for those in the entire Southwest Michigan Region. Whether we're leading the way, supporting a partner organization, or adding value in other ways, the goal is always the same. Everything we do is centered around creating jobs and – by extension – thriving communities where citizens can live vibrantly, and companies are empowered to succeed and grow.

Numbers in job creation wins and highlights from the region are reflective of projects also led by our regional partners.

NEW PROJECTS	NEW JOBS	RETAINED JOBS
34	1,657	872
INVESTMENT	SQUARE FOOTAGE	
\$1.4 Billion	1.963 Million ft ²	



JOB CREATION HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE REGION

2022 was an exciting year for the Southwest Michigan region. While businesses and leaders continued to face a variety of challenges, there was much to celebrate. Southwest Michigan First engaged in 464 one-on-one meetings with existing businesses in the region and were proud to announce over 30 projects with existing businesses and new companies. Our team, along with many partners, was thrilled to help these businesses expand, create, or retain well-paying jobs for community members in Southwest Michigan.

Company	Industry	Project Summary	Investment
County		New Jobs	

 DUNCAN AVIATION	Transportation Support Activities	Duncan Aviation is the largest family-owned aircraft maintenance and repair company in the world.	\$24.2 M
	Calhoun		61
 Hydro	Primary Metals Manufacturing	Hydro Aluminum Metal is a leading supplier of extrusion ingots, sheet ingots, foundry alloys, wire rods, and high-purity aluminum.	\$149.5 M
	Cass		67
 INDUSTRIAL PARTNERS USA	Developer	Industrial Partners USA is developing industrial speculative buildings in Portage and Pavilion totaling nearly 1.4 million sq. ft.	\$70.0 M
	Kalamazoo		N/A
 Pfizer	Pharmaceutical Manufacturing	Pfizer Global Supply announced multiple expansions in Portage to increase their manufacturing capabilities of vital medicines.	\$870.0 M
	Kalamazoo		550
 NISSSHA Nissha Eimo Technologies	Manufacturing	Nissha Eimo Technologies is adding over 32,000 sq. ft. to their Vicksburg location.	\$9.4 M
	Kalamazoo		45
 CITY OF STURGIS 1896	Developer	Root & Branch Real Estate LLC is transforming downtown Sturgis with a mixed-use housing and retail space.	\$9.0 M
	St. Joseph		30
 Welch's	Food Processing	Welch Foods Inc. has produced grape juices, jams, and jellies since 1869 and has had operations in Michigan since 1919.	\$26.2 M
	Van Buren		57

In 2022, **Southwest Michigan First** was awarded \$7.9 million of grant funding from the **Michigan Economic Development Corporation** to support regional revitalization and placemaking. This allocation is among the largest of any region in the State of Michigan. The Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) program supports investments in projects that promote population and tax revenue growth to proactively address the negative economic impact of COVID-19 in traditional downtowns, social zones, and public spaces.



southwest michigan first

The contributions of **Council of 100** organizations go directly toward aiding Southwest Michigan First in our mission to increase economic prosperity for all in southwest Michigan. These companies are instantly connected to a network of leaders and resources around the region and across the country critical to creating success.

ACCOUNTING

BDO
Plante Moran
UHY LLP

ARCHITECTURE | ENGINEERING

Byce & Associates, Inc. +
CRB
Eckert Wordell
Fishbeck
Jones Petrie Rafinski
SME
TowerPinkster +
Wightman +

AUTO

Zeigler Auto Group ++

BUSINESS SERVICES | PRODUCTS

Athletic Mentors
Buist Electric
C12
Custer
Hi-Tech Electric
Integrated Smart Technologies, LLC
Knight Watch
R&A Landscaping
R.W. LaPine
TRELLIS

COMMUNITY LEADERS | ORGANIZATIONS

City of Sturgis +
City of Three Rivers +
City of Portage +
Glen Oaks Community College
Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Michigan
Greg O'Niel
Ronda E. Stryker and William D. Johnston
South Michigan Food Bank
St. Joseph County ++
Sturgis Improvement Association
Tom Webb
Western Michigan University +
WMU Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine
William and Barbara Parfet

CONSTRUCTION | MANAGEMENT

AVB +
CSM Group +
Consumers Concrete +
DJ Construction
ELITE COMPANIES
Kendall Group
Miller-Davis Company +
Rockford Construction
Walbridge

ENERGY

CMS Energy | Consumers Energy ++
Indiana Michigan Power
ITC

FINANCIAL

Advia Credit Union
AmeriFirst Home Mortgage
Century Bank
Chase Bank
Comerica Bank
Common Sail Investment Group
Consumers Credit Union +
Fifth Third Bank
Greenleaf Trust ++
Honor Credit Union
Horizon Bank
Huntington Bank ++
Mercantile Bank
Old National Bank +
PNC Bank ++
Rose Street Advisors
Southern Michigan Bank & Trust +
Sturgis Bank & Trust
The Connable Office
The Wiser Financial Group
Zhang Financial ++

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Imperial Beverage ++
Millennium Restaurant Group

FOUNDATIONS

Irving S. Gilmore Foundation +++
Fetzer Institute

HEALTHCARE | HOSPITALS

Ascension Borgess Hospital ++
Bronson Healthcare Group ++
OptiMed Health Partners

IT | DATA MANAGEMENT

AT&T
Innovative Analytics, Inc +
Aunalytics ++

INSURANCE | RISK MANAGEMENT

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan +
Gibson
Lighthouse Insurance
Nulty Insurance
Priority Health +

LAW

Honigman LLP +
Miller Canfield +
Miller Johnson +
Varnum Law +
Warner Norcross + Judd

MANUFACTURING

Abbott
Armstrong International
CLS
Edwards Garment +
FlavorSum
Flowserve
GHS Strings
Graphic Packaging +
Green Bay Packaging
Heartland Recreational Vehicles
Humphrey Products
Kadant Johnson LLC
Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet
Kalsec
Landscape Forms
MANN+HUMMEL USA
Miniature Custom Manufacturing
Mol-Son, LLC.
Newell Brands
Nobis Agri Science
Pfizer
Re:Build TEKNA
Schupan +
Stryker +++
Sturgis Molded Products
Western Diversified Plastics
XL Machine

REAL ESTATE | DEVELOPMENT

Allen Edwin Homes
Callander Commercial
Franklin Partners
Greater Kalamazoo Board of Realtors
Jaqua Realtors +
Midlink Business Park ++
M.W. VanderVeen Company
NAI Wisinski of West Michigan
Peregrine Company
PlazaCorp Realty Advisors
The Hinman Company +
Treystar Holdings, LLC

RETAIL

Meijer

TALENT MANAGEMENT

HUMANeX Ventures
WSI +

TRANSPORTATION | LOGISTICS

Clark Logic +
Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport +

+ Council of Economic Advisors \$10,000 - \$19,999

++ Legacy Council \$20,000 - \$99,999

+++ Major Contributors \$100,000+

List is current through January 2023

CONTACT **ABbie RUMERY** AT **269.553.9588** TO DISCUSS **COUNCIL OF 100** MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS