



**GRAND VALLEY
METROPOLITAN COUNCIL**

Board Meeting Agenda

Monday July 12, 2010 • 10 a.m.

Prince Conference Center at Calvin College • Grand Rapids, MI

- 1. Call to Order by Chair**
- 2. Public Comment**
- 3. Approval of Minutes dated June 3, 2010**
- 4. GVMC Membership Survey**
 - a. Analysis of results**
 - b. Recommendations of the Executive Sub-Committee on Strategic Planning**
 - c. Next Steps**
- 5. Grant Opportunity: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program**
- 6. Legislative Advocacy**
 - a. Results of Legislative Candidates Survey**
 - b. Issues Update**
- 7. Other items of business and comments from GVMC members**
- 8. Adjournment**



Memorandum

To: Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
From: Donald J. Stypula, Executive Director
Date: July 8, 2010
Re: Agenda Items for our July 12, 2010 Board meeting

Attached are the agenda and support documents for our next GVMC Board of Directors meeting, scheduled for **10 a.m. Monday July 12, 2010 at the Prince Conference Center on the campus of Calvin College in Grand Rapids.**

This month we will focus on strategic initiatives by reviewing the results of the recent membership survey and looking ahead at the next steps in implementing a new strategic direction for the Council. I'm also bringing you some information on a grant opportunity from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and we'll discuss the results of the GVMC's survey of candidates for the 96th Michigan Legislature.

We'll start by reviewing and accepting the attached minutes from our June 3, 2010 GVMC Board meeting.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES: RESULTS OF MEMBERSHIP SURVEY ON GVMC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

I have attached, for your review, the results of our June survey of GVMC members regarding goals, objectives and the future direction of the Metro Council. The survey vehicle was developed by GVMC Summer Associate Jeremy Bergwerff, a graduate of Cornerstone University and MBA candidate at the University of North Carolina, who previously worked for Steelcase and a local bank. Mr. Bergwerff also produced the report (in the form of PowerPoint slides) which I will walk through in detail at our meeting on Monday morning.

Survey Summary

We had a very good response to the members' survey, with 29 GVMC members (counties, communities and at-large members) completing the questionnaire.

- 73% of the respondents feel that the council is headed in the right direction relative to the four core (current) Metro Council functions.
- Specifically, respondents felt that transportation services and facilitation of regional communication are currently the most valuable aspects of membership.
- The members feel there is alignment between them and their constituents perceiving the amount of value that the Council provides, but the problem is that the value received/perceived is not high enough.
- GVMC membership is mixed in their assessment of the success of the Metro Council in achieving its goals. Part of this is a communication issue where the members are not aware of the tangible benefits that the Council provides, but a large part of their concern is that they feel they do not receive sufficient value from their membership.
- The consensus among membership is that they want collaboration and economic development, but less than half reported utilizing the GVMC for those purposes.
- On the positive side, the membership has provided clear direction as to what they want: Well articulated (and followed) goals, expanded opportunities to collaborate, and thought leadership on local and regional issues. Most importantly, all these need to be provided while *showing* the tangible benefits that the members can report back to their boards and constituents.

Executive Sub-Committee and Next Steps

A sub-committee of the Executive Committee has met twice to discuss the members' recommendations; develop a list of goals and objectives; and establish timelines for moving forward and reporting progress to the full board. Staff is developing a report to the full Executive Committee and that panel's final recommendations on goals and objectives and the strategies for achieving them will be reported to the full Metro Council.

I have attached Adobe Acrobat files containing the slides from the PowerPoint presentation assembled by GVMC's Summer Associate Jeremy Bergwerff, together with the compilation of survey comments submitted by those members who participated in the survey.

At our meeting on Monday, I will discuss in-detail, the results of the survey and the steps we will undertake at the staff level to move forward.

GRANT OPPORTUNITY: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES REGIONAL PLANNING GRANT

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in cooperation with other federal

agencies, is offering Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), like GVMC, the opportunity to apply for grant funds under the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program to encourage the development of sustainable plans for metropolitan regions.

The Regional Planning grants will be awarded competitively to multi-jurisdictional and multi-sector partnerships as well as regional consortia consisting of state and local governments, MPOs, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and philanthropic organizations. The funding was approved by Congress for the first time in HUD's 2010 budget, as part of a \$200 million fund for the agency's new Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities.

The funding will support regional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of economic competitiveness and revitalization; social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; energy use and climate change; as well as public health and environmental impacts. The program places a priority on partnerships, including nontraditional partnerships including arts and culture, philanthropy, and bringing new voices to the regional planning process. The grant requires an affirmative commitment from all partners in the consortium – including participating local units of government – to actively participate and work to implement the recommendations developed by the regional consortium.

Applications are due on August 23 and, for the first time, are being reviewed by multiple federal agencies including HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The City of Grand Rapids has expressed interest in participating. GVMC will host a meeting of municipal planners in the very near future to see if there is additional interest in this grant opportunity.

I have attached a more detailed summary for your review.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY – LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES SURVEY

Cover letters and questionnaires on issues important to GVMC members were sent via U.S. Mail to 73 candidates competing in the August primary election for seats in the 96th Michigan Legislature. Following a reminder email, we received completed questionnaires or detailed letters from 30 of those candidates, including at least one response from each of the five state senate and the 11 state house districts in our regional area.

While I have yet done a detailed breakdown of how each candidate responded to each of our critical issues, here is a breakdown of the aggregate voting among the 30 respondents:

Governmental Reforms: All 30 candidates support amendments proposed by GVMC and other local government groups to reform the intergovernmental cooperation acts and the Metropolitan Councils Act to remove barriers to collaboration and shared services.

ACT 312 Reforms: All but one candidate support our effort to reform Act 312, compulsory binding arbitration for public safety employees.

Unfunded State Mandates: Unanimous support among the 30 responding candidates for eliminating unfunded state mandates on counties and local communities.

Revenue Sharing: Only one candidate among the 30 did not support this legislative priority, opting instead to support additional cost cutting at the county and local level to fund essential public services.

Transportation Funding: By far, the biggest mix of opinions was on this legislative priority. Twenty two of the 30 responding candidates support an increase in user fees (motor fuels taxes) to support transportation improvements. Four candidates are opposed to any funding increases and four are proposing various methods, other than increasing motor fuels taxes or other revenue generators to fund investments in transportation infrastructure.

I will have a more detailed breakdown of responses at our meeting on Monday. Our topics are resonating with candidates and should be the basis for our informal discussions with the 17 legislative candidates who will attend our Legislative Candidates Luncheon immediately following our Board meeting on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY – ISSUES UPDATE

Lansing lawmakers in both chambers are in a two-week recess as members of the Appropriations Committees continue their efforts to assemble a state budget for the 2011 state fiscal year. I'll bring you the latest on Monday.

As always, we're looking forward to seeing you and having a fruitful discussion. If you have any thoughts, comments, questions or suggestions you can reach me anytime on my cell phone at 616-450-5217, in the office at 776-7604, at home at 257-3372 or via email at stypulad@gvmc.org.

GRAND VALLEY METRO COUNCIL

Board Meeting

June 3, 2010

8:30 a.m.

Kent County Commission Chambers

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Chairman Jim Buck.

Members Present:

Alex Arends	Alpine Township
Chris Burns	City of Cedar Springs
Dale Bergman	Sparta Township
Jim Buck	City of Grandville
Tom Butcher	Grand Valley State University
Dan Carlton	Georgetown Township
Daryl Delabbio	Kent County
Sharon DeLange	Village of Sparta
Mike DeVries	Grand Rapids Township
Jason Eppler	City of Ionia
Tom Fehsenfeld	At-Large Member
Cindy Fox	Cascade Township
George Heartwell	City of Grand Rapids
Don Hilton, Sr.	Gaines Township
Denny Hoemke	Algoma Township
Jim Holtrop	Ottawa County
Jim LaPeer	Cannon Township
Elias Lumpkins, Jr.	City of Grand Rapids
Mick McGraw	At-large Member
George Meek	Plainfield Township
Sandi Frost Parrish	Kent County
Steven Patrick	City of Coopersville
Jack Poll	City of Wyoming
Chuck Porter	Courtland Township
Al Vanderberg	Ottawa County
Phil Van Noord	Village of Middleville
Bill VerHulst	City of Wyoming
Michael Young	City of Rockford

Members Absent:

Jerry Alkema	Allendale Township
Randy DeBruin	City of Belding
Dick Bulkowski	Kent County

Brian Donovan	City of East Grand Rapids
John Helmholdt	At-Large
Brian Harrison	Caledonia Township
Doyle Hayes	At-Large Member
Pauline Luben	City of Hudsonville
Robert May	City of Hastings
Cy Moore	Treasurer
Audrey Nevins	Byron Township
David Pasquale	City of Lowell
Milt Rohwer	City of Grand Rapids
Rick Root	City of Kentwood
Ken Snow	City of Greenville
Toby VanEss	Tallmadge Township
Rob VerHeulen	City of Walker
Chris Yonker	City of Wayland

Others Present:

Andy Bowman	Grand Valley Metro Council
Leon Branderhorst	Grand Valley Metro Council
Abed Itani	Grand Valley Metro Council
Dennis Kent	MDOT
Gayle McCrath	Grand Valley Metro Council
Marsha Small	MDOT
Don Stypula	Grand Valley Metro Council

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION – To Approve the Minutes of the May GVMC Board Meeting. MOVE – DeVries. SUPPORT – Meek. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Transportation

Amendments to the FY 2008-2011 GVMC Transportation Improvement Program for the Kent County Road Commission and MDOT

The Kent County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation are requesting amendments to the Metro Council’s 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The KCRC request involves the transfer of funding from the Belmont Avenue project to a pair of projects on Lincoln Lake Avenue and 17 Mile Road. In addition, the Michigan Department of Transportation is requesting an amendment to the TIP for work related to the M-21 bridge replacement project in Ada Township and other projects

throughout the area. These amendments have been reviewed and approved by the GVMC Technical, Policy and Executive Committees.

