



City of Allegan

Economic Development Plan

Summer 2020

Amended February 2021

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Introduction

The City of Allegan’s Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is proud to present this strategic economic development plan as it seeks to promote economic prosperity throughout the Allegan community. Through emphasizing the Allegan Community’s key industries, as well as creating a strong downtown core through retail and service opportunities, the City of Allegan EDC can achieve their ambitions as aligned with their stated mission and vision.

Mission Statement

“The City of Allegan Economic Development Corporation acts as a volunteer-based advisory board seeking to encourage and support the retention and growth of current local businesses, support city improvement projects, endeavor to draw additional business opportunities, and improve the quality of life for residents through increased access to commerce and services.”

Vision Statement

“The City of Allegan Economic Development Corporation will work to support community revitalization by actively engaging businesses, entrepreneurs, and talent throughout the community, and proactively planning for an innovative and burgeoning future.”

The City of Allegan Economic Development Corporation endeavors to support and foster concerted, joint efforts to enhance economic development opportunities in the primary market area. The purpose of the Economic Development Corporation is to discuss, study, and recommend to the Allegan City Council measures and actions supporting the achievement of economic goals.

Economic development efforts in the City of Allegan are overseen by City Staff with the support of the Economic Development Corporation, the Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce and Lakeshore Advantage, with every member bringing a unique and valuable point-of-view to this collaborative effort. The following individuals were involved in the formulation of this plan:

City Staff Members:

Joel Dye, City Manager

Sarah Perrigo, City Manager Intern (2019/2020)

Jordan Meagher, Community Development Coordinator (Former)

Economic Development Corporation Members:

Peter Hanse, Appointed Council Member

Michael Kiella, Committee Chair

Lovedia Stap, Committee Member

Kim Munn, Committee Member

Tim Perrigo, Committee Member

Craig VanMelle, Committee Member

Michael Walsh, Committee Member

We are grateful to all of the individuals and organizations that contributed their time, energy, and resources to the completion of this strategic plan. The community-wide planning effort that was put forth has helped to establish the values and priorities of the City of Allegan and its citizens and businesses, ensuring that the economic goals stated herein align with these ambitions and interests.

COVID-19 Statement

At the beginning of the planning process for this 2020 Economic Development Plan, the City of Allegan had no idea of the health and economic hardships on the horizon. As this plan was finalized, the nation was undergoing a public health crisis that significantly altered our economy. The impacts of this crisis, especially as to how it will affect the goals and visions outlined in this report, are not fully known. As we navigate this time of uncertainty, we will need to be flexible and responsive to changes in our economy and primary market area.

While COVID-19 has presented unprecedented challenges, it is imperative that the work of the Economic Development Corporation continues to bolster the efforts of local business owners and community members as we move forward cooperatively through this pandemic.

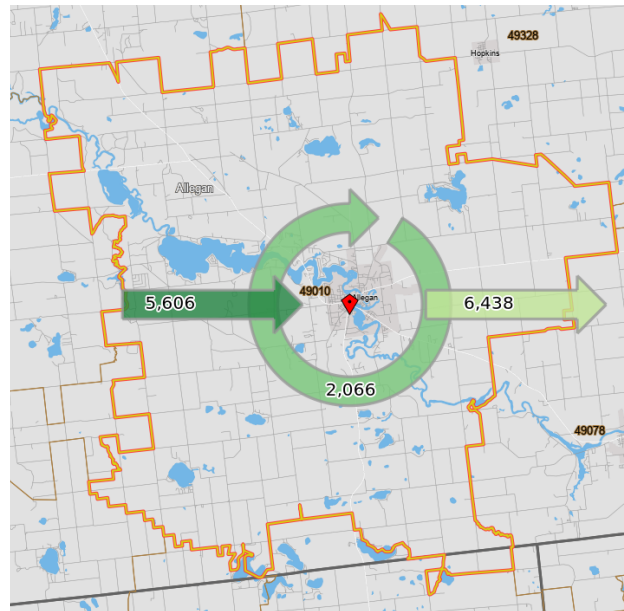
Economic Assessment

For the purpose of this strategic economic development plan, the primary market area will be defined as the area covered by the 49010 zip code, but will include recreational assets that add to the Allegan economy, such as Bittersweet Ski Resort, the Lynx Golf Course, the Allegan State Game Area, and other regional attractions.

Market Profile

An important step in setting economic goals for the Allegan community is to understand who the citizens are and how they interact with the local industry and workforce. There are approximately 17,000 citizens residing within the established market boundaries of the Allegan Area. Of the 17,000 citizens residing in this area, 9,500 are between the age of 25 and 65. The area's median household income is \$56,100—this figure is lower than that of Allegan County, but higher than the State of Michigan. Of the residents over 25 years of age, 18.4% have completed a bachelor's degree of higher, lower than the percentage of County and State residents who have done so.

