



October 17, 2014

120 Attend West Michigan Prosperity Alliance General Session

Over 120 residents, business leaders, educators, economic developers, and government leaders from throughout West Michigan attended the Third General Session of the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance. The meeting was held at the Kirkhof Center at Grand Valley State University.

During the past 10 months the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance has been developing a Prosperity Plan and the criteria for projects of "Regional Economic Significance". This meeting was to vote and prioritize the top projects. There were a total of 31 project submissions.

The Port of Muskegon Logistics Hub received top priority for our region. The project involves developing a permanent deep water port in Muskegon and establishing the port as a local food and shipping hub. The group is petitioning the U.S. Coast Guard to allow river barges from the Mississippi River system to serve the entire Great Lakes.

Developing a Dedicated Revenue Stream for Lake Michigan Watershed Management received the second priority for the area. This project seeks to develop a strategy and process to insure long-term financing for man-

aging and protecting the quality of our watersheds in the 13 county area. It was a joint project of Grand Valley Metro Council, Macatawa Area Coordinating Council and the West Michigan Shoreline Development Commission.

Other priority projects include **E-Merge West Michigan** lead by Talent 2025 which seeks to create a central web-portal to support new business and entrepreneurs in our region. **Connected Community Engagement Program** which aims to advise residents and businesses on technical issues and expand broad-band connectivity throughout the region. **Michigan Work Ready Communities** is a program dedicated to helping employers find employees that are qualified and ready to enter the workforce. The final project was **Michigan Works! State-**

gic Redesign which seeks to partner with a human-centered design firm to understand both employers and job-seekers in an attempt to close the skills gap.

I appreciate everyone that attended this important regional meeting and President Tom Haas and Grand Valley State University for hosting us.



NEXT BOARD MEETING

Due to a scheduling conflict with our regular meeting location our Board Meeting will be:

Thursday November 6, 2014

8:30 am

Wyoming City Hall

1155-28th Street, Wyoming Michigan