MOTION – To Amend the FY 2008-2011 GVMC Long Range Transportation Plan as Requested. MOVE – Hilton. SUPPORT – Lumpkins. MOTION CARRIED.

Amendments to the GVMC 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan

In order for transportation staff to develop the new GVMC FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program, we are seeking your approval to amend the Metro Council's 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) that incorporates changes to twelve improvement projects throughout the MPO area.

As part of the development of the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) an Amendment to the current 2035 Long Range Transportation is required. The LRTP and TIP must be in compliance in order for the new 2011-2014 TIP to be approved in July, 2010. Therefore some adjustments must be made to the project listings in the 2035 LRTP regardless of the fact that the 2035 LRTP is currently undergoing its own update. The list of changes to the LRTP Project List is attached to the agenda packet for your review. The LRTP project changes that constitute this amendment require an Air Quality Conformity Analysis to be conducted, the results of which are posted on the gvmc.org website. Details of the LRTP Amendment project changes are also available on the website. The public involvement process for an amendment includes an ad in the Grand Rapids Press on April 24th inviting public comment on the amendment/air quality analysis; posting the amendment information on our website; inviting public comment at the pre-existing TIP public meeting on **March 18** as well as at the Policy Committee meeting on **March 19**; and mailing notice to the GVMC Public Involvement/Consultation list. The public involvement period is May 3-June 1, 2010.

MOTION – To Amend the GVMC2035 Long Range Transportation Plan as Requested. MOVE – DeVries. SUPPORT – Delabbio. MOTION CARRIED.

5. May 11, GVMC Visioning Meeting Recap

Jim Buck reviewed the process and participation of the May 11, Visioning meeting.

Don Stypula reported he will be sending out an electronic survey today which will look at all the issues identified on May 11, and ask members to rank them. A few areas received strong support such as implementing a communications program; continuing legislative advocacy; and continued transportation involvement.

Daryl Delabbio suggested doing a basic survey where only three questions are asked: why are you a member of the Metro Council; what services would you like GVMC to provide; and a third question which he couldn't remember.

Cindy Fox stated the Executive Committee decided to send the survey only to GVMC Board members.

Al Vanderberg reported the survey provides us with elements on which way to go. The equal or biggest question is who are we. Now we need to get the plan created that ties into why we are here, who we are, and our funding. What is the value added? The key is to keep this moving expeditiously.

Michael Young stated it strikes him that the major categories which we defined four years ago are the elements identified for the upcoming plan. My concern is that no one organization can do all these things. We may be setting ourselves up for failure. It seems we have just added to the plate of Metro Council. Lew Bender considered himself just the facilitator of the visioning meeting. He did not say he himself would develop the plan.

Don Stypula said he wants to see what members want us to focus on first. We can begin immediately and identify funding from outside sources.

Michael Young stated the organization will shortly face a crisis as members evaluate whether or not they can remain members. The plan needs to be developed soon, not in several years.

Sandy Frost Parrish asked if the visioning results and the survey were leading to a defined strategic plan.

Don Stypula stated yes, it will result in a business plan with deliverables and which will be worked through the Executive Committee.

Daryl Delabbio stated there was a lot of information here and we need to break it down to manageable objectives and decide what services we want GVMC to provide.

Tom Fehsenfeld said in the visioning meeting one of the issues talked about was the value of the organization to members. We need to put a process in place so we don't get into this position again. If we need to take on new jobs, what could we deemphasize or eliminate. If we had to cut, what could we do without?

Jim Buck reported it appears we should rev up on the economic development welcome mat, which has hit a lull, but needs to be focused on again. The comment on just adding to the plate of Metro Council is significant. We were also recently asked by Pat Lockwood and Julie Dennis to focus on collaboration for this area.

Don Stypula introduced Jeremy Bergwerff who is going to be helping on the strategic planning.

6. Legislative Advocacy

Don Stypula reported he is already getting some surveys back from legislative candidates with detailed responses. We will have additional discussion on this at the next Legislative meeting. At the next Quarterly luncheon we will meet these candidates one-on-one.

Mike DeVries stated perhaps we should have a subcommittee which focuses on economic development.

7. Other – Next GVMC Board Meeting July 12, 2010, 10:30 a.m. Prince Center

Phil Van Noord commented on the need to discuss issues such as medical marijuana. Many communities are running into this issue and it would be good to share what others are doing.

Don Stypula instructed Phil to meet with Andy Bowman and see what others are doing.

8. Adjourn – 9:35 a.m.

MOTION – To Adjourn. MOVE – Eppler. SUPPORT – Delabbio. MOTION CARRIED.

GVMC

Membership Survey

June 2010

Don Stypula, Executive Director
Jeremy Bergwerff, Summer Associate

GVMC Member Survey

Preliminary Comments:

- **37 total responses including 29 completes and 8 partials. Therefore, the potential for overlap exists, but is likely minimal.**
- **This presentation is a summary. All numerical, yes/no types of answers are included but any free form 'verbal' answers are summarized. All verbal answers are included in the appendix.**
- **Recommendations have been developed by Jeremy Bergwerff without in depth consultation as to the existing functions of the Metro Council. Some overlap may exist between recommended actions and current actions. In such cases, we suggest revisiting the process as the effectiveness is likely low.**

GVMC Member Survey

Executive Summary

At a very high level perspective, 73% of the respondents feel that the council is headed in the right direction relative to the four core Metro Council functions (1). Specifically, they feel that transportation services and facilitation of regional communication are the most valuable aspects of membership (2). The members feel there is alignment between them and their constituents perceiving the amount of value that the Council provides, but the problem is that the value received/perceived is not high enough (3).

The membership is mixed in their assessment of the success of the Metro Council in achieving it's goals (4). Part of this is certainly a communication issue where the members are not aware of the tangible benefits that the Council provides, but a large part of their concern is that they feel they do not receive sufficient value (3). Of the six key GVMC Responsibilities/Services, fully 50% of the membership reported that they used/benefited from only one or two in the last 12 months (5). The consensus among membership is that they want collaboration and economic development, but less than half reported utilizing the GVMC for those purposes (6).

On the positive side, the membership has provided clear direction as to what they want: Well articulated (and followed) goals, expanded opportunities to collaborate, and thought leadership on local issues. Most importantly, all these need to be provided while *showing* the tangible benefits they the members can report back to their boards and constituents (7).

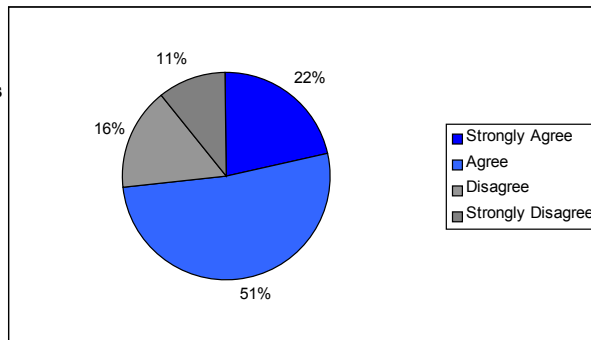
- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| (1) See question 1 | (4) See question 6 | (7) See question 20 |
| (2) See questions 2,8 | (5) See question 12 | |
| (3) See questions 9,13,15 | (6) See question 12,14,16 | |

3

GVMC Direction – Q1

Question 1: The current core functions of the Metro Council -- currently available to all members -- are listed below. To what extent do you agree that these are the correct core functions of the Metro Council?

Transportation Planning
 Regional Land Use /
 Environmental Planning
 Membership Communications
 Legislative Advocacy

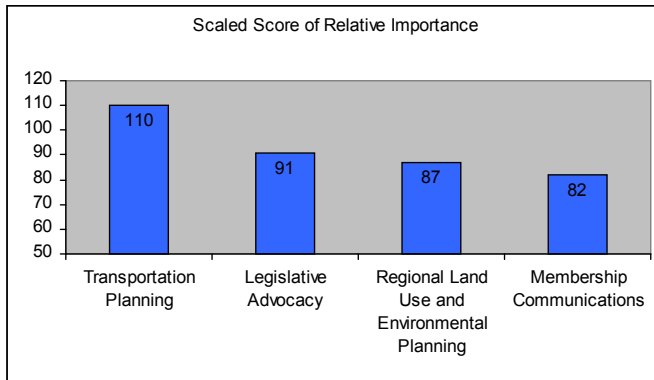


27 of 37 (73%) respondents Agree or Strongly Agree with the current core functions.

4

GVMC Direction – Q2,3

Question 2: Please rank the Metro Council core functions by order of importance to you



Transportation Planning is the clear priority with other core functions seen as secondary.

Transportation Planning received 21 #1 votes while the others received 7, 4 and 5 respectively.

