

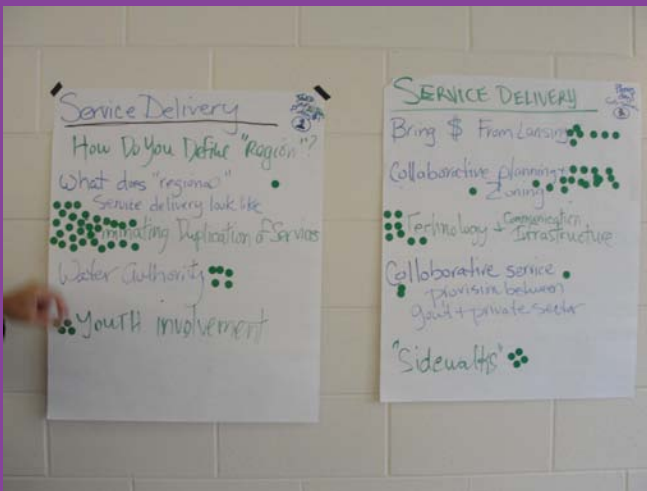


Re-Envisioning Our Future Together: Building Davison 48423

An Initiative Convened by
The Engineering Society of Detroit Institute
Prima Civitas Foundation
Michigan State University
Land Policy Institute & Extension

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SCENES FROM THE SYMPOSIUM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----------|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | 1 |
| About The Engineering Society of Detroit..... | 2 |
| About Your ESD Institute | 2 |
| About the Symposium Process and Outcomes..... | 3 |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 4 |
| Goals of the Davison Symposium: Re-Envisioning Our Future Together | 5 |
| Conveners' Recommendations | 5 |
| OPENING PRESENTATIONS | 7 |
| Welcome: <i>"Nothing Pre-determined"</i> by J. Smiertka, General Counsel, Prima Civitas Foundation | 7 |
| Next Steps: An Overview of Re-Envisioning Initiative Process | 7 |
| Speaker and Presentation Synopsis Comments from the President of Prima Civitas Foundation | 8 |
| <i>"Michigan's Economic Transformation"</i> by Charles Ballard, Professor, Michigan State University | 9 |
| <i>"Michigan's Local Government Fiscal Challenges"</i> by Mark Skidmore, Professor, Michigan State University..... | 10 |
| <i>"Inter-jurisdictional Cooperation and Prosperity: Key Issues and Considerations"</i> by Soji Adelaja, Director, Michigan State University Land Policy Institute..... | 11 |
| <i>"A Changing Landscape"</i> by Derek Bradshaw, Genesee County Planning Commission | 13 |
| <i>"Davison's Government: Services and Finances of the Community"</i> by Armen Hratchian, Senior Consultant, Public Sector Consultants, On Special Assignment to Prima Civitas Foundation | 13 |
| <i>"History of Communities Sharing"</i> by Kurt Soper, Davison Township Supervisor and Dale Martin, City Manager, City of Davison | 14 |