Many of the residents of the market area work outside of their local community; conversely, many of those employed within the 49010 community, reside outside of the area. Of the 7,672 employees working within the area, 73.1% live outside of the community. 75.7% of those living within the 49010 boundaries are employed outside. (American Community Survey, 2017) This leaves 2,066 residents who are also employed within the Allegan Primary Market Area. There is opportunity in realizing strategies to attract and retain the 5,606 individuals employed in the primary market who do not yet live in the area. Recognizing the inflow and outflow of employees and residents is crucial to understanding the interactions between people and the economy as daytime spenders and nighttime spenders may be different populations.



Industry Profile

The largest employer located within the City of Allegan is the Perrigo Company, one of the world's largest suppliers of over-the-counter self-care companies that sells products globally, followed by Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital. These two employers place the Allegan Primary Market Area at a key intersection of health care and biotechnology. Another significant employer in the area is the Allegan Public School System and the Allegan Area Education Services Agency with nine educational buildings and additional administrative services.

With this in mind, the largest shares of workers in the Allegan Primary Market are employed in the Manufacturing, and Health Care and Social Assistance industries. This reflects state-wide trends as the State of Michigan has concentrations that are higher than national averages in both Production Occupations (1.76LQ) and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (1.09LQ). (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019) Below is a detailed breakdown of employment by industry:

Employment by Industry, 49010 (2017)		
<i>Industry</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Share</i>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, & Mining	214	2.5%
Construction & Utilities	478	5.6%
Manufacturing	2,381	28.0%
Wholesale Trade	359	4.2%
Retail Trade	831	9.8%
Transportation & Warehousing	229	2.7%
Information	76	0.9%
Finance & Insurance	204	2.4%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	66	0.8%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	300	3.5%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	71	0.8%
Administration & Support, Waste Management & Remediation	497	5.8%
Educational Services	591	6.9%
Health Care & Social Assistance	927	10.9%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	108	1.3%
Accommodation & Food Services	624	7.3%
Public Administration	275	3.2%
Other Services	273	3.2%
Total	8,504	100.0%

Infrastructure Profile

The City of Allegan holds a unique opportunity for growth as supported by existing infrastructure, while also experiencing deficits in other infrastructural areas. One of the many things that makes Allegan very unique for a small, rural town is the presence of an airport with a 4,300 ft runway. While the airport cannot accept large jets, there are currently 36 T Hangers of which 90% are occupied on any given day by small recreational or business aircraft. The location of the City of Allegan allows easy travel for individuals looking to connect with a larger flight at airports such as Gerald R. Ford International Airport, Kalamazoo Battle Creek International Airport, and even O’Hare International Airport. There is also opportunity for the addition of a helipad to encourage further regional air traffic.

The City of Allegan also boasts a Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant and a Water Resource Recovery Facility. The Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant produces approximately 1.5 million gallons per day and can produce an additional 2 million gallons per day if needed. The Water Resource Recovery Facility handles approximately 900,000 gallons per day of sewage and can handle another 3 million gallons per day. Both plants have been updated in the past decade and are of a much higher quality than that of many other communities. With the capacity to take

on additional households and businesses, Allegan’s utility infrastructure is well situated to absorb and support further developments within the primary market area.

Despite the presence of several significant manufacturing companies, the community faces a major infrastructure deficit with the current gas station inventory; none of the gas stations can accept semi-trailer trucks. This is a hindrance to growth as it may discourage the addition of further manufacturing and commercial enterprises. These infrastructural considerations will be important in supporting future economic development endeavors by the City of Allegan and private investors.

Education Profile

The Allegan Primary Market boasts multi-level education systems to guide community youth from the beginning of their educational careers up to a community college degree, providing them with foundational skills to enter the workforce or pursue further education. These educational assets provide involved stakeholders, including the City of Allegan, with an opportunity to bolster the existing system to further train and attract an ambitious workforce.

Allegan Public Schools are composed of an early childhood learning center, three (3) elementary schools, L.E. White Middle School, and Allegan Senior High School. The curriculum taught in the Allegan school district is largely traditional, providing youth with the knowledge necessary to take the next steps in their education and career. Allegan Public Schools is a member of the Allegan Area Education Service Agency (AAESA), an entity that provides county schools with specialized education support staff, purchasing support, assessments, and other programs beyond the scope of a single district.

