



Strategic Plan 2009-2013



FROM OUR COMMITTEE

To our West Michigan business partners

As you know, global economic and industry changes continue to have a profound effect on our region. Though these changes present significant challenges for West Michigan, we have also been here before. For more than 25 years—through economic growth and recession—The Right Place has advanced our regional economy through strategic planning and the execution of solid economic development practices. Throughout that time, the organization has continuously evolved and adapted: attracting the new companies, partners, talent and tools that support the growth and development of our existing and emerging industries.

That strategic leadership has never been more required than it is today. West Michigan is challenged, but it also has great potential. In the last five years, more than a half billion was invested in the region, creating jobs in nearly every sector and developing new assets in advanced manufacturing, life sciences, alternative energy and defense. We recognize it is incumbent on us to take advantage of that investment and use it to support even greater growth. All of which is why we participated in the development of this strategic plan and will continue to invest in The Right Place to support its execution.

As you will see on the following pages, this strategic plan sets a new direction for leading economic growth in West Michigan. It also reflects a more specific focus on three critical priorities: business development, emerging industry growth and advanced manufacturing innovation. The Right Place's extensive network and experience position it well to successfully fulfill these priorities, which offer our best course for wealth creation in West Michigan. Under these priorities, The Right Place will continue to advance the West Michigan economy by retaining and attracting premier companies, jobs and investment to our region.

We applaud The Right Place's success in meeting and exceeding the goals of its previous strategic plan. As investors in The Right Place and West Michigan, we have seen our financial commitment to this organization returned more than tenfold. We are proud to support this new strategic plan, and with your help we will foster an environment of sustainable economic growth in West Michigan for ourselves and generations to come.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Breon, President & CEO, Spectrum Health
Keith Brophy, GM/Enterprise Integration Systems, RCM Technologies
Elizabeth A. Cherin, President/CEO, Fremont Area Community Foundation
Jim Dunlap, Regional Group President, Huntington Bank
Danny R. Gaydou, Publisher, The Grand Rapids Press
Brian T. Harris, President & CEO, H & H Metal Source
John C. Kennedy, President & CEO, Autocam Corporation

Birgit Klohs, President & CEO, The Right Place, Inc.
Phil Koning, President & CEO, Macatawa Bank
Peter Perez, President, Carter Products
Milton W. Rohwer, President, Frey Foundation
Craig Sturken, Executive Chairman, Spartan Stores, Inc.
David L. Van Andel, Chairman/CEO, Van Andel Institute

Strategic Priorities 2009-2013

The Right Place's five-year strategic plan, developed in conjunction with independent consultants Ernst & Young, is based on global market research into the projected five-year economic outlook, and extensive interviews and focus groups with external and internal regional stakeholders. The resulting 2009-2013 Strategic Plan established these priorities for the continued growth and development of West Michigan's economy.

Lead West Michigan business development efforts

- Develop and implement comprehensive strategies to retain and expand existing regional businesses.
- Develop and implement comprehensive strategies to attract new businesses from national and international markets.
- Create and manage innovative programs that promote sustainable land and building use critical to regional economic growth.

Identify and develop emerging growth opportunities

- Develop and implement strategies to support growth in the following targeted industries:
 - **Life sciences** with special emphasis on medical devices and biotechnology
 - **Advanced manufacturing**
 - **Sustainable practices** including renewable products, services and technologies
 - **Renewable energy** sources and suppliers of solar, wind and biomass power
 - **Aerospace and defense**
- Develop strategies for new sources of investment capital for startups and expanding firms.
- Support the development and attraction of engineering, scientific and technical talent needed to support these industries.

Strengthen the global competitiveness and innovation of our existing regional manufacturers

- Develop and implement innovative products and services to support best-in-class manufacturing efforts, increasing operational productivity and profitability.
- Support the commercialization of regional, national and international intellectual property to drive growth opportunities for area manufacturers.

2009-2013 Goals

	Five-year target
Capital Investment	\$500 million
New capital investment directly influenced through The Right Place activity	
New Jobs	5,000
Number of jobs directly attracted/retained through The Right Place efforts	
New Payroll	\$175 million
New payroll directly added/retained through The Right Place efforts	
Companies Assisted	7,500
Number of companies directly assisted by The Right Place	

Achieving Our Goals 2004-2008

Five years ago, when we developed our previous strategic plan, we set some ambitious goals. Despite a tough economy, we were able to meet and surpass those goals in every area. It's a testament to the resilience of West Michigan and The Right Place's economic development efforts over the last 25 years.