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| | |
|---|-----------|
| PLENARY SESSION (DAY 1) | 15 |
| Brainstorming Session Ideas, Plenary Session (DAY 1) | 15 |
| Brainstorming Questions & Opinions From Attendees..... | 15 |
| Prioritizing Ideas and Organizing Workshops | 18 |
| Four Workgroups Become Three (Driven from the Bottom Up) | 18 |
| PLENARY SESSION (DAY 2) | 19 |
| Government Structure Workgroup 1: Synopsis | 20 |
| Government Structure Workgroup 2: Synopsis | 22 |
| Service Delivery Workgroup 3: Synopsis..... | 23 |
| Combined Economic Development and Education Workgroup 4: Synopsis | 25 |
| CLOSING SYMPOSIUM REMARKS | 27 |
| APPENDICES A TO M | 28 |
| Appendix A—Re-Envisioning Our Future Together Symposium Abstract... 28 | |
| Appendix B—Davison Symposium List of Participants | 32 |
| Appendix C—Facilitator Biographical Information | 36 |
| Appendix D—Convener Leadership | 39 |
| Appendix E—“ <i>Michigan’s Economic Transformation</i> ” by Charles Ballard, Professor, Michigan State University | 43 |
| Appendix F—“ <i>Michigan Local Government Fiscal Challenges</i> ” by Mark Skidmore, Professor, Michigan State University | 53 |
| Appendix G—“ <i>Inter-jurisdictional Cooperation and Prosperity: Key Issues and Considerations</i> ” by Soji Adelaja, Director, Land Policy Institute, Michigan State University | 63 |
| Appendix H—“ <i>A Changing Landscape</i> ” by Derek Bradshaw, Genesee County Planning Commission..... | 76 |
| Appendix I—“ <i>Davison’s Government: Services and Finances of the Community</i> ” by Armen Hratchian, Senior Consultant, Public Sector Consultants, Special Assignment to Prima Civitas Foundation | 83 |
| Appendix J—Complete Report: Government Structure Workgroup 1 | 89 |
| Appendix K—Complete Report: Government Structure Workgroup 2..... | 101 |
| Appendix L—Complete Report: Service Delivery Workgroup 3..... | 109 |
| Appendix M—Complete Report: Education and Economic Development Workgroup 4..... | 134 |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From Abstract to Action: We, the symposium conveners, wish to welcome the reader to the results of a unique and dynamic process that transforms differing views, opinions and at times gridlock into consensual and importantly implementable action.¹

In June, 2010, over 80 pioneers, as David Hollister, CEO of Prima Civitas Foundation, called our volunteer attendees, took time from their busy schedules and responsibilities to come together to learn and share at a community symposium.² The St. John the Evangelist Parish Family Center on Dayton Street in downtown Davison, Michigan, graciously hosted our two-day symposium.³ The idea was conceived by an ad hoc steering committee made of interested stakeholders.⁴ The symposium itself was formally convened by The Engineering Society of Detroit Institute (ESDI), Prima Civitas Foundation (PCF), and Michigan State University Land Policy Institute and Extension (MSU).

Our primary goal was and continues to be fostering an interactive incubator for critical thinking and grassroots visioning by community leaders and residents from the City of Davison and Davison Township. Following the process model of ESDI, our attendees first had the opportunity to hear from top academic, governmental and land-use policy experts. Then, guided by volunteer facilitators drawn from our convener organizations, our pioneers first brainstormed ideas without regard to barriers, then prioritized their ideas, shifted them through evaluation methods and finally reported their findings.⁵ At the close of those two days, attendees, facilitators and conveners alike witnessed the christening of a new and bold vision for the Davison community.

And, indeed, a new Davison was born: **Davison 48423**.

A secondary goal for our symposium was to serve as a lighthouse for other communities in Michigan wanting to explore a re-envisioning of their future. With our process based upon collaboration and inclusiveness as fundamental principles, everyone soon had the confidence and tools to constructively tackle apparently intractable public policy issues. Fear and gridlock were transformed into consensual action. Ironically, Michigan's harsh economic realities—loss of population and unprecedented funding cuts to state, county, township and municipal budgets—served as the catalyst for this positive change.

No one attending the symposium underestimated the challenge before him/her; each participant was cognizant of the serious work necessary to develop a new implementable vision for the City of Davison and Davison Township. As many around Michigan watched, Davison pioneers acted. This report is theirs and we as conveners acknowledge their contribution to all of us across the State of Michigan. The results of their courage are contained in this report.

1 Appendix A contains the original abstract summary that formed the basis for this symposium.

2 Appendix B is a complete listing of symposium participants and attendees.

3 We extend our appreciation to the volunteer staff of St. John Family Center and the pastor of St. John, the Rev. Andrew Czajkowski, for offering to us without charge their beautiful facility, delicious food and hospitality that made our symposium possible and a success.

4 The Symposium Steering Committee included: Michael K. Brown, Flint Area Reinvestment Office; David Hollister, President and CEO, Prima Civitas Foundation; Dale Martin, City Manager, City of Davison; James Smiertka, General Counsel, Prima Civitas Foundation; David A. Skiven, Co-Director ESD Institute; Mark Skidmore, Professor, Michigan State University; Kurt Soper, Davison Township Supervisor; and Christopher J. Webb, Co-director ESD Institute.