AAESA also operates the Allegan County Area Technical & Education Center (ACATEC). In conjunction with this education system, the public-school system has moved towards “job-ready” training. ACATEC works as a wonderful resource for students and all community members, offering nineteen (19) programs focused on employability for students in their Junior and Senior years of high school. The vocational training provided by this entity works to train to competencies, providing a launching point for youth to finish their training and enter the workforce following their education. Along with the programs offered to high school students, a number of training courses are open to adults in the community.

In addition to the vocational training offered at ACATEC, the Early College Allegan County program allows high school students to extend their high school education by one year in order to obtain both a diploma and an associate degree or Technical Certificate from Lake Michigan College at no extra cost. Lake Michigan College also offers Associate Degrees, Certificate Programs, and a Certified Nursing Aide program to all community members.

Besides the opportunity to continue post-secondary education through Lake Michigan College, there are numerous universities, colleges, and career institutions located in bordering counties

of Kalamazoo, Kent, and Ottawa. While these opportunities leave City residents faced with somewhat long commutes to further their education, the Universities within a 40 mile drive include Western Michigan University, Grand Valley State University, and a plethora of small, liberal arts colleges.

To attract and retain businesses within the area it would do well for the City of Allegan to ensure that Allegan Public Schools, AAESA, and Lake Michigan College work together to provide preparation for a well-trained and engaged workforce.

Housing Profile

Within the City of Allegan's small footprint, there is a lack of diversity in housing. While the surrounding countryside boasts more variety of upscale homes, lake cottages, and other housing suitable for the professional workforce, few such opportunities exist within the City limits, making it difficult for the City of Allegan to attract and retain a middle- to upper-class workforce. Some neighborhoods are highlighted with modern or historic homes marketed towards that market, but much of the housing is small and often substandard.

In the last few decades, economic downturns, workforce relocation, and manufacturing plant closings have placed downward pressure on Allegan's housing values. In 2018, the median property value in the City of Allegan was \$94,200, compared to \$109,500 in Otsego, and \$121,000 in Plainwell. Additionally, only 52% of housing units in Allegan were owner-occupied between 2014-2018, a much lower proportion than is seen in surrounding areas. Many houses did not receive ongoing maintenance and upgrades to retain or boost their value. As more homes fall into disrepair, a downward spiral of neighborhood decay ultimately follows. With neighborhoods requiring modern upgrades and innovations, there is a great opportunity for reinvestment in these existing community pockets.

Alongside investment in existing neighborhoods, there are several sites prime for housing developments within the Allegan Primary Market. The undeveloped land located south of L.E. White Middle School, the undeveloped land located south of the Thomas-Jackson neighborhood, and the land owned by the Armintrout family located off of Old Pine Road, are suitable for new developments of modern, diverse housing.

In order to create a strong housing market to attract a professional workforce that can assist in driving economic development, the current state of housing in the City of Allegan must be evaluated and remedied.

Regional Economic Development

The Allegan County Economic Development Commission is an agency of Allegan County committed to fostering cooperative efforts that will enhance development opportunities in region. As the 7th fastest growing county in the State of Michigan in 2019, regional economic development has seen great success with the completion of four commercial projects and the

investment of \$12.8 million private funds. (Allegan County Economic Development Commission, 2019)

As a partner in the greater West Michigan area, Lakeshore Advantage serves as a leading non-profit economic development organization that connects businesses to the resources needed for success. (Lakeshore Advantage, 2020) In the broader area served by Lakeshore Advantage, \$127 million in private investment was made in local communities and enterprises bolstering 21 completed projects, while \$1.8 Million was raised for the economic catalyst fund in 2019. Projects completed in the West Michigan area include a \$1.8 million expansion of Artisan Medical Displays, as well as a \$7.1 million expansion of the Perrigo Company in Ottawa County, both expanding the biotech industry footprint in the region.

The Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce is another local organization devoted to economic and business development in the Allegan area. Offering a plethora of networking opportunities and business promotion pieces, the Chamber has served as a partner for the City of Allegan, attracting further talent and investment while continuing to assist and promote existing businesses.

Prime Development Opportunities

With a proportionally large geographic footprint, the City of Allegan's downtown area offers a variety of prime development opportunities. From a vacant lot teeming with ground-up potential, to multiple historic rehabilitation projects combining a piece of the past with modern-day progress, there is a great opportunity for private development and investment in the downtown. Throughout this section, key sites have been identified for development. These locations hold an integral role in the future of Allegan's economic and community growth.

In the past few years, two expansive rehabilitation projects have been completed, triggering a chain reaction of intrigue and investment. These two projects, the Shoppes at the Penney's Block, as well as The Heritage at 136 Brady, have provided necessary residential and retail locations to ensure continued and expanded commercial activity in the Downtown.

