



Saginaw Future PROGRESS REPORT Village of Birch Run

Our Mission

The mission of Saginaw Future Inc. (SFI) is to increase economic opportunity in Saginaw County by facilitating and supporting business retention, expansion, attraction, and new business development. SFI collaborates with business, education, government and community partners to position Saginaw County as a great place to live, work and locate a business. Our organization identifies and meets the needs of businesses at every stage, from start-ups to mature organizations and from micro-businesses to multi-national corporations.

Throughout the past year, Saginaw Future Inc. (SFI) has worked on potential economic and business development projects that cover a wide range of services including proactively calling on existing companies, marketing Village of Birch Run area properties to incoming businesses and grant administration.

Corporate Watch Call Program

Each year, Saginaw Future staff members bring in representatives of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and other service providers to meet with area business executives. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss the company's plans for expansion and potential barriers to growth.

SFI then follows up with an action plan which may include new programs or initiatives or may include partnering with other agencies to reduce the barriers and encourage continued growth.

From 4th Quarter 2015 to 3rd Quarter 2016, Saginaw Future met with **Birch Run Premium Outlets** multiple times and are working with the business on future plans. SFI also met with **Kaleidoscope Learning Circle** and **LaFontaine Ford of Birch Run** to learn more about their needs. Retaining these Birch Run area businesses, encouraging growth and assisting with expansions is critical to the health of the local and regional economy. SFI plans to meet with the Village Manager and DDA Officials to learn of their priorities.

Saginaw County Expansions

SFI is focused on projects that result in the creation of new jobs and investment for Saginaw County. Projects from the past 12 months generated nearly \$147 million in new investment and nearly 1,000 jobs were created and retained. And, with assistance from our team, area businesses were able to secure more than \$33 million in state and federal government contracts, which supports customer base diversification.

Exciting economic progress is taking place all over Saginaw County in various industry sectors. Over the past year, SFI worked on 17 manufacturing, three logistical, seven commercial and business services related projects and more. This progress points to a healthy and growing economy.

Marketing

- Saginaw Future worked on **97 Saginaw County responses** to leads, which are defined as any location interest from a company or developer from outside the Region. **Three** of those leads included potential sites in the Birch Run area.

- www.GreatLakesBaySites.com is an online regional property database that features available industrial, commercial, office and retail properties. Currently there are **11 Birch Run area buildings and 13 vacant sites** listed on the web site, including the 12100 Heath

St. building. **I 820 Dixie Highway was leased.** Saginaw Future strongly encourages local leaders to make Birch Run developers and realtors aware of this FREE opportunity available 24/7 at Great Lakes Bay Sites.

- SFI actively markets Saginaw County for business locations at targeted tradeshows, site consultant events, direct meetings and through the use of promotional tools. During 2016, we participated in 26 such events and met with site consultants in Detroit, Chicago, Ohio and New York **communicating the opportunities** for businesses that locate in Saginaw County.

- SFI co-hosted a Regional **familiarization tour** with three members of the MEDC business attraction team, with one being a resident of India specializing in Indian manufacturing. The members toured key areas and resources of Saginaw County and the Region.

- Partners in Great Lakes Bay Region 5 have demonstrated strengths in business expansion and start up assistance. Bay, Midland and Saginaw Counties have been collaborating on attraction opportunities for several years and now the 8-County Region has partnered with the Great Lakes Bay Regional Alliance to launch a **regional business attraction initiative**. Silverlode Consulting was hired and created a three-year in-depth strategy and detailed plan for implementation.

Company Assists

- The Pure Michigan State Trade Export Promotion (STEP) program is designed to assist small- to medium-sized businesses diversify their customer base and enter new global markets. STEP provides direct reimbursements to qualified small and medium-sized companies for developing or expanding export-related activities. **Eight Saginaw County companies and organizations** received assistance.

- SFI also assists businesses with **financing programs** from the MEDC, SBA, East Central Michigan Revolving Loan Fund and more. Private commitments from banks, credit unions or other financial institutions are often needed, however there are also direct loan options.

- Saginaw Future and Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! assisted eight Saginaw County companies with **Skilled Trades Training Fund grants**.

Government Contracts

Federal, state and local governments are multi-billion dollar purchasers of goods and services. The Saginaw

Future Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) provides **no fee assistance** to businesses that are interested in this market. Saginaw Future strongly encourages Birch Run area representatives to make local businesses aware of this opportunity.

SFI Administered Programs

- The **Saginaw County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (SCBRA)** promotes the redevelopment of economically distressed and/or environmentally impacted properties, commonly referred to as “Brownfields,” located in communities which are members of the SCBRA. Inclusion of eligible property within an approved Brownfield Plan enables the SCBRA to utilize tax increment financing to support eligible brownfield expenses incurred through the redevelopment of brownfield sites, and may also provide access to other economic development incentives.

- The **Regional Prosperity Initiative** was developed by Governor Snyder to align state services in ten Michigan regions. SFI serves on the steering committee for the 8-County Region (Great Lakes Bay Region 5) to help address economic and workforce development, transportation, adult and higher education, and develop priorities for state support. Region 5 includes Arenac, Bay, Clare, Isabella, Gladwin, Gratiot, Midland and Saginaw Counties.

SFI also convenes monthly meetings and lead initiatives with the **Region 5 economic development organizations**. MEDC representatives also attend providing information on new economic development tools and opportunities.

- The **Economic Development Corporation (EDC) of the County of Saginaw** is a public corporation that was created in 1979, governed by a nine member Board of Directors and administered by SFI. The EDC was formed under Public Act 338 of 1974 for the purposes of alleviating and preventing conditions of unemployment by supporting economic development through loans, grant, bonds, and equipment and land gifts.

For economic assistance please contact Saginaw Future Inc.

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