



## Fact Sheet

**Who we are:** The West Michigan Strategic Alliance (WMSA) is thousands of people representing businesses, institutions and governmental units who have a stake in the future of the region. WMSA focuses on eight counties: Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo and Ottawa.

**When we started:** WMSA was formed in 2000 when 250 volunteers were convened to discuss critical factors affecting the region.

**What we do:** We facilitate conversation, cooperation and collaboration. The **vision** of the WMSA is “for West Michigan to be a best place in the Midwest to live, learn, work and play.” The **mission** of the WMSA is “to be a catalyst for regional collaboration.”

**Our priorities:** Regional input sessions determined these six Priorities for Regional Collaboration are essential in preserving the health of and fostering growth in West Michigan:

- Creating a Regional Mindset
- Ensuring a Sustainable Environment
- Revitalizing our Urban Centers
- Developing a Growth Strategy
- Strengthening our Community through Diversity
- Fostering a Prosperous Economy

### Current Initiatives:

- WIRED (Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development)—a U.S. Department of Labor funded program to increase workforce and economic development innovation in the regional economy;
- Green Infrastructure—an effort to identify, protect and connect the interconnected network of green space and other environmental assets in West Michigan that support the functions of natural ecosystems and provide benefits to people;
- Internships – To improve the region’s educational attainment, WMSA has launched an initiative to create an additional 3,000 internships for current university and college students;
- Regional Indicators—a process to establish measurement of the quality of life in the region;
- Sustainability – In collaboration with the Right Place, Inc. the Alliance is working under a \$400,000 EPA grant to foster and expand sustainable manufacturing practices in West Michigan;
- Green Parts RSA – WMSA was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Department of Labor and Economic Growth to serve as the convener to create a Green Jobs Regional Skills Alliance (RSA). The geographic area served by the *West Michigan Green Parts RSA- Alternative Energy Component Manufacturers* is the WMSA eight-county region;
- Clean Cities – Under a grant from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, the WMSA is developing a “Clean Cities Coalition” that will include local markets for alternative transportation fuels, refueling sites and clean vehicle technologies and as part of an alternative fuel corridor in West Michigan.

Current information about our priorities, initiatives and progress can be found on our Web site: [www.wm-alliance.org](http://www.wm-alliance.org).