Prime opportunities such as these solidify Allegan as a community full of opportunity and ambition. These identified key development sites, in conjunction with current economic development steps being taken by the City of Allegan and its partners, will be the next step in recognizing Allegan's Downtown vision of creating a well-designed place where the community comes together and fosters the local economy.

101 Brady Street

Located at a significant entryway into the community, 101 Brady Street has remained a vacant lot for decades, failing to activate a valuable piece of real estate. While this lot once contained a commercial development, today it serves as a bleak introduction to our town, conveying a sense of abandonment and lifelessness. A market study completed by a regional developer in 2019 proved that a hotel in this general area is financially feasible. Currently, a proposal exists to construct a 5-story, 80 room hotel contingent on the City

of Allegan vacating a portion of 2nd Street, turning the 2nd Street Bridge into a one-way entrance into town, as detailed in the Streetscape Plan.

The Mill District

The Mill District, located on the eastern edge of Allegan’s Downtown Core, was once the driver of Allegan’s economic vitality. Once boasting fifteen water powered mills, Imperial Carving closed their doors in 1997, leaving the Mill District largely abandoned. To maximize the potential of the Mill District, a strategic approach will be necessary to assemble all available land possible to create a new recreational area that will serve as a draw for both commercial and residential investment. Furthermore, the new recreational area will draw new visitors into the community to experience Allegan and support local businesses through the purchase of goods and services while in town. In order to activate this unique piece of real estate, there is a proposed mixed-use development with a focus on leveraging non-developable areas to drive value to potential developable parcels.

Allegan City Dam Removal

For some time, there has been a continued discussion regarding the future of the City-owned dam and riverfront. The current conditions of the powerhouse and dam structure, combined with the contaminated river sediment, necessitated an in-depth analysis to explore potential solutions. In January 2020, the Allegan City Council voted in favor of a full dam removal, contingent on funding being acquired and community input into the design of the newly formed Riverfront.

Additional sites identified as prime development opportunities include the Flatiron Building at 142 Hubbard Street, 245 Hubbard Street, and 137 Brady Street, as well as the second levels at 155 Brady Street, 200 Locust Street, and 125 Locust Street.

The plans and proposals associated with applicable developments contained within this section can be found in the appendix at the conclusion of this document.

S.W.O.T. Analysis

By completing a scan of the City of Allegan and 49010 area’s economy, location, and culture, a clear picture of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats emerges. When pursuing the enclosed economic goals, all of these internal and external factors must be carefully considered and approached consciously. By acting mindfully of weaknesses and threats, the City of Allegan has the opportunity to alter or eliminate these barriers to success. The table on the following page outlines the factors affecting the City of Allegan’s success and identity:

S.W.O.T. Analysis, 49010

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare Industry • Agriculture, Forestry, & Mining • Construction & Manufacturing • Professional Services • Heavy Automotive Consumerism (94.5% of Commuters Use Personal Automobile) • Recreational Assets (i.e. Kalamazoo River, State Game Area, Mountain Bike Trail) • Growing Entertainment Opportunities (Summer Concert Series, Annual Festivals, Private Investment) • Central Geographic Location (Within 40 Miles of Grand Rapids, Holland, & Kalamazoo) • Presence of Event & Entertainment Venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Diversity in Retail & Restaurants • Lack of Diversity in Housing • Lack of Professional, Upper Management Workforce Residing in Area • Lack of Public Transportation • Perceived Educational Limitations • Insufficient Tourist Needs (Lodging, Transportation, Environmental Health) • Lack of Childcare Establishments • Lack of Racial & Cultural Diversity • Ill-planned Land Use in Industrial Areas
<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and Expand Entertainment Offerings • Bolster Educational System • Establish Area as Industry Hub • Improve Transportation Logistics • Enhance Tourist-Based Offerings • Broaden Service Industry Needed to Attract and Retain Residents and Visitors • Improve Upon New and Existing Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from Neighboring Communities; More Established Business Districts • Few Locally Owned Companies • Negative Outside Perceptions and Stereotypes • Threat of Recession (Current Events: COVID-19) • Heavy Dependence on One Employer • Stagnant Population • Lack of Pressure, Priority, and Action to Develop and Grow

Beyond the tangible weaknesses of the City of Allegan’s primary trade area, underlying perceptions and cultural weaknesses may also be remedied by well-planned, intentional economic development actions. As a long-standing community with a rich, storied past, informal power structures and skepticism of outside expertise may lead to a resistance to change. By prioritizing public-spirited, deliberate development efforts, awareness of innovative ideas and possibilities can strengthen the culture and reputation of the City of Allegan.

Economic Development Plan Process

Community Partnerships and professional studies have played a large role in informing the City of Allegan and the Economic Development Corporation during the process of creating this Economic Development Plan. The involvement of market research consultants, local enterprises, and EDC members has been integral to this project.