5 Appendix C lists our facilitators and biographical information.

ABOUT THE ENGINEERING SOCIETY OF DETROIT

The Engineering Society of Detroit (ESD) was founded in 1895. Its membership consists of over 6,700 individuals and over 3,000 corporate members. With its 79 affiliated technical societies and 34 construction organizations, ESD's reach extends to over 60,000 technical and scientific professionals. ESD's Board of Directors includes an impressive cadre of leaders in business, government, manufacturing, engineering and design, academia and health care.⁶



ESD collaborates with nearly 100 nonprofit organizations and municipalities, including: Automation Alley, Detroit Regional Chamber, Detroit Renaissance, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, NextEnergy, Oakland County, Oakland County Michigan Works!, Society of Automotive Engineers, City of Southfield, and Wayne County. ESD provides professional training, certification and accreditation programs in conjunction with the majority of Michigan's universities and community colleges.⁷

ABOUT THE ESD INSTITUTE

The ESD Institute was formed through unanimous approval of the Board of Directors of The Engineering Society of Detroit through "Mega-Question" facilitation in December 2008 and benefits from seed and continuing funding from the Rackham Engineering Foundation.⁸ The ESD Board of Directors established the charter of the Institute as follows:



- **ESD Institute Vision:** Finding a sustainable tomorrow with integrity that serves our members and society.
- **ESD Institute Mission:** Fostering greater unity, focus and choice for the implementation of innovation, maintenance and attraction of investment capital and the betterment of society.

The charge of the Institute is to advance, through excellence and collaboration, the successful implementation of innovation by bridging creative and independent thought with concrete and meaningful action.

ABOUT THE SYMPOSIUM PROCESS AND OUTCOMES⁹

As a matter of process, the ESD Institute identifies a topic for consideration, called an *initiative*. Individuals are invited to serve as volunteers to examine a selected initiative

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6 Appendix D is a complete listing of The Engineering Society of Detroit and ESD Institute Board of Directors.
7 Additional information regarding The Engineering Society of Detroit is available at www.esd.org.
8 Additional information regarding The ESD Institute is available at www.esdinstitute.net. The Institute is served by volunteer co-directors, David A. Skiven, P.E., FESD, and Christopher J. Webb, J.D., FESD.
9 More about our process is available at the Institute's website at www.esdinstitute.net.

in the context of a workgroup, referred to as a *symposium*. Typically, symposium attendees represent a diverse and often conflicting range of stakeholders with various affiliations, expertise and perspectives—from university professors and subject matter experts to local residents and interested citizens. Attendance at a specific symposium is limited by invitation.

Attendees are asked to take off their official or organizational hats and serve as interested and concerned individuals and not as spokespersons or representatives of a special-interest groups or organizations. Symposium participants are encouraged to be open-minded and to use their good judgment, experience and expertise in a productive, positive manner. Attendees are also expected to disclose any potential for bias or conflict of interest that might prejudice the work of the Institute.

A symposium typically occurs over a two-day period and may be continued for further deliberation if warranted by the Institute. An internal Institute committee frames the symposium's initiative; this committee is comprised of Institute directors and assigned staff, a select group of ESD Board members and, as the symposium venue warrants, representatives from specific local or outside organizations. The Institute also facilitates the work of the symposium and acts as the meeting reporter.

Based on the process model of the National Academy of Science in Washington, D.C., the Institute's goal is to establish and safeguard a productive problem-solving environment that encourages creativity and open dialogue in workgroups that are tasked to achieve new solutions that can be implemented by policymakers. The Institute's overall focus is to find socio-economic unifiers and enablers to propel Michigan's economic and employment turnaround.

