
TO: Kalamazoo City Commission

FROM: Kevin S. Ford, Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo (SPK) Coordinator

DATE: August 25, 2017

RE: 2017 SPK Updates

OVERVIEW OF WORK WITH MOORE STRATEGIC CONSULTING

The Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo (SPK) action planning effort—led by David Moore and staff from Moore Strategic Consulting—started in earnest with our first meeting of the SPK Task Force on August 8th. We addressed our current reality as a city and set context for ongoing work. Approximately thirty leaders from diverse perspectives engaged with us to set clear direction for strategy development in each of the three SPK goals:

1. Increase access to well-paying jobs
2. Promote strong, economically secure families
3. Promote the healthy growth, development and learning of children

Goal Teams are now being formed to research and prioritize strategies in each of the goal areas. Initial goal team meetings are scheduled for September 12-13, 2017. Goal teams will look deeply at data and specific strategies for addressing underlying conditions. The work of these teams will be integrated and connected in Task Force meetings to achieve the following outcomes:

- Consider the current reality in Kalamazoo looking at data, research and community experiences.
- Evaluate current efforts designed to improve conditions.
- Identify gaps in current efforts and options for expanded or new initiatives to address the gaps.
- Identify priority action steps and long term strategies for the SPK plan.

While the Goal teams are meeting, the Task Force will focus on developing an implementation infrastructure that ensures ongoing momentum, shared commitment and accountability amongst city government, service providers, and funders that lays out clear strategies for ongoing resident engagement. We are on schedule for specific goals, strategies, and indicators as well as an ongoing management structure to be defined by the Task Force in November with anticipated recommendations for consideration by the Commission in December.

Our goal is an ongoing structure for driving action on clear goals across the community to increase Shared Prosperity. In addition to shaping city planning and budgeting, our goal is energy, commitment and an ongoing effort that shapes action by partner.

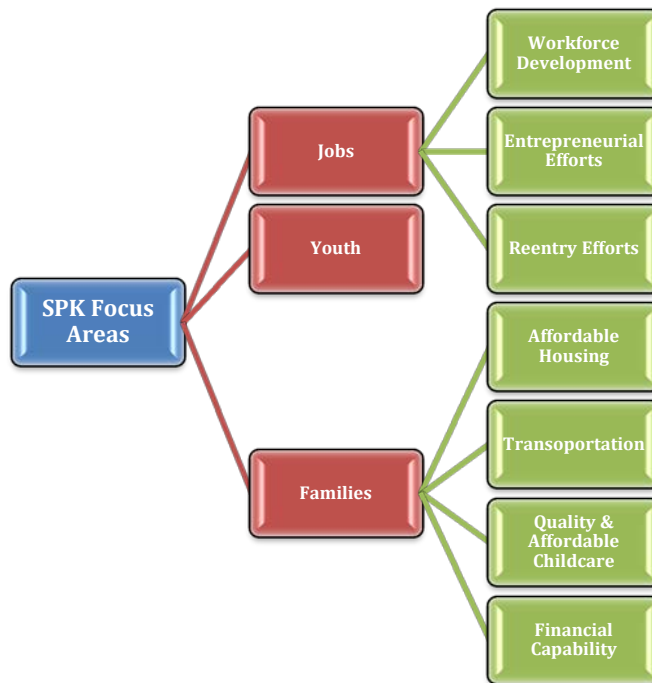


Figure 1—SPK Focus Areas Framework

MICHIGAN FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITY CORPS

In an effort to support the goal of creating strong, economically secure families and improving financial capability (figure 1), the city of Kalamazoo applied and was granted to be a host site for an AmeriCorps member. The primary duties include financial education—trainings and workshops for clients and the community at large around financial literacy and empowerment as well as

- Facilitating or assisting in financial workshops following the FDIC Money Smart Curriculum or a curriculum that covers the same financial themes.
- Outreach to financial institutions or other qualified entities to host workshops on budgeting, credit scores, debt management or other topics.
- Creating partnerships with Financial Empowerment Centers or Financial Opportunity Centers
- Providing referrals to agencies that provide one-on-one financial coaching.

In addition, the AmeriCorps member will be building site capacity in neighborhoods for Show Me the Money Day (SMTMD), a statewide event in Michigan coordinated by CEDAM (Community

Economic Development Association of Michigan) that kicks off tax season and promotes access to free financial resources, affordable financial products and services and financial education classes.

REENTRY WORK

City staff is working with the Mayor and Vice Mayor in partnership with WMU's Walker Institute on Race and Kalamazoo Prisoner Reentry Coalition to host a viewing of the documentary film the 13th on August 31 at the Foundry from 6-9pm. This showing is specifically targeted toward elected officials and policymakers to achieve the following outcomes:

- Inform policymakers how the system of incarceration affects every village, township, and city in Michigan.
- Explore ideas on how to provide support and opportunities for returnees.
- Educate them on the need to obtain relevant and timely data from the state concerning returnees in their community.
- Examine actions they can take to support local reentry efforts in their community.

WMU FINANCIAL PLANNING CENTER

Western Michigan University's Haworth School of Business will establish a Financial Planning Center in 2018 in an attempt to service the Kalamazoo community with regard to financial planning. The SPK Coordinator has developed a partnership with WMU's business school and the Kalamazoo Promise to acquire funding for a pilot program to help Promise recipients improve financial decision-making skills related to human capital requirements of their intended careers. This will not only touch upon workforce development but also address and enhance financial capability within our community.

KALAMAZOO PROMISE COLLABORATION

The Kalamazoo Promise has recently hired two new staff to work with Promise students who have begun college courses but dropped out and who have completed credits but are unemployed or underemployed. A primary focus on the latter includes engaging the business community, which aligns with workforce development. The SPK Coordinator has teamed up with the Director of Business Collaboration for the Kalamazoo Promise to streamline cooperative efforts between the city and the Promise in the areas of workforce development and Promise youth within the city. This is an ongoing collaboration to develop investment from the business community and implement interventions to enhance opportunities for talent retention and quality employment acquisition.

CHILDREN SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (CSA)

The SPK Coordinator is working with KPS, Upjohn Institute, and local financial institutions to explore a Children's Savings Account (CSA) pilot for KPS students. CSA's are a version of Individual

Development Accounts (IDA) targeted toward youth to establish, build, and utilize savings toward postsecondary expenses that the Kalamazoo Promise does not currently cover. Since these are long-term accounts designed for postsecondary use, the SPK Coordinator is exploring options to integrate a two-generational component that involves parents and guardians as well in order to yield measurable results in a timely fashion. Such design has the ability to impact all three focus areas of SPK.