2004-2008 Outcomes

(Through November 2008)

\$467,229,901
IN CAPITAL INVESTMENT



GOAL: \$340,000,000

\$228,471,094
IN NEW PAYROLL



GOAL: \$75,000,000

8,366
CREATED/RETAINED JOBS



GOAL: 4,500

2,332
COMPANIES ASSISTED



GOAL: 2,000

GOAL 1: Lead business retention, expansion, and attraction

Giving a local aerospace firm a competitive edge

When Precision Aerospace Corp. was in the running for a sizeable aerospace contract, we worked with the City of Wyoming and the State on a comprehensive tax incentive package to give them an edge in the competitive bid process. The incentives were instrumental in Precision's ability to land the highly sought after contract. And the expansion helps ensure the company's long-term investment in the region.

PRECISION AEROSPACE CORPORATION | Manufacturing: \$10.1 million in capital investment, 120 new and retained jobs and \$4.34 million in new payroll

Enticing dot.coms to West Michigan

When online travel company Priceline.com was looking for a place to locate a new call center, we collaborated with city and state officials to put together a comprehensive incentive package to redevelop a building in Wyoming. The incentives were enough to bring the call center here. And the 424 new jobs that came with it.

PRICELINE.COM | High-tech services: \$7.7 million in capital investment, 424 new jobs and \$23.5 million in new payroll

Giving turkey farmers a place to roost

When a newly formed cooperative of turkey farmers needed processing facilities close to their West Michigan farms, we found a vacant food facility in Wyoming with the utilities they needed, just a mile from the interstate. Then we turned to the state for funding assistance for job training and new equipment for the Michigan Turkey Producers Co-op. Gains to the West Michigan economy? About \$70 million in payroll, utilities, purchases of feed, supplies, sanitation chemicals and other operating needs.

MICHIGAN TURKEY PRODUCERS | Agribusiness: \$19.9 million in capital investment, 117 new and retained jobs and \$3.1 million in new payroll

GOAL 2: Identify and develop emerging growth opportunities

Expanding life sciences

San Diego-based genetics and molecular diagnostics company Sequenom looked at sites in Michigan, Indiana and Tennessee before acquiring a clinical diagnostics lab in Grand Rapids. We worked with city and state officials to develop an incentive package that included \$20 million in state grants. With further growth, the company plans to build its own lab in the region in the next few years. The addition of Sequenom to West Michigan's life science core further strengthens our region's advanced research and development capabilities.

SEQUENOM | Life sciences: \$20.25 million in capital investment, 523 new and retained jobs and \$45 million in new payroll

Building a green economy in West Michigan

How can West Michigan's manufacturing capabilities be repurposed to tap into renewable and alternative energy? Quite effectively, according to Alternative Energy Cluster Analysis—A Growth Opportunity For West Michigan, a study co-funded by The Right Place and the West Michigan Strategic Alliance (WMSA). About one third of our precision plastics and metal manufacturing companies—nearly 800 companies in all—are already equipped to tap into this emerging market, which is expected to grow to \$171 billion by 2018. Because this may be one of West Michigan's best opportunities for growth over the next five years, The Right Place has begun hosting conferences, sponsoring tours, conducting workshops and more to prepare the region to capitalize on this promising trend.

Potential for West Michigan: 4,250 new manufacturing jobs and more than \$800 million in market share

InnovationWorks goes public

In February 2008, The Right Place launched InnovationWorks—a seven-county collaborative initiative that assists entrepreneurs with inventions and new technologies, connects established companies to innovative ideas and coaches individual inventors on how to commercialize new products, processes and services.

Recipient: Business Review Western Michigan's Deal of the Year Award
Finalist: Innovation Michigan Award for Outstanding Innovation
Partners: Allegan County, Barry County Economic Development Alliance, Ionia County Economic Alliance, Lakeshore Advantage, The Chamber - Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg, Muskegon Area First, The Newaygo County Economic Development Office

GOAL 3: Strengthen manufacturing leadership and innovation

MMTC-West

The West Michigan Regional Office of the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC-West) keeps small and medium-sized manufacturers in a 17-county region globally competitive by providing operational assessments, process improvement training, mentoring, web assistance and market diversification tactics.