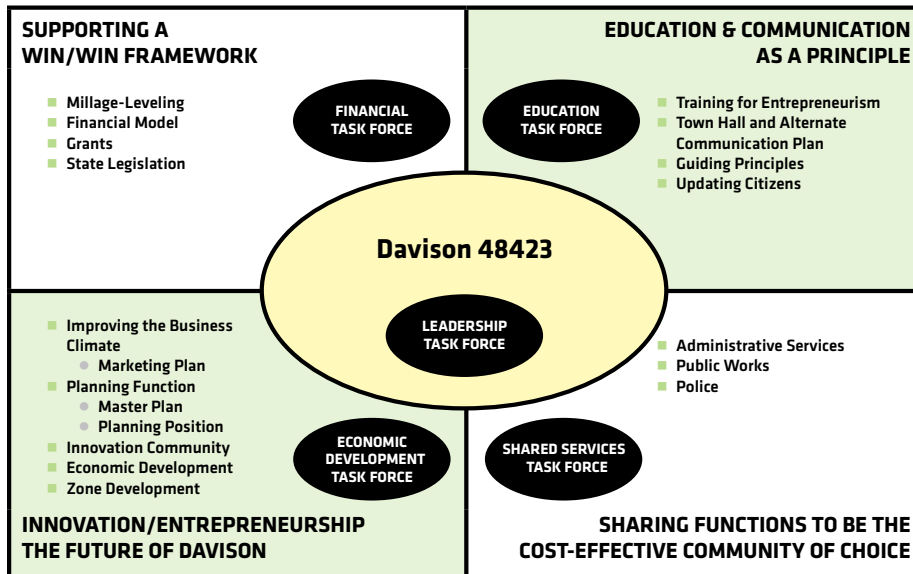
A symposium focus often takes the form of a timeline-based approach, what we at the Institute call, *Now, New and Next*. The *Now* consists of the problem and solutions presently available or within the short-term. The *New* looks at a two- to three-year time span and often flushes out and accomplishes the hard work of implementation started in the *Now* phase. Finally, the *Next* is the realization of the vision developed during the symposium. By using this timeline-based approach, seemingly impossible challenges are broken down and solved while at the same time an atmosphere of trust is built that is the "engine" of accomplishment and successful implementation of the symposium goals.

While attendees make every attempt to strive for consensus regarding a report, this is not a requirement, nor should attaining consensus be achieved at the cost of weakening the analysis or conclusions reached during the symposium. Accordingly, it may be more valuable to the symposium's purpose to explain the rationale behind workshop disagreements rather than to issue unanimous conclusions that are so limiting in scope that they fail to contribute to a better understanding of the initiative.

It is important to note that the role of the Institute is to maintain the independence, objectivity and integrity of the process and not to advance a specific outcome or result. Symposium reports are a collaborative and collective effort that represents the end product of all participating attendees. In a few words: attendees are the true "owners" of their symposium work product. For us at the Institute, it is a privilege to serve as a means for their collective and innovative work and to work with our co-conveners. The resulting synergies of our work together will hopefully be repeated and enhanced over time for other communities with public policy issues in an effort to assist in Michigan's economic turnaround.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Often a picture can be a useful tool in describing the breadth and width of an interactive undertaking such as a symposium.¹⁰ Below is a diagram capturing key outcomes from the work of our symposium:



If one message came through loud and clear after the conclusion of our symposium, it was simply and starkly the need and importance of the process, once begun, to continue to go forward in the face of the realities of global competition, demographic decline, drain of investment and critical need for tax base stability within communities. As conveners, we have set forth in this Executive Summary the symposium’s five key findings that should be pursued.

GOALS OF THE DAVISON SYMPOSIUM: RE-ENVISIONING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER— Conveners’ Recommendations

Recommendation #1—Form “48423 Davison as a Destination” Leadership Task Force

To promote the City of Davison and Davison Township as a community of the future, the conveners of the symposium recommend that a leadership task force be formed to address pending issues and develop a strategic direction for “48423”—a combined Davison community. The task force would provide the leadership for four primary efforts, including evaluating initiatives to result in a win-win scenario for both the City of Davison and Davison Township. The four primary areas of efforts are described in detail in the conveners’ recommendations and are as follows:

¹⁰ Few people have ESD Co-Director David A. Skiven’s talent for turning thoughts and words into pictures. The diagram that follows was drawn out freehand by Mr. Skiven during our symposium and finalized for this report.