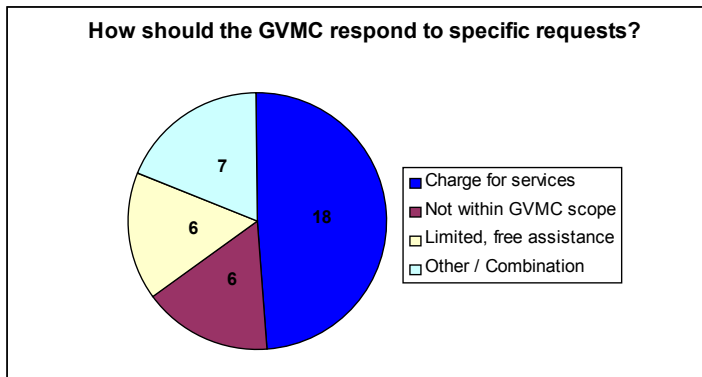
Note:
 Most Important – 4 points
 Important – 3 points
 Less Important – 2 points
 Least Important – 1 point

See Appendix 1 for free form responses to Question 3: Please comment on your ranking from Question 2. Are all core functions equally important or do you see a clear distinction in importance?

Summary: 77% believe that there is a clear distinction in importance.

GVMC Direction – Q4

Question 4: Providing in depth, targeted assistance/support for planning or transportation work that is more specific than the regional scope the Metro Council has in its charter (ie. the community asks GVMC to do the planning/transportation impact work for a project proposed in a specific community).



The membership is in favor of a fee-for-service model.

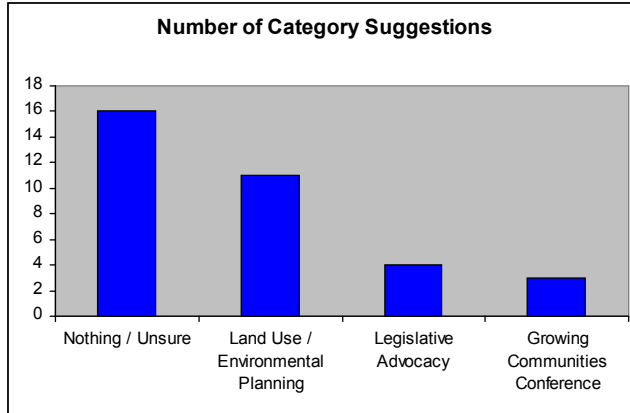
See Appendix 2 for free form responses to Other / Combination

GVMC Direction – Q5

Question 5: In your opinion, what function(s) of the Metro Council are no longer important or valuable to your community and could be candidates for elimination?

Most members appear content with the current functions (16 of 36 responses), but Land Use/Environmental Planning was the most frequently cited candidate for elimination (11).

Five responses requested more emphasis on regional collaboration and related activities.



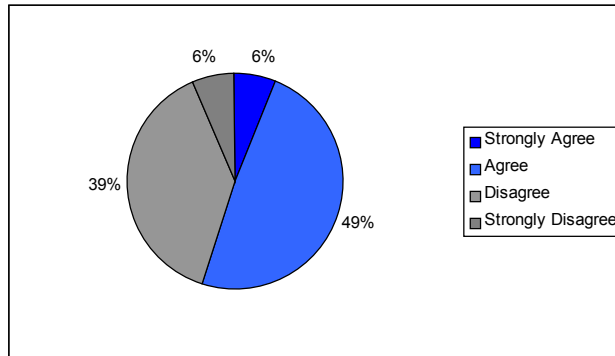
See Appendix 3 for free form responses to Question 5

GVMC Success/Failure – Q6,7

Question 6: Please respond to the following statement: "I feel the Metro Council is accomplishing its necessary core functions well"

55% Agree/Strongly Agree
45% Disagree/Strongly Disagree

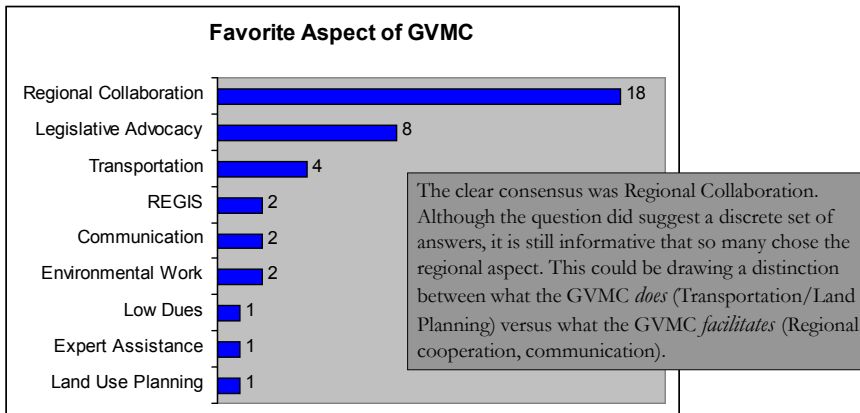
Although this is a positive outcome, the nearly even split demonstrates that the membership is mixed about the overall success of the GVMC.



See Appendix 4 for free form responses to Question 7 commenting on their answer to question 6: "Specifically, why do you feel the Metro Council is or is not accomplishing the core functions?"

GVMC Success/Failure – Q8

Question 8: Please list your favorite aspect of membership in the Metro Council.
Some possibilities: low dues per capita, expert assistance, good regional perspective, regional collaboration/cooperation, effective legislative advocacy, helpful communication, etc.

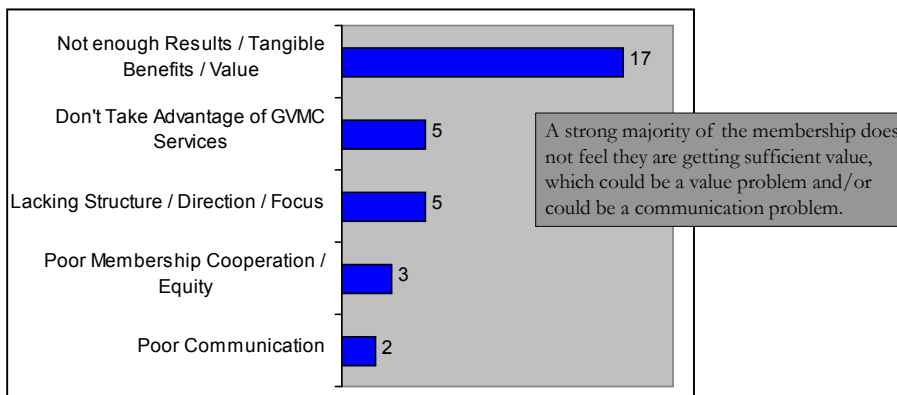


See Appendix 5 for free form answers to this question

9

GVMC Success/Failure – Q9

Question 9: Please list your most significant complaint about the Metro Council.
Some possibilities: not enough value for the cost, I don't feel like I matter to the region, I don't see a tangible benefit, my voice is not heard, I don't take advantage of GVMC transportation or land use planning services.

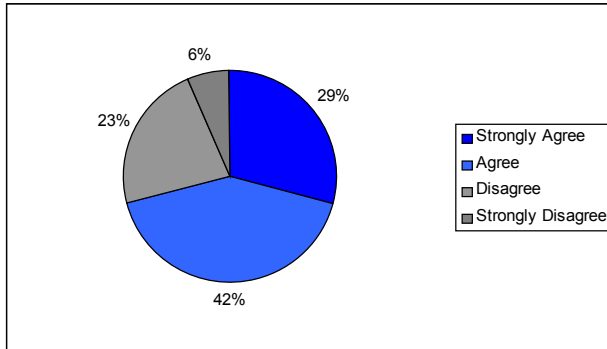


See Appendix 6 for free form answers to this question

10

GVMC Value – Q10,11

Question 10: Please respond to the following statement: "I would find added value in Metro Council and attend more GVMC-sponsored events where the Council facilitated inter-jurisdictional collaboration or training sessions for activities directly related to the work of my county or community."



The most commonly suggested topics surrounded two questions:

1) How do we work together as a region?

Service Sharing

Regional Collaboration

2) How do I run my community?

Economic Development

Policy/Legislative Activity

See Appendix 7 for free form suggestions for training topics

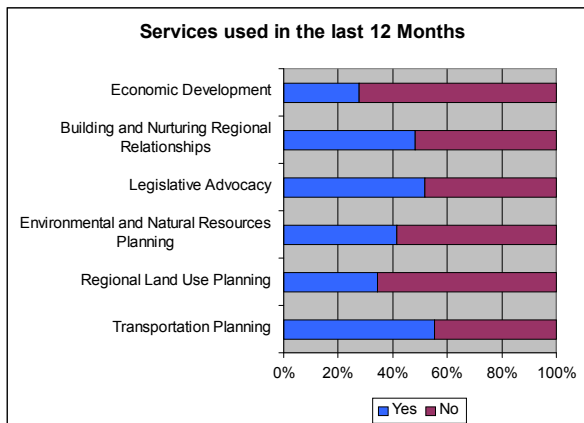
11

GVMC Value – Q12

Question 12: Which of the following GVMC Responsibilities/Services do you feel that your organization uses at least a few times a year and/or you can think of a specific, direct benefit from in the last year.

Most members do not feel they have benefited from these GVMC services in the last year, particularly interesting is the regional relationships aspect, which seems to be much-desired function of the Metro Council.

# of Services Used	Count of Members	Percentage
1	10	36%
2	4	14%
3	6	21%
4	4	14%
5	1	4%
6	3	11%



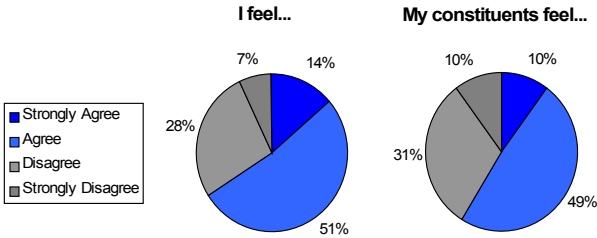
Seven blank answers were eliminated from the data set assuming the question was skipped though it could mean they used zero services. This improved the proportion of services used slightly.