MMTC-West achieved: \$106 million in retained sales, \$33 million in new sales and \$1.6 million in cost savings

Manufacturers Council

The Right Place's Manufacturers Council coalesces the individual interests of regional manufacturers into one common goal: to improve the economy for local manufacturers, and to establish West Michigan as an international center for productivity, innovation and excellence in manufacturing. This year, the council expanded the number of participating companies. And they continued to lead efforts to address regional manufacturing issues, particularly in the areas of sustainability.

Led the creation of a regional best-in-class peer assessment system for West Michigan manufacturers

Supply Chain Management Council

The Right Place's Supply Chain Management Council is dedicated to promoting best practices in integrated supply chain management. This year, the council succeeded in addressing the issue of attracting and retaining supply chain talent in the region, communicating new commodities strategies for the changing global economy and providing tactical support for the everyday challenges of the supply chain management profession.

Sponsor: 5th Annual Midwest Supply Chain Management Conference

Host: Sunrise Series Briefings

Host: Energy & Metals Commodities 2009 Outlook

GOAL 4: Lead urban development vital to business retention and attraction

The GrandWalk project

The GrandWalk project is an ambitious private/public venture that combines sustainability with urban redevelopment. The goal? To transform a blighted 1200-acre industrial area into sustainable buildings, interdependent companies and community green space. Central to this effort is the refurbishment and remediation of the mammoth, vacant Lear plant and its surrounding 41 acres. GrandWalk was initiated by The Right Place and launched in collaboration with local businesses, cities, universities and architects.

Secured: \$1 million brownfield redevelopment loan

Published: Connecting the Dots: The GrandWalk Sustainable Community

Encouraging adaptive reuse through brownfield funds

Revitalizing urban centers and turning vacant properties into attractive investments requires significant investment in clean up. To expedite the clean up of these “brownfield” sites and encourage their reuse, we collaborated with three cities in the region to hone their grant applications, identify high-potential sites and guide them through the application process. Our work helped secure a combined \$800,000 in brownfield funds for three cities in West Michigan.

The cities of Grand Rapids, Kentwood and Wyoming each received EPA brownfield redevelopment funds totaling \$800,000

Sparta Foundry clean up

When Sparta wanted to ready a collapsing foundry and contaminated site for redevelopment, The Right Place secured more than \$2 million in state funding to take on the challenges of environmental contamination and blight. The funds are being used to demolish the building, remove the waste, determine the full extent of contamination, and identify a means to mitigate the risks. They are the first steps in a major restoration.

\$2.25 million in Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) funding for clean up

GOAL 5: Lead regional initiatives in economic development

Partnering to retain and attract talent

West Michigan competes in a global marketplace for talented professionals looking for great places to live and work. Attracting those people to the region, and keeping talented professionals here, is the collective work of many. In the last year, we collaborated with several partners—public and private universities, non-profit organizations, independent businesses and economic development partners—to identify the strengths of the region and begin providing tools and resources to West Michigan businesses to retain and attract talent.

Several new private/public entities are working together to develop West Michigan’s talent pool

Collaborating with Newaygo County

With 2008 marking the second successful year of collaboration, The Right Place continues to work with the Newaygo County Economic Development Office (NCEDO) on their economic development efforts. In 2006, we worked with them to establish a countywide brownfield authority. In 2008, we worked side-by-side to develop the county’s brownfield plan and garner funding for site assessments. The plan was approved in November and implementation begins in 2009.

With funding in place, NCEDO can begin the work of assessing potential brownfield sites

Partnering with Southwest Michigan First

The Right Place co-sponsored a life sciences study, Life Sciences Development: Regaining Global Prominence, with Southwest Michigan First, as part of a larger collaborative effort to jointly market the region to life science prospects. The result was a series of investment, incentive and funding recommendations to raise West Michigan’s profile in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device industries worldwide.

Regional collaboration to raise the region’s life science profile

Mission

The mission of The Right Place, Inc. is to promote wealth creation and economic growth in the areas of quality employment, productivity and innovation in West Michigan by developing jobs through leading business retention, expansion and attraction efforts.

About The Right Place

Building on 25 years of knowledge and experience understanding the opportunities and challenges affecting the West Michigan economy, The Right Place, Inc. develops and implements comprehensive strategies to retain, expand and attract businesses vital to the region's long-term health. These strategies include: marketing the region globally, connecting area businesses to national and international resources, identifying emerging growth opportunities, and strengthening the global competitiveness and innovation of area firms. Through these and other activities, The Right Place is fostering an environment of sustainable economic growth, high-quality employment and wealth creation for the West Michigan economy.

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