1. Supporting a win-win financial framework
2. Innovation and entrepreneurship are the future of the Davison Community
3. Sharing functions to become the cost-effective community of choice
4. Education and communication as principles of the Davison Community

In each area of effort, it will be essential that representatives be identified who will be dedicated to the initiatives and willing to lead during uncertain and difficult times.

Recommendation #2—Supporting a win-win financial framework

The symposium identified a critical obstacle to a successful win-win scenario for the City of Davison and Davison Township: the difference in millage between the two communities. The conveners recommend that a professional task force be formed from representatives of both communities and state and support organizations to evaluate, develop and recommend a course of action for at least the following items:

- Identify a time-based plan to level millage between the city and township
- Identify and develop state legislation required to implement recommendations
- Develop a financial model that communicates the direction
- Identify and pursue federal, state and nonprofit grants that could be used to enable necessary changes
- Identify and pursue federal and state tax credits that could be applied to the identified effort areas

Recommendation #3—Innovation and entrepreneurship are the future of the Davison Community

The conveners recommend that a task force of representatives of the City of Davison and Davison Township be formed to improve the business climate within the community and to devise a marketing plan focused on innovation and entrepreneurship—more popularly known as the “new economy.” It will be critical for the communities to develop a combined planning function staffed with professionals who will create a business-growth master plan. Additionally, the task force will work in conjunction with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to identify opportunities for state support and potential economic zone development. The overriding priority of the task force should be the creation of the innovation community for Michigan.

Recommendation #4—Sharing functions to be the cost-effective community of choice

The financial stress that the State of Michigan and all communities within the state are facing makes it apparent that a strategic direction based on the foundation of the past is a blueprint for failure. The conveners concluded that a critical element in developing the plan for the future of the City of Davison and Davison Township is to combine duplicate services to improve overall effectiveness and cost efficiency. To address this opportunity, the conveners recommend the formation of a joint task force that would evaluate and recommend opportunities for sharing services in the following areas:

- Administrative services
- Police
- Public Works

Representatives of the task force should include individuals qualified in the function or service and be positioned within the community to speak knowledgeably regarding the function.

Recommendation #5—Education and communication as principles of the Davison Community

Davison and Davison Township have a long and successful history as a joint community working to develop a state-of-the-art education program. This collaboration resulted in the community having the third-highest-ranked educational system in the state. The conveners believe the community of Davison is in the unique position to build off this success and become a state leader in two critical areas—continuing education and communication. It is recommended that a task force be formed to develop and implement a plan that would at least:

- Develop and implement training and education programs in the areas of innovation and entrepreneurship for residents
- Develop an aggressive communication plan to keep the residents of the community informed of the efforts of all the task forces

OPENING PRESENTATIONS

WELCOME: “NOTHING PRE-DETERMINED” by Jim Smiertka, General Counsel, Prima Civitas Foundation

On June 9, 2010, Jim Smiertka, General Counsel for the Prima Civitas Foundation, opened the *Re-envisioning Our Future Together: Building Davison 48423* symposium in a community meeting room in Davison’s St. John the Evangelist Parish Family Center. Smiertka welcomed all attendees to a serious two-day commitment of creative, out-of-the-box thinking and acknowledged the symposium conveners: The Engineering Society of Detroit Institute (ESDI), Prima Civitas Foundation (PCF),¹¹ Michigan State University Land Policy Institute¹² and Michigan State University Extension—State & Government Program.¹³

After extending his personal greetings to everyone, Smiertka explained to the many attendees, “First, I want you to clearly understand one thing: Nothing is pre-determined here.” He asked that in addition to speaking their minds and saying what they believe, everyone should remember, above all, to be respectful of one another throughout their symposium participation. Mr. Smiertka explained that there were two results hoped for out of this symposium:

- **A vision for the Davison community**
- **A process model for other communities**

Importantly, it was noted that many people, from Michigan State legislators to local and community leaders and government organizers around the state and nation, were carefully watching the progress of this symposium because of the intended purpose of those assembled.