Studies Conducted

In 2019, the City of Allegan hired the Gibb’s Planning Group, one of the foremost urban planning and retail consultants, to complete a Retail Market Analysis of the Allegan primary trade area. In determining how much additional retail and restaurant development is supportable in downtown Allegan, GPG explored geographic and topographic considerations, traffic access in the area, retail strengths, and retail gravitation in the market. (Gibbs Planning Group, 2019) GPG found that approximately 50 percent of existing retail and restaurant spending is presently leaving the Allegan area, suggesting a need to concentrate quality retail opportunities within the Allegan Downtown Core. The Retail Market Analysis also estimated that the primary trade market could support up to 77,500 sq.ft. of new retail and restaurants, producing an additional \$26.0 million in sales by 2024. (Gibbs Planning Group, 2019) The results of this study have greatly influenced the economic goals of the City of Allegan’s Economic Development Corporation.

In addition to the Gibb’s Planning Group Retail Market Analysis, the City of Allegan requested that Abonmarche, a consulting firm specializing in development services and landscape architecture among other things, create a capital improvement plan for the Downtown Business District that has influenced this economic development plan. Abonmarche produced a comprehensive redevelopment approach that would create revitalized commercial opportunities, improved traffic flow, and new streetscapes with improved accessibility. This capital improvement plan placed an emphasis on creating an active, vibrant place that supports authentic human contact and social activities while maintaining a safe and visually appealing environment that connects well to its bordering uses. A capital improvement plan reflecting some of these project tenants is crucial in creating increased commercial vitality in downtown Allegan, thus benefiting business-owners, residents, and visitors alike. You can read the full report of both of these studies by following the links provided in the appendix of this document.

Public Meetings Held

In all City of Allegan projects, public input and committee involvement is highly valued and considered when laying out the City’s goals. Because of this, multiple public meetings provided educational insights into the economic development plan process for the community, as well as served as public input sessions for the plans set forth in this report. Besides the Economic Development Corporation’s monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of each month that allow for public input, other scheduled meetings were used to inform the studies influencing the City of Allegan’s economic development plans.

At the conclusion of the above-mentioned studies, both Gibbs Planning Group and Abonmarche held meetings to present their results and field questions and comments from the audience. Gibbs Planning Group held a meeting with the City of Allegan’s downtown business owners to present the opportunity for future retail and restaurant growth in the area, while Abonmarche held focus groups with City of Allegan staff, downtown business owners, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Public Spaces Committee. Some of the input obtained at this meeting included the desire to create an environment that will attract new businesses and investment downtown, improve the connectivity between the riverfront plaza and downtown, as well as create a pedestrian-friendly space that is conducive to consumer use and enjoyment, all of which influenced the capital improvement plan.

Additionally, the Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce, a valued economic development partner of the City of Allegan, hosted a series of “Starting & Running Your Own Business” classes in conjunction with the Michigan Small Business Development Center in which local entrepreneurs gained valuable knowledge as to how to successfully open a commercial business. This series was received positively with the attendance of forty individuals from the area representing thirty-four potential businesses. Since this series, five of those potential businesses have come to fruition including the Regent Arcade, the Rusty Basket, and Life Pyramid Massage, adding to the vitality of Allegan’s downtown business district.

Economic Development Plan Goals

Based on the information collected surrounding the local and regional economic assessments, as well as the well-thought out plans conducted by professional consultant services with the assistance of public input, the City of Allegan’s Economic Development Corporation presents the following economic development goals.

1. Growth, Maintenance, and Emphasis of Biotech Industries

As mentioned in the industry profile, the largest employer located within the City of Allegan is the Perrigo Company, one of the world’s largest suppliers of over-the-counter self-care products globally, followed by Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital, placing the City of Allegan at a key intersection of health care and biotechnology. Per the American Chemical Society, biotechnology is defined as the application of biological organisms, systems, or processes by various industries to learning about the science of life and the improvement of the value of materials and organisms such as pharmaceuticals. Biotechnology includes research and development to produce products that are anticipated to improve human lives, an area in which the Perrigo Company is a worldwide leader; the Allegan campus of the Perrigo Company assists these biotechnological endeavors through logistical support. Amidst the current worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, these two employers have been even more integral to the success and health of both the Allegan area and the global population. Due in large part to the presence of these two organizations, the City of Allegan’s Economic Development Corporation seeks to promote the growth and maintenance of the biotechnology and healthcare companies, establishing Allegan as a hub of biotechnology and

supporting activities. With the regional presence of Pfizer and Stryker, two additional medical technology and pharmaceutical companies, the City of Allegan is in a unique location to present expansion opportunities for the Perrigo Company and others in order to strengthen supply chain operations within the biotech industry, as well as augment the local economy.