See Appendix 8 for free form "other" services used (4 comments)

12

GVMC Value – Q13,15

Question 13/15: Please respond to the following statement: "For my job, I feel/my constituents feel my county or community is getting sufficient value from our investment in the Metro Council"



No significant difference in the answers suggests alignment between the membership and their constituents regarding the value of the GVMC. Still, between 35%-40% of the people that the Metro Council serves do not feel they are getting sufficient value for their investment.

GVMC Value – Q14,16

Question 14/16: How can we improve this [understanding of GVMC Value]?

Common Themes:

Membership Value

- Regional Thinking/Actions
- Clarify the Purpose of the GVMC
- Focus on Core Issues
- Better Communication
- Targeted but even Service Delivery

Constituent Value

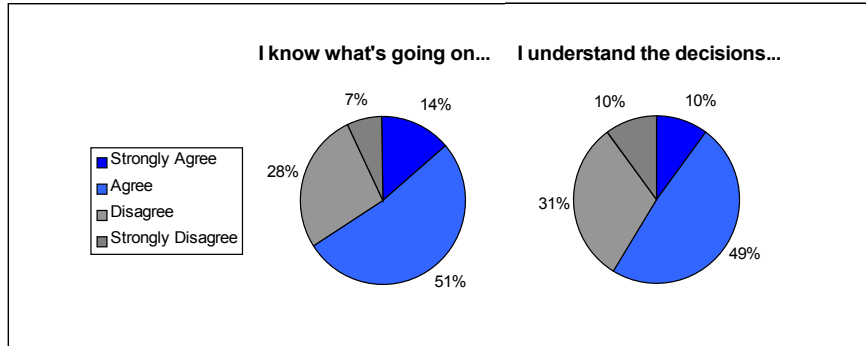
- Better Communication
- Improve the Value to the Members and the Constituents will see it.
- More Regional Collaboration

See Appendices 9 and 10 for all answers to Questions 14 and 16

GVMC Value – Q17,18

Question 17: "The Metro Council helps me to know and understand *what is going on* in my neighboring communities and it helps me perform my job."

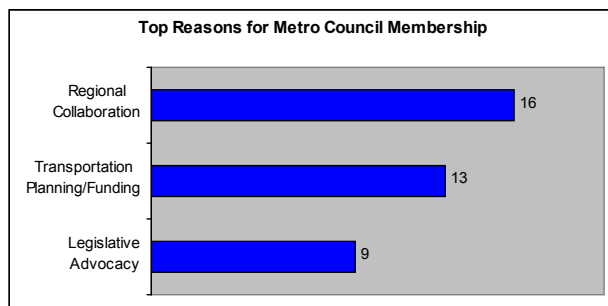
Question 18: "Because of the Metro Council I feel I have more *knowledge and understanding of decisions* made in my neighboring communities."



15

GVMC Value – Q19

Question 19: What are the top two reasons why your organization is a member of the Grand Valley Metro Council?



A common theme is reiterated:

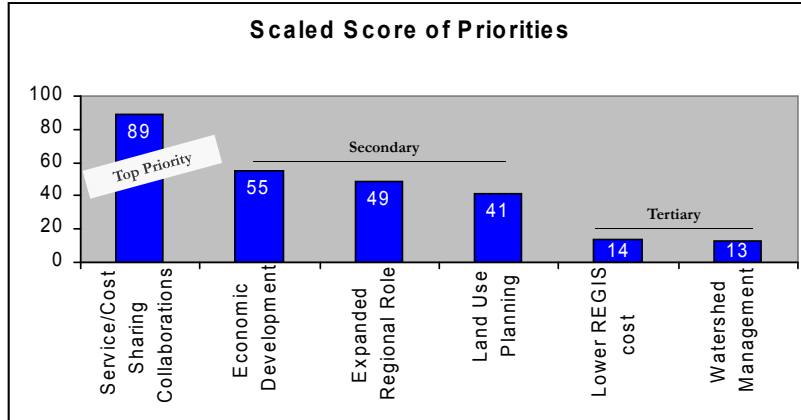
Help us work with our neighbors, plan and secure funding for transportation and keep us advised of/fight for us with Lansing.

See Appendix 11 for the free form answers to Question 19

16

GVMC Visioning/Goal Setting

Question 20: Please check below your First/Second/Third choice for activities and services that the GVMC should pursue in the near term.



Points Allocation:

1st Choice – 4 points

2nd Choice – 3 points

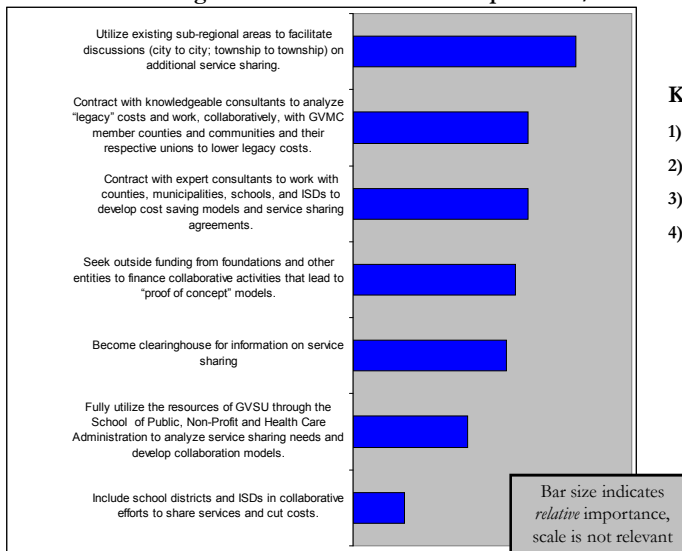
3rd Choice – 2 points

17

Top Priority

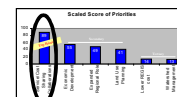
GVMC Visioning/Goal Setting

Facilitate Sub-Regional Discussions to Develop Service/Cost Sharing Collaborations



Key Specifics:

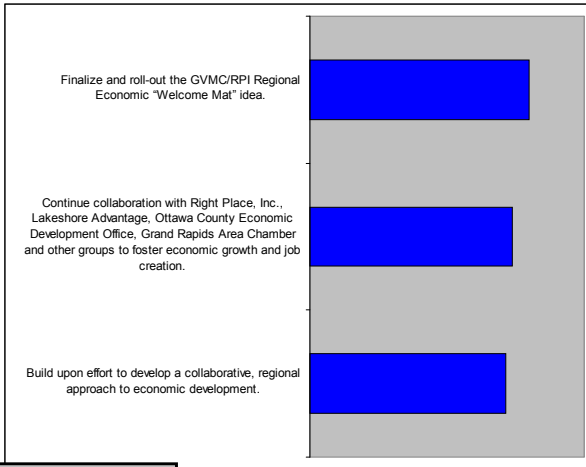
- 1) Facilitate Discussions
- 2) Help Reduce Their Costs
- 3) Lead Service Sharing
- 4) Bring Best Practices



Secondary Priority

GVMC Visioning/Goal Setting

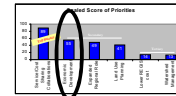
Collaborative, Regional Economic Development



Bar size indicates relative importance, scale is not relevant

Key Specifics:

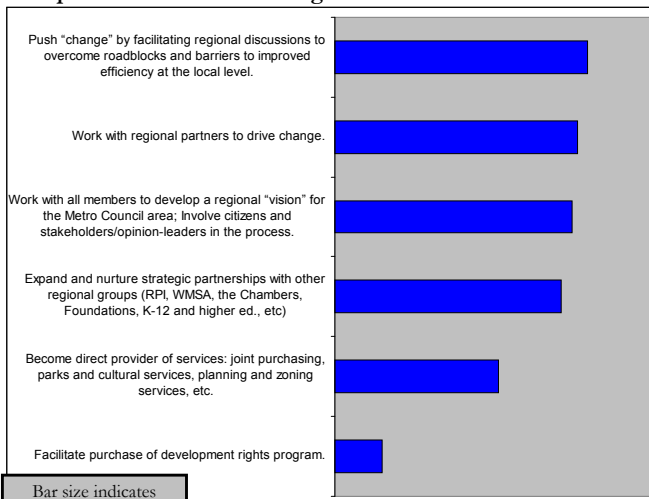
- 1) Help provide a united image to the outside
- 2) Work with existing partners



Secondary Priority

GVMC Visioning/Goal Setting

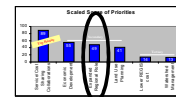
Expand Metro Council's Regional Role



Bar size indicates relative importance, scale is not relevant

Key Specifics:

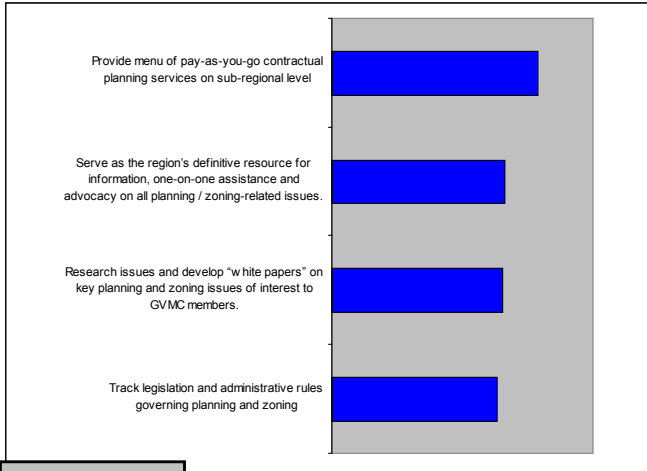
- 1) Facilitate Regional Discussions
- 2) Work with existing partners
- 3) Develop a regional vision
- 4) Expand partnerships



Secondary Priority

GVMC Visioning/Goal Setting

Tangible, Relevant Land Use Planning Services



Bar size indicates relative importance, scale is not relevant

Key Specific:

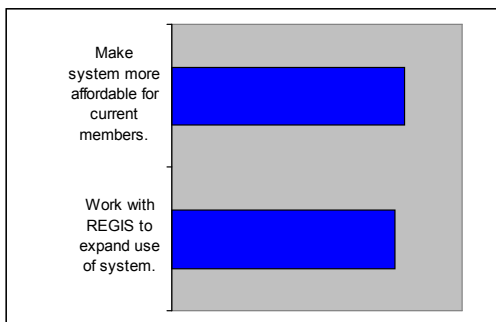
- 1) Provide/Charge for Value-Added Services



Tertiary Priority

GVMC Visioning/Goal Setting

Work with REGIS for lower cost services

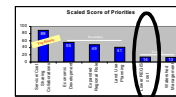


Bar size indicates relative importance, scale is not relevant

Key Specific:

No change is necessary. This is a low overall priority and the membership doesn't have a strong feeling towards changes.

