



Strategic Plan

Taking Midland to the World

Midland Tomorrow is the economic development corporation serving the County of Midland and all the municipalities therein. Our mission is ***to enhance the quality of life for Midland County residents through the retention and creation of quality jobs and diversification of the economic base.*** We work with industrial and technology companies to help attract and retain jobs and reduce their barriers to enterprise.

For years, economic development has relied upon “bottom line” accounting assistance, such as tax abatements, to successfully attract and retain business. Michigan’s economic issues in recent years, however, have challenged firms across our state to take their old tools down new paths. Michigan businesses and organizations are meeting the challenge by innovating, dreaming big, taking risks, and blazing new trails to business success.

Midland Tomorrow is one of those organizations. Our latest strategic plan retains the best of our existing economic toolkit and takes it to the next level with new, bold strategies to drive economic growth. In this plan, we recognize the value of our existing economic base firms, continuing to support them through personal contact and connections to economic incentives and business assistance. But while we keep our internal focus consistent and strong, we’re also looking outward – not just opportunities in our region or state, but across the globe.

We’re taking Midland to the world.

Our tripartite strategic plan seeks to invigorate our existing knowledge and talent base through access to new innovations and intellectual property, strategic business counseling, and connections to other manufacturers and innovators to develop new relationships and opportunities. We’re helping to cement the connections that make us world class. At the same time, we’re researching and building relationships with businesses across the U.S. that fit our existing technology infrastructure, demonstrating to them why locating in the Midland area will be the best choice they’ve ever made. We are aggressively pursuing new jobs and investment from across America. We want them here to benefit our residents and grow our economy.

Strategic Initiative 1: National Business Attraction

Proactive economic development isn't about waiting for jobs and investment to come to us. We're **researching and contacting leaders of specific companies** that complement our existing business infrastructure. We're **building business relationships** with them and explaining the deep chemical industry expertise Midland offers – and how that translates into business advantages they can't find anywhere else. And, to complement this initiative, we advertise Midland in **national and global industry trade publications** to keep our message where it needs to be: in front of industry decision makers.

Given the presence of major solar industry leaders in Midland and our two neighboring counties, Saginaw and Bay, our whole region has a strong proposition for solar industry attraction as well. That's why Bay, Midland and Saginaw Counties have partnered for a **regional solar business attraction initiative** that complements our individual business attraction efforts. In all these initiatives, our positions and goals are the same: Because we have business strengths in our community on an unprecedented scale for a region our size, we often find ourselves competing against much larger regions for investment – regions with more financial resources to bring to the table. Rather than competing with dollars alone, we aim to deliver a *targeted message to specific companies through personal contact* before the sales process begins, moving from a solely financial deal to a **true value proposition** that encompasses every aspect of business success.

Strategic Initiative 2: Develop Midland's Culture of Innovation

We're working to make Midland an adaptive leader in fostering and successfully launching high-expectation new technology companies. To do this, we're focusing on helping to develop **new markets, new customers and new products** for our existing businesses and our area.

Our **new market development** efforts involve proactively seeking new market opportunities for our second-stage companies (companies that have passed the survival stage and are considering areas of growth). Our strategy works with these growing companies to ensure they're taking advantage of chances to grow their businesses. **New customer development** efforts are searching inside and outside of Midland for opportunities for our client companies to collaborate in customer/supplier relationships. And under our **new product development** initiative, we're searching for unused intellectual property at major employers and universities for Midland-based companies to commercialize, helping to grow their businesses while bringing new ideas into the marketplace.

Strategic Initiative 3: Maintain Midland's Attractiveness for Our Economic Base

Our larger economic base companies – The Dow Chemical Company, Dow Corning Corporation, MidMichigan Health, McKay Press, and many others – continue to lead the state in its efforts towards economic recovery, and have acted as Midland's single most powerful defense against Michigan's economic challenges. Our proactive strategy utilizes all resources

available to us to ensure that when our existing economic base businesses think “expansion” and “investment,” they think “Midland.”

We’re accomplishing this by **identifying expansion opportunities** and helping to secure them for Midland companies; **fostering specific in-depth partnerships** with local companies to ensure the workforce needs of industry are met; **minimizing the cost of doing business in Midland and Michigan** through economic development incentives; **identifying proactive approaches to attracting new investment** at the state level, and **reducing the overall cost of doing business in Midland** by educating companies and people on the expansion process.

Other Initiatives

In addition to the above economic development plan, Midland Tomorrow’s strategic plan continues to place high priority on marketing our services to our stakeholders as well as improving Midland’s quality of life through participation in focused initiatives to help attract and retain businesses.

Investors

Midland Tomorrow relies on the generous support of our investors to make our economic development initiatives possible. We are currently funded by contracts for service with the City of Midland and the County of Midland as well as generous support from over 70 other local private and public businesses and individuals.

Conclusion

Midland has gained innumerable benefits from the chemical and technology industries, which have sheltered us from economic storms and provided a solid foundation for our local economy. In our fiercely competitive economic development climate, it’s time to leverage the full power of our chemical industry background and proactively tell the world why Midland is *the* location for technology business siting and growth. It’s time for business leaders nationally to hear the summation of a century of cutting-edge research and development, business cooperation and synergy, and a focus on outstanding business together with outstanding quality of life:

Michigan’s technology renaissance begins here.

Midland Tomorrow’s job is to take that story to the world.