As home to several significant facilities of one of the world's largest self-care companies, the EDC sees a great opportunity to identify as and enhance the City of Allegan's reputation as a leading geographic hub of biotechnology and healthcare, attracting additional talent and investment to the local economy.

2. Expansion of Manufacturing Capacity

In addition to a strong presence of the biotech industry, the City of Allegan is home to a strong manufacturing base including companies such as the following among others:

Allegan Tubular Products, Inc., a leader in fabricated tubing and tube assemblies for the appliance industry, manufacturing products for the water heater industry, motorcycle aftermarket, office furniture, school furniture, exercise equipment, boilers, fireplaces, wire carriers, tube carriers and wire transporter industries, and other industries where tubing is used. (Allegan Tubular Products, Inc., 2020)

Fabricated Components & Assemblies, Inc., a custom engineering, design and fabrication firm with expertise ranging from food processing, home kitchen and bath applications to architectural, pharmaceutical, industrial, and display industries. (FC&A Inc., 2020)

RCI Adventure Products, a business devoted to designing, manufacturing, and installing innovative adventure products, serving industries such as amusement and water parks, restaurants and retail centers, and natural and historic tourist attractions among others. (RCI Adventure Products, 2020)

While these companies have assisted in creating a strong manufacturing base within the City of Allegan, the industrial park located within the city limits is at capacity, indicating a need for an expansion of industrial capacity. The City of Allegan's Economic Development Corporation has made it a priority to expand manufacturing capacity as a result. An expansion of manufacturing will provide the City and its residents with increased employment opportunities and an augmented tax base. The EDC recognizes the importance of working alongside the City of Allegan's Planning Commission, as well as City Staff in order to ensure that this expansion follows sound land-use planning, as to avoid detrimental effects to residential areas while still delivering these benefits.

3. Improvement of Strong Downtown Service Industry

While the City of Allegan already houses many unique and successful retailers and restaurants, the Gibb's Planning Group Retail Market Analysis identified an opportunity for support up to 77,500 sq.ft. of new retail and restaurants, producing an additional \$26.0 million in sales by 2024. With the high level of daytime consumers coming to town for work, as well as the valued residents of the City of Allegan primary trade market, the Economic Development Corporation recognizes a need to strengthen the downtown's service industry, providing additional retail opportunities in a broader array of industry niches. By increasing these commercial opportunities, a strong downtown business district can enhance the local quality of life, while also encouraging additional entrepreneurs to invest in the area. Among the retailers and restaurants identified by Gibb's Planning Group as the most supportable are grocery stores, general merchandise stores, pharmacies, sporting goods and hobby stores, as well as full-service restaurants.

In addition to these added commercial opportunities, the Economic Development Corporation identifies the capital improvement plan produced by Abonmarche as a key piece in strengthening the downtown business district. By implementing key recommendations from this report, it will generate revitalized commercial opportunities through greater foot traffic for retail properties, increased accessibility to storefronts, and added customer-attraction from the primary trade area and beyond. The City of Allegan sees great opportunity for increased economic vitality as well as enhanced quality of residential life by outlining this goal of improving the strong downtown service industry.

4. Leverage Recreational Tourism Features

The City of Allegan primary market is home to many beautiful natural resources such as the Kalamazoo River, the Allegan State Game Area, and the Allegan Mountain Biking Trail, as well as other recreational assets such as Cheshire Hills Golf Course, the Lynx Golf Course, and Bittersweet Ski Resort. All of these features together create a strong recreational tourism opportunity year-round. Because of these features, the City of Allegan Economic Development Corporation has set a goal to increase and complement these features in order to entice additional recreational tourists. By increasing tourist amenities such as lodging, restaurants, and retail opportunities with an emphasis on sporting goods and hobby stores, there is an opportunity to enhance the local economy through tourist dollars, as well as increase the public health of the community through increased access to recreation and wellness assets.

5. Augmentation of a Strong Workforce through Education

As discussed in the Education Profile, the City of Allegan has a lack of post-secondary educational options, leading to a largely non-Mid- to Upper-Professional workforce. Without this workforce, a significant driver of economic development is being underrealized. It is crucial to identify beneficial skill development programs both through extensive research, as well as conversations with local businesses to determine what job-training will create a valuable workforce in the City of Allegan. With this information, skill development courses and career-readiness programs can

be offered in conjunction with local educational entities such as the Allegan County Area Technical & Educational Center. By promoting this workforce, the City of Allegan can realize great economic developments in the form of job attraction and retention, engaged community members and consumers, and more.