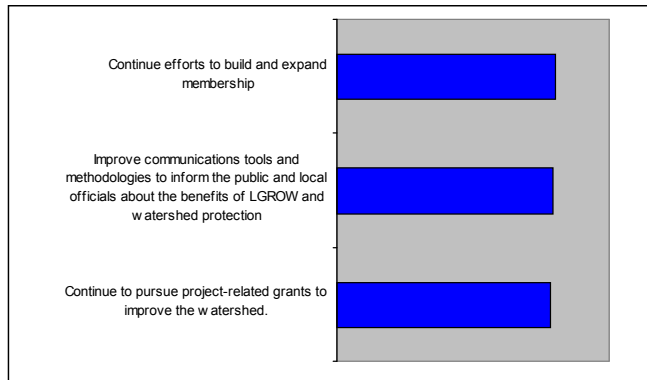
Only 6 members put this in their top three priorities



Tertiary Priority

GVMC Visioning/Goal Setting

Coordinate Watershed Management Activities through LGROW

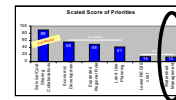


Key Specific:

No change is necessary. This is a low overall priority and the membership doesn't have a strong feeling towards changes.

Only 4 members put this in their top three priorities

Bar size indicates relative importance, scale is not relevant



GVMC Recommendations

- **Membership Newsletter**
 - Bi-monthly, written by current staff with copies available to the residents/staff of the member communities (in their lobby)
 - Remind the membership of the goals and current projects/priorities
 - Provide a summary of activity moving toward the GVMC goals: "How we are doing here: _____"
 - Discuss fiscal responsibility: how far under annual budget/costs saved/grants received etc.
 - Highlight a different department/function each issue providing in depth discussion of what they do, why they are passionate about their work and how they're benefiting the membership.
 - Calendar of upcoming events hosted by GVMC or other communities
 - Follow up with member feedback for GVMC events (conference, public meetings etc.)
 - Highlight a community, talk about what they're doing, why they're members (services used) and focus on some best practices that they've developed

Problems Addressed: Communication, Perceived value, Regional connections, GVMC relevance and accountability, Idea sharing, Member ego

GVMC Recommendations

- **Become a thought leader on local issues**
 - Current staff and/or GVMC provided consultant author white papers addressing local issues. “How should XYZ ordinance be written?”
 - Canvass member communities to find best practices relative to the topic
 - Facilitate round-table discussions on the specific topic with stimulus provided by the GVMC, an expert consultant/academic as moderator
 - Provide training sessions for specific topic from GVMC staff or hired consultant. Council does/doesn’t charge members for a 1 day session on relevant issues. Questions 10/11 and Appendix 7 discusses member suggestions. 71% of the respondents would be interested in training.

Problems Addressed: Local assistance, Quality of the overall region, Communication, Actual value, GVMC relevance, Idea sharing, Injecting new ideas

25

GVMC Recommendations

- **Add fee-for-service functions**
 - Current staff have expert skills in areas affecting localities. Use regional abilities focused on sub-regional communities.
 - Membership supports this concept.
 - Land Use Planning is a prime candidate; membership have diminished perspective of this function at the GVMC, but continue to need local assistance here.
 - Other areas could be involved even if outside the Metro Council’s areas of expertise. Metro Council could coordinate consultant work that covers multiple jurisdictions. Take this collaboration responsibility off their plate and be the clearing house.

Problems Addressed: Local assistance, Actual value, GVMC relevance

26

GVMC Recommendations

- **Help the Communities Save Money**
 - **Help the Communities Analyze their Costs**
 - Contract with a consultant to do cost audits for several communities at a reduced costs, provide the service free/reduced to the membership. Leverage GVMC size.
 - Lay the groundwork for Cost/Service Sharing/Consolidation
 - **Lead the Region in Cost/Service Consolidation Progress**
 - Facilitate round table discussion on candidates for consolidation
 - Ease political tensions with frequent discussion
 - Start small with obvious services where politics are least involved
 - **Seek Grants to Demonstrate Viability of Service Sharing**
 - Community foundations and/or federal departments to fund area-wide government planning?

Problems Addressed: Tangible results, Local assistance, Actual value, GVMC relevance by leveraging size

27

GVMC Recommendations

- **Leverage Regional Connections**
 - Finalize and roll out the GVMC/RPI “Welcome Mat”
 - Engage other ‘region-wide’ organizations by hosting a monthly/bi-monthly lunch or conference call to keep up to speed with other organizations: RPI, Lakeshore Advantage, Ottawa County Econ. Dev., Chambers of Commerce etc.
 - Communicate both the activity and the results of the meetings to the members; how these activities will impact their locales.
 - Invite 1-2 member communities along each month to see what’s going on (model after RPI industry round-tables).
 - Invite a consultant to host (pay for) a lunch for member communities. Part A the consultant talks about the services they provide (advertisement); Part B the communities discuss a specific topic/problem that they are facing; Part C, follow up discussion about solutions in a non-sales situation.

Problems Addressed: Regional connections, Tangible results, Communications, GVMC relevance, Networking

28

GVMC Recommendations

- **Re-tool existing functions**
 - Membership found decreased value in some areas, primarily land use planning, see question 5.
 - Create relevant, adhered-to area-wide plans or change planning model to fee-for-serve. Some complaint about The Blueprint being out of date and irrelevant.
 - Membership felt there was value in legislative advocacy, but some felt it was a candidate for reduction/elimination because they didn't see tangible results.

Problems Addressed: Fiscal responsibility, Tangible results, Membership responsiveness, Resource limitations

29

GVMC Membership Survey – June 2010

Don Stypula, Executive Director
Jeremy Bergwerff, Summer Associate

Appendix 1

Of those who answered the question, approximately 77% believe that there is a clear distinction in importance. Many commented on the importance of Transportation Planning, but also mentioned functions that they felt were core, but not listed. Others disregarded some functions as not important at all.

Question 3: Please comment on your ranking from Question 2. Are all core functions equally important or do you see a clear distinction in importance?

I believe transportation planning, given its regional importance and the amount of fed funds involved, to be most important.

All equal importance

I believe transportation and legislative advocacy are of major importance

Equally important

Equal

Transportation Planning with its funding allows GVMC to exist and is required for transportation funds to be allocated to our region. Legislative Advocacy and Member Communication cost us little but bring us leverage as a region built on our individual strengths. Regional Land Use and Environmental Planning should only be a core function if sustainable funding is secured. The REGIS Agency should be our model; identified Goal, defined Objective, sustainable Funding, measurable Outcomes.(Not even on the list?)

While I believe that the core functions are all important, they are never 'equally' important simultaneously. It is important to be able to switch gears at a moment's notice to redirect priorities based on what the state and local economies are doing at that moment in time. GVMC has to be flexible to some extent.

Clear Distinction

I think that Planning is no longer relevant I believe that environmental issues such as storm water and LGROW are important.

Clear distinction.

"I do not put membership communications in the same category as the others. It seems to me that communications is about how to get the job done, not what the job is.

Land use has faded in importance due to the lack of development pressures. We should be asking the question--""Are there some things we could easily put in place now because of the economic environment that would make us a much better region when the development pressures come back?""

These are all very important and interdependent.

"Definitely a clear distinction in importance. I question the priorities and believe that GVMC needs to set some concrete priorities and go after them full bore.

Some of the land use planning and even to some degree the legislative advocacy is nebulous and hard to measure progress.

What about consolidation/collaboration of services? This is something concrete that GVMC should be doing.

You are missing--facilitating consolidation of services. Additionally, it is not transportation planning that is needed, but facilitating grants.

Continue your advocacy and working for our region.

Other than transportation planning (of which SOMEBODY has to do it) there is little value provided in the other services.

I actually thought they are all equally important, so I'm glad you gave us this opportunity to comment. It was hard to rank them - all #1 in my book.

I think transportation planning is very important to the entire area.

Membership communications is not a core service; it is a prerequisite for performing the function. Transportation Planning does not have to be a core function as it currently exists; it is a component of Regional Land Use planning, but that function (Planning) has not been effectively implemented. Legislative advocacy is important, but should not be the primary focus as it appears to have been during the past five year; and how effective has legislative advocacy been?

We think that Metro Council should evolve to become a 'loose knit' co-ordinating and collaborating body for West Michigan governments, that can represent West Michigan as a Regional entity when opportuned to do so.

Land use planning is not a big thing now. We can do it ourselves if we have access to the right information through education opportunities. The communities really don't want to be told how to do it.

