



Washington Trip

A small group of business, government and Chamber of Commerce representatives recently travelled to Washington DC to advocate for West Michigan. The focus of the session was to meet with members of congress, senior staff and agency representatives on several key issues.

House Majority
Leader
Eric Cantor



One of the primary issues discussed was transportation and the need for approval of the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill. This federal legislation is critical to the continued improvement of transportation infrastructure in our region. It is key to the continued growth and re-development of Michigan's economy as well as the economy of West Michigan. The group presented a public/private collaborative view for continued support of this vital legislation.

During the three day session, delegates met with several Members of Congress, as well as, Senators Levin and Stabenow. Also, senior committee staff from Transportation, Agriculture, Defense, Education and several other House committees were represented.



Members of Congress,
Amash, Miller and Huizenga

The advocacy trip also included appointments with major embassies that have strong economic ties our region including Canada, Japan, Korea and the Netherlands.

Finally, key meetings took place with leaders in a few of the major agencies of federal government including the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Defense and Army Corps of Engineers.

This trip demonstrated to federal authorities the cooperative efforts and unified public/private partnerships working to continue to promote our region. By working together business, government and economic development agencies spoke with one voice to our elected and appointed federal officials.

REGIS

For the past 13 years, REGIS has been a single centralized GIS service provider for over 19 local government entities. Operating on a Cloud Computing concept, REGIS members can assess REGIS applications, data and infrastructure from anywhere. The shared and collaborative REGIS service model is another example of governmental cooperation in our area.

If you would like more information about REGIS or are a business in need of regional GIS information, please feel free to contact me or Dharmesh Jain at jaind@gvmc.org We would be happy to meet with you to personally discuss the benefits of participating in REGIS.

CDBG Study Committee

Along with GVMC members Alex Arends, Alpine Township Supervisor, and Lowell City Manager Mark Howe, I am participating in a study committee evaluating the Community Development Block Grant Programs in Kent County.

This effort to study the potential for increased collaboration involves the programs currently administered by the cities of Grand Rapids and Wyoming and the County of Kent.

The programs will be reviewed as the three government's seek opportunities to find greater efficiencies and evaluate the potential for enhanced cooperation and collaboration.

The study committee includes representatives of Wyoming, Grand Rapids and Kent County along with Alex, Mark and myself. It is being chaired by Assistant County Administrator Wayman Britt. If asked by our consultant, I encourage our members to participate in one of the scheduled focus groups.

I look forward to working closely with these three governmental units and our GVMC members as we study the CDBG program.

Inside Grand Rapids

This morning I presented GVMC to the current class of Inside Grand Rapids. This program sponsored by the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce is an intensive 2 1/2 day educational seminar designed to provide a fast overview of our region and the people and organizations leading our communities.