Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
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UPDATE
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West Michigan Prosperity Alliance Releases New Regional Dashboard



Over 150 people packed into a room at the Frederik Meijer Gardens on Friday, February 17 to witness the official unveiling of the West Michigan Regional Dashboard, a project created through a partnership between The Right Place, Inc. and the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

The Dashboard is an online tool that establishes a common set of shared indicators which will track the region's progress on critical economic, environmental, and social outcomes.

Special guest **Lt. Governor Brian Calley** addressed the crowd and talked about the importance of the projects and partnerships forged through the Regional Prosperity Initiative and the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance. The Lt. Governor also announced the award of over $180,000 to WMPA in 2017, bringing the total funding awarded to the region to in excess of $900,000 over the last four years.

The Dashboard was created as a tool for economic development agencies, planning commissions, community development organizations, higher education, adult education, the non-profit and philanthropic community, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, as well as the general public.

The features of this project include 34 unique indicators broken down into three broad categories – Economic, Social and Environmental, including:

- A "heat map" where you can roll your cursor over a county which provides and compares the most recent years of data.
- A scale at the bottom of each indicator map, which shows the High and Low among the 13 counties for that given indicator
- A statement providing the reason why the indicator is important
- The data source
- A line graph, where you can roll your cursor over each line, which will show you the number for each year the graph covers
- A bar chart, which shows the same information in a second format, which illustrates the differences between the local, regional, state and national numbers
- The capability to print any screen displayed

The Dashboard will be used as a coordinated measurement tool, empowering communities in the region to begin strategic changes and build collective action. The ultimate goal of the dashboard is to inform, educate, and focus regional efforts to increase West Michigan's overall economic and social wellbeing.

An Advisory Committee of regional organizations led the data gathering and development of the project. The Committee reviewed nearly 100 different indicators gathered from other regional dashboards, with the main object being to determine the most critical indicators and narrowing down the list to 30-40.

The Dashboard can be accessed at www.wmdashboard.org.