Clear distinction

There is a clear distinction. Transportation planning, although important, could be handled by the WMRPC. Metro Council should be working on "higher" more important collaborative programming.

All are equally important

Anything that covers beyond the borders of Kent County, and that we can react or respond to truly as a regional body.

clear distinction

equally important

We need to be the leader in consolidation and combining of services. I trust this is what membership communications is and therefore is my number one vote

legislative advocacy is # 1, others about equal

I really appreciate the legislative advocacy & communications!

While I have listed planning the least important it should not be disregarded. I do see a distinction in importance but I see membership communications and legislative advocacy quite equal.

I do not agree that the currently identified core functions are those functions that are most important going forward.

Some are more valuable, such as land use and transportation planning.

I believe regional issues in regard to transportation and land use are the most important. These are issues that individual communities can not work on their own.

I do not view our land use planning as particularly relevant to the members.

Clear distinction. While transp planning is important, it does not directly affect our community as it is outside the MSA. Could & should put more emphasis on regional land use & environ. planning. Assitance & partnering to help investigate & facilitate joint planning commissions, joint services, etc.

I think we get very different value from what is presented as core functions. Planning is very theory based while Transportation gives clear value in the form of dollars.

Appendix 2

A combination of methods was suggested, but no consensus is present among these responses.

Question 4: Other, please specify

#1 with an explanation. Our community would like to see GVMC spearhead some projects/issues (i.e. medical marijuana or chicken ordinance as examples) that impact the region. Every member community has likely paid their attorney to draft those ordinances. Can GVMC serve as a clearing house for those type items? It would probably cost us less in the end.

GVMC needs to provide value-added services and benefits. Transportation planning and support seems like a role for GVMC.

At least THAT community is getting a benefit. To think that GVMC would do less is hard to understand. I like both 1 & 3. Perhaps a very limited amount should be included in the regular dues. Anything more than that should be billed.

core services only

I would chose number 3 but I do not have a problem exploring the possibility a paid fol a-la-carte.

Metro Council must provide tangible planning support to its members.

Appendix 3

A plurality mentioned that nothing should be eliminated (11) along with another five that were unsure; roughly half of the membership (16) appear to be reasonably content with the functions. The most commonly cited function for elimination was land use/environmental planning (11). Five wanted increased focus collaboration among the region often in conjunction with eliminating some functions.

Question 5: In your opinion, what function(s) of the Metro Council are no longer important or valuable to your community and could be candidates for elimination?

Unsure.

Growing Communities Conference

I am not prepared to delete any of our current functions until they are discussed at the executive board level.

Growing Communities Conference

Growing Communities Conference

Land Use Planning. There are no tangible results from the department. Project specific Land Use Planning can be preformed contractually. LGROW does not have adequate or sustained funding. The Rouge River Watershed group should be the responsibility of those in that watershed.

That's a good question. I don't have an answer.

None

Planning Functions can be handled by outside consultants

"I think that the regional land use and planning is a no go at this time. I would have separated regional land use and regional environmental planning in the survey. I also believe that legislative advocacy has limited returns.

I think that the focus has to be on developing inter-governmental partnerships and developing region wide policy that impacts most or all local units of government. Developing performance measurement expertise that could be shared with local units would also be a plus."

Land planning work unless re-imagined. The issues of today are not the issues of 10 years ago.

They are all important, especially as we focus on consolidataion.

"Less time and focus on Legislative Advocacy. While it is important, the facilitation of collaborative service agreements and other more concrete issues should take precedent. I also question what measurable, value-added benefits come from the land use and environmental planning. It is important, but what are the results. "

Transportation planning and legislative advocacy are far less important than serving to bring the region together.

All but Transportation I guess. But then GVMC shouldn't even be organized under the Metro Council statute.

I'm not aware of any that should be eliminated.

Regional Land Use and Environmental Planning

As currently practiced/implemented, our organization finds that all of the functions, save Transportation, have been effective (e.g., what legislation has been affected by legislative advocacy?). All functions should be reviewed and prioritized. Metro Council does not need to be the MPO, which has been a prime emphasis. Metro Council should be a clearinghouse for information and serve as a convener for metropolitan collaboration and consolidation of services. It appears that GVMC member communities are being asked to respond to "forced-choice" questions rather than provide input that we feel is important to the long-term relevance and effectiveness of the GVMC.

None.

See above comments

All are important

None come to mind.

I can only add more functions, I think it is shortsighted of local elected politicians think otherwise.

More focus as a Regional Planning Organization, less focus as a support group for individual government agencies.

Regional land use

I will have to think on that

Environmental planning

all important

Functions are fine now.

I have never been a big fan of the time spent on the Blue Print. I think we need to get it off of the shelf and adhere to it or get rid of it.

Regional Planning needs new direction. No one is paying attention. If we had developed according to the Blueprint over the last decade, how different would we be today from financial, land use and service perspective. Legislative activity is a valiant effort, but there is little consensus among members on topics that matter most - so how effective has it been? LGROW is an interesting partnership that has promise. The Stormwater alliance has proven value.

None.

unsure of what can do eliminated, a detailed list of functions would be necessary to best address this.

Regional land use planning should be reduced.

None come to mind

Planning

Appendix 4

A handful of general positive comments (7), but any focused positive comments were for Transportation Planning (4). The most common reasons for complaint can be categorized as either No benefits/impact to the GVMC activities (5) or having the wrong focus/direction (5). Others mentioned resource limitations, but one commenter expects more.

Question 7: Please comment on your response to Question 6. Specifically, why do you feel the Metro Council is or is not accomplishing the core functions?

Doing what they can with the resources provided

Administration is following the desires of the membership.

It's doing an adequate job

Does a good job

Transportation...yes. Otherwise, it seems like GVMC staff are a little "scattered" and don't have any clear direction.

Lack of Funding for Transportation

The GVMC staff needs to focus on Transportation and Environmental issues. There is no longer a need for planning or working with the state. The state is no longer a player in local matters.

Planning hit a wall years ago. There is no true desire to do regional planning. Legislative does not appear to have measurable benefit.

"Transportation - excellent.

Legislative advocacy - chance of success with the current legislature on anything is almost nil. I suppose we have to keep trying.

Land use planning - very limited impact on the community."

I think it is doing a good job but needs to focus on regional consolidation efforts full force!

Transportation is definitely one area that GVMC is accomplishing. Legislative advocacy is strong too. Communications and Land Use fall short. There has been next to no media relations; no visible communications plan; and hard to measure results from the land use and environmental side.

There is no real value beyond transportation planning - and that is a commodity service. Some are being performed well, but I think there are some areas that could use more attention. I know the staff is majorly overloaded with work and you would almost need to hire more employees in order to function at your highest capacity. So, based on current staffing, you're doing a pretty good job of meeting those needs.

What metrics are being used to measure success? A "business plan" was developed several years ago after investment of time and effort by board members, but it has basically been ignored.

We have no criticism to be made about current Metro Council performance. Comments would be 'about right' for performing existing functions.

I think Metro Council is capable of doing so much more. For example, some of the tasks discussed at the planning session.

It would be hard to think of what our community would be like w/o it!

I feel some of the functions of GVMC are being carried out by organizations such as THE RIGHT PLACE, and the West Michigan Strategic Alliance. Those organizations should play a much larger role in GVMC

Wonder if it possible for cities and townships to every be on the same page

all regions should be equally treated

Don is well informed and is an excellent communicator!

They are not necessarily the appropriate core functions for today.

The council does provide transportation planning well, but needs to refocus and change to coordinate services.

I question the value of our land use planning function.

Too much emphasis on transportation planning. Need more emphasis on assisting local governments w/ providing services w/ fewer dollars in this "new normal" economy. Would like to see more work w/ energy conservation & alternative energy development along w/ addressing the triple bottom line of sustainability (environmental integrity, economic diversification & social equity.) Also, more partnerships with agencies such as WMSA & The Right Place. More emphasis on Smart Growth.

We rely on very old plans such as the Blueprint. We need to reinvent GVMC. Planning is too theory based. Planning could be valuable if it was tangible.

Appendix 5

The overwhelming consensus among the membership (17) was the regional dialogue and collaboration. Comments were mainly a variation on that theme with Legislative Advocacy garnering 8 votes. Other aspects had a few comments: Transportation, REGIS, Communication and the environmental perspective each had two or three votes.

Question 8: Please list your favorite aspect of membership in the Metro Council.

Some possibilities: low dues per capita, expert assistance, good regional perspective, regional collaboration/cooperation, effective legislative advocacy, helpful communication, etc.

Regional dialogue/relations. Legislative advocacy.

Regional collaboration and legislative advocacy

Transportation planning and regional collaboration

Collaboration

REGIS

Bringing communities together.

I believe GVMC excels in the area of Transportation.

regional perspective & regional collaboration

Regional dialogue & consciousness raising on community-wide issues.

Low dues are important now.

Regional collaboration/cooperation...if it would happen more.

regional collaboration/cooperation

Its potential is my favorite aspect. Its failure to take W Michigan out of the box is my least favorite. I love the regional aspect of the Council - the ability to meet with other area leaders as equals and be able to work on solutions for the problems facing all of us in these hard economic times. But even in good times, this Council allows facilitation of regional cooperation that we would not have otherwise.

The last several years have been frustrating. The informal relationships that have developed is the most significant aspect.

- 1.) Ability to see Regional perspective.
- 2.) Regional collaboration possibilities.
- 3.) Legislative advocacy.

Good regional perspective and a forum to exchange ideas and things that are important to the region.

Return for the dues. Legislative advocacy.