6. Creation of Housing Diversity

If the City of Allegan is to become a hub of economic development driven by an engaged, professional workforce, adequate and desirable housing must be created. With a large portion of company executives residing in surrounding towns, the City is losing valuable community members to serve on boards, advocate for and support local businesses, and boost perceptions of the community. By diversifying available housing in the City of Allegan to attract this market, a reverse in neighborhood decay and declining housing values will be realized as homeowners invest in their properties. Additionally, investment in the housing market will result in a stronger tax-base for the City of Allegan, allowing the City to allocate funds towards accompanying economic development efforts.

Implementation of Economic Goals and Oversight Partners

In order to achieve these goals, the City of Allegan Economic Development Corporation has identified key actions to be taken by the City of Allegan and its partners to ensure the successful implementation of the economic opportunities.

In order to grow the City of Allegan's capacity for the manufacturing and biotech industries, as well as grow the area's reputation as a hub of innovation and production, the Economic Development Corporation must work closely with the Planning Commission and the public in order to have a well-thought out land use plan. A zoning discussion to identify space suitable for increased capacity will require meticulous planning and consideration of adjacent land uses to ensure no infringement on residential neighborhoods occurs. From this discussion, deliberate actions can be taken to increase capacity for manufacturing as well as expand the presence of the biotech industry in the City of Allegan.

Intentional marketing efforts to showcase the City of Allegan's biotech industry, as well as recreational assets, can be used to grow the biotech presence as well as leverage recreational tourism features. By featuring these aspects on both the City website as well as advertisements in regional publications such as Shoreline Visitors Guide and REVUE, the Economic Development Corporation can achieve their goals of framing Allegan as a center of biotechnology innovation and increasing recreational tourism. These marketing efforts will attract the attention of regional businesses and visitors, adding to the local industrial and tourist economies.

Partnerships with economic development partners such as the Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce, Lakeshore Advantage, and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation will be crucial in achieving the goals of strengthening Allegan's downtown business district and

leveraging recreational tourism features. Through their support and resources, business attraction and financial assistance can be garnered through educational and grant programs, thus providing potential business owners with the opportunity to locate their commercial venture in the City of Allegan. By removing entry barriers such as unmet capital requirements and lack of business management training through these programs, the City of Allegan will experience an influx of retailers and restaurants, not only providing more consumer options for local residents, but providing the service infrastructure needed for a successful recreational tourism base.

By working with local educational organizations such as AAESA and ACATEC, identification and promotion of a well-trained and engaged workforce can be retained within the City of Allegan. This not only will provide further opportunities for existing residents, but will brand the City of Allegan as a community committed to job-ready workforces. Through offering post-secondary education through intentional skill development programs, the City of Allegan can attract institutions and employers to invest in the community. Once an upward trend in an ambitious workforce is realized, diverse housing must be offered to retain those workers. By partnering with developers and other housing stakeholders, desirable and upscale housing can be attained to add tangible and intangible resources to the City of Allegan.

Finally, the pursuance of grants such as the Rural Business Development Grant can assist in strengthening Allegan's downtown service industry by funding capital improvement projects such as the streetscaping initiative proposed by Abonmarche. Grants are available to fund projects centered around economic development, making the City of Allegan Downtown Streetscaping Project a great candidate as it will build on current economic development momentum by further encouraging investment and growth of the downtown business core, thus strengthening the economy and local quality of life. Due to this, the Economic Development Corporation sees the pursuance of grants as a vital action needed to achieve their economic development goals.

Evaluation of Economic Goals

The following section outlines concrete evaluation criteria to ascertain the success of the above actions to implement the stated goals. By using quantifiable criteria, the City of Allegan Economic Development Corporation ensures that personal biases and abstract judgements are not imposed on the evaluation of these economic development goals.

Growth, Maintenance, and Emphasis of Biotech Industries

1. Addition of Biotech Industry page on City of Allegan website to highlight the existing companies, the potential for expansion, and the benefits of locating biotechnology companies in the Allegan Area.
2. Maintenance of current Perrigo Co. geographic footprint through strong relationship with the City of Allegan and its community.

Expansion of Manufacturing Capacity

1. Joint Economic Development Corporation and Planning Commission meeting to be held to discuss potential areas for expansion of manufacturing capacity.
2. Identification of additional land suitable for industrial expansion.

Improvement of Strong Downtown Service Industry

1. Addition of 25,000 sq. ft. of retail and restaurants in the Allegan Downtown Business District by 2024.
2. Provide various business attraction and entrepreneurial seminars to attract and support potential business owners in the Allegan Downtown Business District.
3. Fully develop the Mill District into a mixed-use development.