Regional collaboration/cooperation

Offers opportunity for regional cooperation with other local units of government, offers the opportunity to listen to what goes on beyond my county, gives all units of government the same voice and same vote.

legislative advocacy

good assistance when needed

effective legislative advocacy

Effective legislative advocacy & Excellent communication

LGROW and stormwater partnership

Regional transportation planning. and Land use planning, - REGIS

regional perspective; regional collaboration/cooperation

regional collaboration/cooperation

Helpful communication. Community sustainability recognition.

Work done for legislative advocacy.

Transportation, REGIS, networking

Appendix 6

The members have a strong consensus on a theme of not enough tangible value/results from relevant services (16). There were five comments about not taking advantage of the services and another five commented on a poor structure/direction/focus for the GVMC. Three commented on a problem with equality and/or cooperation among the different units of government. Two comments related directly to poor communication.

Question 9: Please list your most significant complaint about the Metro Council.

Some possibilities: not enough value for the cost, I don't feel like I matter to the region, I don't see a tangible benefit, my voice is not heard, I don't take advantage of GVMC transportation or land use planning services.

Lacks formal authority in most instances. Ex: Regional Planning. No power sometimes equals no impact.

Need more relevant services

Don't take advantage of GVMC planning services

Communications

Don has a tendency to overpromise and underdeliver. He is so likeable but I don't always see results.

Don't cancel meetings when we don't have a significant agenda. 1 or 2 times per year.

I don't believe that the Planning staff has any mission or focus.

The organization does not have an effective method of maintaining relevancy. Most board members have no idea what the group is about. An annual method of making sure board direction and staff action are in sync is necessary.

Not finding ways to address the most critical needs of members.

There could be more advocacy on behalf of the cities by the Metro Council to express their budget constraints and taxing limitations to the general public from this more independent source.

Feeling that nothing is really getting done; few tangible results. Seems like month to month it is just the same motions repeated over and over again. What are we actually doing? What are the priorities?

not enough value

not enough value for the cost, I don't feel like I matter to the region, I don't see a tangible benefit, my voice is not heard, I don't take advantage of GVMC transportation or land use planning services.

Too much to do - not enough staff time. Perhaps priorities need to be established and adhered to.

We do not see a tangible benefit to our membership.

We don't take advantage of GVMC transportation or land use planning services.

Lack of cooperation on things that are important to the region. The future of REGIS and how the city of Grand Rapids and Kent county are going it alone. If they can't support something that is successful, how can we ever hope to consolidate other services. The thought of combining governmental units, at this point, is nothing but a fantasy. The leaders of the various communities that are members of GVMC, are looking out for their own interest and therefore decisions to consolidate government will only come about unless they are forced to do it.

We struggle with showing a tangible benefit.

Local politicians sometimes don't see the larger picture of where the council tasks should be focused(it isn't to assure their re election

Return on Investment

we don't use GVMC transport or land use

We have to show a tangible benefit to continue to participate

not all regions are treated equally

None

Not yet positioned to take its member units of government to a destination that involves more service sharing, service consolidation and intergovernmental relationships.

Not enough service for fee.

I don't see a tangible benefit; could be more on the cutting edge of all consolidation efforts in the region

My local unit gets minimal value from land use planning function yet it is a major cost component of GVMC.

Too much emphasis & funding depends on transportation planning, which does not affect members outside of the GR MSA.

We have failed to take advantage of regional planning services.

All talk, no action. Declining tangible benefit

Appendix 7

The significant suggestions are around two questions: 1) How do we work together? and 2) How do I run my community? The most commented topic is Service Sharing/Regional Collaboration (11) which speaks to the first question. The other common topics are related to running the community: Economic Development (4), Policy Development/Legislative Activity (4). The remaining comments were specific examples of "how to..." in which the members are interested.

Question 11: Please comment on possible educational topics in which you may be interested.

Economic development and regional service sharing

Economic development

Econ Development

Merging Services

performance measurement on a regional basis; intergovernmental collaboration; policy development on topics that impact us all

"Dialogue towards sharing functions or merging units;
Thinking about how to improve public understanding and engagement in the political process."

Parks authority, transportation, overall consolidation opportunities defined.

Huge proponent of targeting regions - possibly using Blueprint - and identifying ways to facilitate sharing/collaboration of services; cost savings; etc.

Purchasing services, true planning services, leadership in cooperation/coordination/consolidation. Strong/effective voice for government reforms, elimination of 312. Funding of studies that show needs for reforms to public employee benefits, benchmarking of all communities on cost of services broken down to per unit costs etc etc etc.

Templates for policies, ordinances, intergovernmental agreements; a clearinghouse for information on successful collaborations.

Emergency services. Regional land use planning.

Do we or do we want to compete with MML or MTA? I would support training sessions that were directly tied in to the mission of GVMC, otherwise I am not so sure we need to become a training organization.

Collaboration is needed

build relationships between communities, work more for cooperation not competition

Planning, financial functions, police, fire, assessing

Joint planning & zoning. Collaborative service delivery. Energy conservation & alternative energy development. Regional parks, trail & recreation development. Grant writing assistance (fee-based). More affordable GIS access for smaller communities.

Retooling local economies and educating new legislatures.

Analysis and discussion of current topics that face our communities

Appendix 8

Question 12: Other GVMC services/benefits your community has received

Quarterly Luncheons

At-large member

None. I've asked for assistance, say, on something as simple as gypsy moth spraying and received no return information.

REGIS

Appendix 9

Again, regional thinking/actions are the top issue (8). Other key recommendations are to clarify the purpose of the GVMC and focus on core issues (5) along with better communication (4) and a more even, but targeted delivery of services (4).

Question 13: Please respond to the following statement: "For my job, I feel my county or community is getting sufficient value from our investment in the Metro Council"

Question 14: How can we improve this?

Stay focused on core issues and regional thinking

More training programs

More funding

More regional coordination in day-to-day issues.

Not sure

Refocus away from Planning and move to direct environmental issues such as storm water.

Develop new agreement on who GVMC is and what it is going to accomplish and don't be afraid to shed that which is not relevant or working anymore.

At-Large Member

communication through emails

Take a leadership role in fostering collaborative/cooperative relationships between local units; target long term, systemic issues and help locals address them; use media relations and communications to create community dialogue

focus on regional consolidation/cooperation

It is a mindset. It has become what we feared - another unit of slow, safe government bureaucrats, planners and status quo coasters.

Work on those priorities

Be more than an MPO. See above.

More communication on State finance/budget issues.

More targeted service delivery

Continue to emphasize the whole vs. the individual

Lower costs, review positions

not sure

Show the value

all communities should be equally treated

It is fine the way it is.

Focus on future needs in areas of service consolidation, service provision, functional consolidation

Assist more with coordination of area-wide services.

do more study of large scale consolidation of government

Reduce budgets like every member has had to do.

More direct services to communities.

Determine specific needs of membership

Follow through, action, do what you say you are going to do

Appendix 10

Communication was the most specifically mentioned improvement (12) but implicitly just as many members highlighted areas where they felt the value could be improved. Eight simply mentioned "value" while others suggested topics such as Regional Collaboration (3).

Question 15: Please respond to the following statement: My colleagues and constituents feel that our community is getting sufficient value from our investment in the Metro Council

Question 16: How can we improve this? (ie. Is it a matter of value or of communication of that value?)

Stay focused on core issues and regional thinking

Better communications

More collaboration

More regional coordination in day-to-day issues.

Not sure

The City Commission values the efforts in Transportation and storm water.

Both

At-Large Member

communication of that value

It is largely that people do not know about or see tangible results.

focus on regional consolidation/cooperation

I have fought to keep our dues flowing to GVMC but will no longer do so. Even advocacy has become "mailing it in" resulting in sending along "heres what happened" clips from the news services rather than "here's what we are working to make happen and how you can be a part of it attack plans.

I'm not really sure how to answer #15. Some do, some don't. It made me answer, so I checked disagree, but that's only because I've heard a couple complaints over the years. There should have been a "neutral" choice.

It is a matter of value.

Both - GVMC needs to facilitate consensus on values, AND then communicate them where needed.

I do not think our community knows much about the Metro Council. Possibly Metro Council should work towards gaining more exposure in the region.

communication

Give members more fire power

not sure

Communication

both are involved

It is fine the way it is.

it is a matter of value

value

unsure - branding?

reduce spending and dues

Both

A better job of promoting the services that we can provide.

Follow through, action, do what you say you are going to do

Appendix 11

The Membership showed clear consensus on Regional Cooperation/Activities (16) along with strong enjoyment of Transportation Planning/Funding (13) and Legislative Advocacy/Communication (9). Many other one-off responses including: data collection, good leadership, historic inertia, REGIS, assistance and environmental issues.

Question 19: What are the top two reasons why your organization is a member of the Grand Valley Metro Council?

Regional cooperation and legislative advocacy

Transportation Planning & Legislative Advocacy

"Transpo planning & Legislative advocacy"

REGIS and transportation planning

Transportation Funding-Regional Cooperation

Transportation and Environmental issues (Storm Water permits and LGROW)

Regional cooperation and collaboration

N/A - At-Large Member.

Regional cooperation and data collection

"1. Regional planning and cooperations is critical to the future growth and success of all the communities and the entire area.

2. Transportation planning."

We strongly support regionalism

Historic inertia, wanting to be a "team player" and optimism that we will take it up a notch.

Ability to have a regional perspective on issues. Transportation.

Charter member: to realize what was originally envisioned about being a regional collaborative body

1.) Opportunity to be part of the bigger West Michigan community.

2.) Opportunity to receive insights & information about State Government issues from knowledgeable (inside) sources.

Legislative advocacy. Being made aware of what others are doing in the region.

Collaboration

1. It was and still is a great concept eventhough going though a difficult time.

2. This GVMV board member has been able to convince the rest of the board that this is a good investment.

3. There are definitely benefits to membership that can't be measured.

Good leadership Plus we have Don S.

Transportation Dollars & Part of discussion for collaboration

To get help on various issues that come up & To have a collective voice for our region in Lansing

Legislative advocacy & communication

Engage in regional discussion and forge relationships & Transportation

Regional planning and transportation

transportation & planning

Transportation planning and collaboration

Identification w/ GR metro region even though an independent small outlying community. Good communications on legislative front.

Transportation and legislative advocacy.

We still need a regional perspective and networking

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
[Docket No. FR-5396-N-03]
**Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for HUD's Fiscal Year 2010 Sustainable
Communities Regional Planning Grant Program**

Goals

The goal of the program is to support multi-jurisdictional regional planning efforts that integrate housing, economic development, and transportation decision-making in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of economic growth, social equity and environmental impact simultaneously.

In the Appropriations Act, Congress provided a total of \$150,000,000 to HUD for a Sustainable Communities Initiative to improve regional planning efforts that integrate housing and transportation decisions, and increase State, regional and local capacity to incorporate livability, sustainability, and social equity principles into land use and zoning. Of that total, \$100,000,000 is available for regional integrated planning initiatives

Funding Levels

- **Small metropolitan or rural areas.** The grant amount awarded under the Program to an eligible entity that represents a small metropolitan or rural area with a population of not more than 499,999 may not exceed \$2,000,000.
- **Large metropolitan areas.** The grant amount awarded under the Program to an eligible entity that represents a large metropolitan area with a population of 500,000 or more may not exceed \$5,000,000.

Eligible Applicants

HUD is considering as an eligible entity a multi-jurisdictional and multi-sector partnership consisting of a consortium of **units of general local government and all government, civic, philanthropic and business entities** with a responsibility for implementing a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development, such as:

- local jurisdictions (working in concert)
- MPOs
- rural planning organizations
- COGs, regional units of government(i.e. transit agency, water district)
- state government
- civic and nonprofit organizations
- private sector interests
- philanthropic organizations and educational institutions
- workforce investment boards

Matching Funds

HUD will expect that at least 20 percent of the overall costs of the projects awarded under this grant will include leveraged funding from other public, philanthropic and private sources including in-kind contributions.

Intended impacts

The Sustainable Communities Initiative was conceived to advance development patterns that achieve improved economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and social equity in metropolitan regions and rural communities. Recognizing the fundamental role that public investment plays in achieving these outcomes, the Administration charged three agencies whose programs impact the physical form of communities—HUD, DOT, and EPA—to lead the way in reshaping the role of the Federal government in helping communities obtain the capacity to embrace a more sustainable future.

- HUD will take the lead in funding, evaluating and otherwise supporting integrative regional planning for sustainable development.
- DOT will focus on (a) building the capacity of transportation agencies to integrate their planning and investments into broader plans and action to promote sustainable development; and (b) investing in transportation infrastructure that directly supports sustainable development and livability principles, as discussed below.
- EPA will enhance its role as a provider of technical assistance and developer of environmental sustainability metrics and practices.

Decisions made by local jurisdictions about the locations of housing, shopping, and employment are often disjointed both within and across jurisdictions and are, therefore, unable to incorporate either the impact on accessibility to different types of destinations or the broader impact on mobility and livability in a region. This fragmented approach results in a host of unintended consequences including:

- spatial mismatch between affordable housing and opportunities for employment and education;
- long and expensive commutes;
- permanent loss of agricultural land;
- reduced water quality in streams, lakes, and other water bodies;
- higher emissions of greenhouse gasses and other damaging pollutants.

Despite the presence of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Councils of Governments, and other regional planning entities, there is too often a misalignment of transportation, housing, and infrastructure systems due in part to the lack of coordination when plans by different agencies are prepared separately. While separate resources may be available for housing, economic development, water infrastructure, and transportation planning, few funding sources help communities address challenges and opportunities in an integrated fashion.

Desired Outcomes

The final product of a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant will be a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development and/or implementation strategy that meet the requirements of existing HUD, DOT, and EPA programs, such as Consolidated Plans, Long Range Transportation Plans and Stormwater Master Plans.

Building on these requirements, a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development would be a plan that:

- (A) Identifies housing, transportation, economic development, land use, environmental, energy, green space and water infrastructure priorities and goals in a region;
- (B) Establishes locally-appropriate performance goals and measures the future outcomes of baseline and alternative growth and reinvestment scenarios against those goals, and includes standardized metrics developed by the Partnership;
- (C) Provides strategies for meeting those priorities and goals;
- (D) Prioritizes projects that facilitate the implementation of the regional plan; and identifies responsible implementing entities (public or private) and funding sources; and
- (E) Engages residents and stakeholders substantively in the development of the shared vision and its implementation plan early and throughout the process.

A few regions are on the cutting edge and have demonstrated the capacity to plan for the long-term, build broad-based coalitions in support of sustainable communities and use an array of tools to incent investment in development, land preservation, and infrastructure that implements their sustainable vision.

Project Categories

Three funding categories are being considered:

Category 1: Regional Plans for Sustainable Development. Funding to support the preparation of Regional Plans for Sustainable Development that address housing, economic development, transportation, and environmental quality in an integrated fashion where such plans do not currently exist;

Funds would support stakeholder-driven visioning and scenario planning exercises that will address and harmonize plans for the location, scale and type of housing, education and job centers; identify appropriate transportation and water infrastructure; and proactively consider risks from disasters and climate change. Applicants would be expected to identify a set of locally-appropriate performance metrics that are consistent with the Partnership's Six Livability Principles (see below), as well as the Partnership's own metrics, and then measure the outcomes of proposed growth/reinvestment scenarios against those metrics. Funding in this category would support data analysis, urban design and outreach efforts to achieve broad consensus among groups, citizens, and decision-makers for a single vision/scenario and to have that plan adopted by all appropriate regional governmental bodies.

Funding could support

- preparation of Regional Plans for sustainable development where such plans do not currently exist
- data analysis
- urban design and open space visioning
- outreach efforts to achieve a collective vision among stakeholders
- efforts to have a plan adopted by all appropriate regional governmental bodies

Expectations

- identify local performance metrics consistent with the outcomes of proposed growth/reinvestment scenarios

Category 2: Detailed Execution Plans and Programs. Funding to support the preparation of more detailed execution plans and programs to implement existing regional sustainable development plans (that address housing, economic development, transportation, and environmental quality in an integrated fashion); and

Funds in this category would support the preparation and adoption of detailed plans and programs to implement an adopted integrated regional sustainable vision. Because implementation needs will vary significantly from region to region depending on the goals of a sustainable plan and the gaps that exist, the funds from this category would likely support a wide range of implementation activities but still be measured against the common and consistent metrics and outcome goals highlighted in the previous section. For example, inter-jurisdictional affordable and fair housing strategies, regional transportation investment programs, corridor transit-oriented development plans, sector or area plans, land banking and acquisition strategies, revenue sharing strategies, economic development strategies, plans to improve access to community amenities, and other specific activities that help ensure that the goals of the regional vision are implemented. Regional coalitions would be eligible to apply for this category on the basis of demonstrating the adoption of a regional vision that is substantially consistent with the Livability Principles, program goals and metrics identified in the published NOFA.

Funding could support

- inter-jurisdictional affordable and fair housing strategies
- regional transportation investment programs
- corridor transit-oriented development plans
- land banking and acquisition strategies
- revenue sharing strategies
- economic development strategies
- plans to improve access to community amenities

Expectations

- demonstrate the adoption of a regional vision substantially consistent with the Livability Principles, NOFA program goals, and metrics

Category 3: Implementation Incentives. Implementation funding to support regions that have regional sustainable development plans and implementation strategies in place and need support for a catalytic project or program that demonstrates commitment to and implementation of the broader plan.

Recognizing that those regions that have already fully embraced sustainable regional planning provide important models to the nation, the Partnership is considering ways in which the Program can reward and incent further action by cutting edge regions.

First, HUD is evaluating the extent to which applicants that have an adopted Regional Sustainable Development Plan and appropriate implementation programs in place could be pre-certified as having met HUD, DOT, and EPA's criteria for sustainability and livability factors in other discretionary federal funding programs.

Second, HUD is considering providing a limited number of grants to complete a financing package for projects that would accelerate the implementation of a Regional Sustainable Development Plan. As envisioned, this category would support pre-development costs, capital costs for a regionally significant development or infrastructure investment, or land acquisition investments. We are considering how to make best use of new federal dollars in the context of existing programs and their requirements—and also in the context of innovative practices in the field. Applicants would need to demonstrate that they have in place an adopted regional vision that is substantially consistent with the Livability Principles, metrics identified in the published NOFA to measure performance, and have commitments from affected participating partners to initiate implementation efforts, but have funding gaps that could be closed within the grant limits for this program.

Funding would support

- catalytic project or program that demonstrates commitment to and implementation of the broader sustainable development plans
- pre-development costs
- capital costs for a regionally significant development
- infrastructure investment that advances economic equity
- land acquisition investments

Expectations

- demonstrate an adopted regional vision consistent with the Livability Principles
- identify performance metrics
- have commitments from partners during implementation
- demonstrate funding gaps that could be closed within the grant limits for this program.

Six Livability Principles

- 1. Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.
- 2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.** Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility, and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
- 3. Enhance economic competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
- 4. Support existing communities.** Target Federal funding toward existing communities - through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling - to increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.
- 5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment.** Align Federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
- 6. Value communities and neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.