Leverage Recreational Tourism Features

1. Continue to market Allegan’s recreational tourism features in regional publications.
2. Obtain the successful development of a hotel in the Allegan Downtown Business District to provide lodging for recreational tourists by 2025.

Augmentation of a Strong Workforce through Education

1. Continued and regular dialogue with educational organizations to identify job-training demands.
2. Identification of potential sites and content providers to offer training to the City of Allegan’s residents.
3. Promotion of the City of Allegan as a hub of a job-ready workforce.

Creation of Housing Diversity

1. Promote a comprehensive land use plan that highlights existing unfinished developments in the City of Allegan.
2. Incentivize completion of housing developments in tandem with partnering developers.
3. Create a community dialogue that encourages business owners to promote the City of Allegan to their workers as a place of residence.

With the completion of these quantifiable goals through the implementation processes mentioned, the City of Allegan’s Economic Development Corporation will be set up for success in promoting economic prosperity throughout the Allegan community, through emphasizing the Allegan Community’s key industries, as well as creating a strong downtown core through retail, service, and tourism opportunities.

Economic Development Plan Action Matrix

	Benefits	Implementation	Partners	Evaluation
<p>Growth, Maintenance, & Emphasis of Biotech Industries</p> <p><i>Timeline:</i> One Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augment local economy & tax base • Strengthen supply chain operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Allegan as biotech innovation hub • Identify locations for industry expansion w/ zoning considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Allegan Planning Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biotech Industry page on website • Continue relationship with the Perrigo Co. to expand footprint
<p>Expansion of Manufacturing Capacity</p> <p><i>Timeline:</i> One Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased employment opportunities • Augmented tax base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify locations for industry expansion w/ zoning considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Allegan Planning Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint EDC/Planning Meeting • Identification of 20 acres of suitable land
<p>Improvement of Strong Downtown Service Industry</p> <p><i>Timeline:</i> Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced quality of life • Attraction of additional investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursuance of grants to assist local streetscaping • Provide assistance to business owners • Develop Mill District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce • Lakeshore Advantage • MEDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of 25,000 sq.ft. of retail and restaurants • Business Management seminar to attract entrepreneurs

<p>Leverage Recreational Tourism Features</p> <p><i>Timeline:</i> Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance local economy • Promote health and well-being of the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing efforts in regional magazines and website • Partnership with economic development organizations to provide assistance to business owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allegan Area Chamber of Commerce • Lakeshore Advantage • MEDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market assets in regional publications • Obtain the successful development of a hotel
<p>Augmentation of a Strong Workforce through Education</p> <p><i>Timeline:</i> Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augment local economy through engaged workforce • Attract institutions and employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of in-demand training programs • Creation of a well-trained and engaged professional workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allegan Area Education Service Agency • Allegan County Area Technical & Education Center • Allegan Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular dialogue with educational organizations • Identification of potential sites and content providers • Promotion of Allegan as a job-ready workforce
<p>Creation of Housing Diversity</p> <p><i>Timeline:</i> One Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further job and workforce attraction and retention • Addition of engaged community members and consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of desirable housing in conjunction with developers • Identification of under-utilized and incomplete housing projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers specializing in housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use Plan highlighting underutilized neighborhoods • Incentivization of housing projects • Encourage business owners to promote residence in Allegan to workers

By focusing community-wide planning efforts on the growth, maintenance, and emphasis of biotech industries, the expansion of manufacturing capacity, the improvement of a strong downtown service industry, and leveraging recreational tourism features, Allegan City Staff and the Economic Development Corporation seek to promote economic vitality and growth in the City of Allegan.

Appendices

Mentioned in this report are the Gibb's Planning Group Retail Market Study and the Abonmarche Capital Improvement Plan, both of which greatly informed the goals and actions stated within.

To read these reports, please use the links below or visit the City of Allegan website at cityofallegan.org!

Gibb's Planning Group Retail Market Study:

<http://cms7.revize.com/revize/alleganmi/Allegan%20Michigan%20Retail%20Market%20Analysis%20for%20Client%2009%20December%202019.pdf>

Abonmarche Capital Improvement Plan:

<http://cms7.revize.com/revize/alleganmi/Streetscape%20Report.pdf>

The following requests, plans, and proposals were all mentioned in the Prime Development Opportunities section.

To read these documents, please use the links below or visit the City of Allegan website at cityofallegan.org!

101 Brady Street Request for Developer Qualifications:

<http://www.cityofallegan.org/101%20Brady%20RFQ.pdf>

The Mill District

<http://cms7.revize.com/revize/alleganmi/Mill%20District%20Report%20.pdf>

Allegan City Dam Removal

<http://www.cityofallegan.org/Allegan%20Dam%20Report%20060419%20wAppx.pdf>