NEXT STEPS: AN OVERVIEW OF RE-ENVISIONING INITIATIVE PROCESS by Former Flint Mayor Michael K. Brown

ESDI Co-Director Christopher Webb introduced former Flint Mayor Michael K. Brown of the Flint Area Reinvestment Office, who greeted everyone present and noted that, “People around the state are really watching our symposium today.” Mr. Brown talked about the harsh economic challenges facing state and local government, the unprecedented loss of jobs in Michigan and the brain drain that everyone talks about as the state continues to lose its young college graduates and professionals. “But despite tough economic times,” said Mr. Brown, “we still have to provide services to our residents.”

11 Information regarding the Prima Civitas Foundation (PCF) and its work may be found at www.primacivitas.org

12 Learn more about Michigan State University Land Policy Institute at www.landpolicy.msu.edu

13 For more information on MSU Extension’s State and Local Government, please visit www.msue.msu.edu/slg

To continue to provide local services, to address the great loss of jobs and tough economy and to stop the brain drain from our communities, Mr. Brown said there are two things needed:

- **Local people must develop local solutions.**
- **We can learn from each other here today and, hopefully, share what we learn with other communities around the state who are also desperately seeking new solutions.**

After Mr. Brown's remarks, the conveners stressed to the attendees that the exercise in Davison "is not a top-down process. Understand that there are no experts here who will try to tell you what to do. It is you, each and every one of you, who must do the critical thinking here today and tomorrow. Engage each other. Meet other people. Learn from each other—that is our job today—and to build consensus for action."

Mr. Webb then outlined ESDI's purpose. "The ESDI mission reflects the reality that the era of silos is gone," he said. "We've gone from 'finding fault' to 'problem-solving' due to our hard times." Mr. Webb then listed the past three ESDI symposia to give attendees a basic understanding of the Institute's initiative in Michigan:

- Green Zone Initiative Symposium
- Clean Water Symposium
- Clean Energy Symposium

ESDI's other Co-Director, David Skiven, summed up: "Understand that while we can't do it all now and all at once in these two days in Davison, the process of this symposium has begun with each of you and will progress in stages: *Now, New, Next.*"

Mr. Webb then put key questions to the participants for their reflection: "How can local governments work together on a cost-effective basis? How can we grow Michigan? How can we keep our brain power and conserve our resources?"

Mr. Smiertka followed by mentioning the various organizations supporting the Davison Symposium (like the Community Foundation of Greater Flint) and challenged attendees to: "Think beyond what the law allows." He invited Professor Mark Skidmore of MSU up to the podium, explaining that Mr. Skidmore was an expert in coordinating state and local affairs and an expert in finance. As Mr. Skidmore reaffirmed to all attendees: "You know the challenges of your community. You'll be the ones who produce whatever comes out of the workgroups."

SPEAKER AND PRESENTATION SYNOPSIS by David Hollister, President and CEO, Prima Civitas Foundation

David Hollister was introduced as a member of the Davison Symposium Steering Committee, the President and CEO of Prima Civitas Foundation, and also the former Mayor of Lansing, who was instrumental in bringing two General Motors Plants to the region. A recognized leader in inter-governmental cooperation and member of the State House Appropriations Committee, Mr. Hollister welcomed all attendees as present-day urban pioneers.

Speakers for the first session of the symposium were introduced by Mr. Hollister, who also graciously summarized the six speakers' topics for the audience:

1. **Charles Ballard**, Professor at Michigan State University, will put things in perspective with an explanation of Michigan's current economic situation.
2. **Mark Skidmore**, Professor at Michigan State University, is an expert in local government and will help us understand how the state economy functions.
3. **Soji Adelaja**, Director, Land Policy Institute, MSU, will help us envision how Michigan communities can position themselves to participate successfully in the new economy.
4. **Derek Bradshaw** from the Genesee County Planning Commission will lay out the facts we need to understand the City of Davison and Davison Township.
5. **Armen Hratchian**, Senior Consultant and Public Sector Consultant to Prima Civitas Foundation, will outline the functions of local government and explain services that are at present jointly provided to the city and township (fire, park and senior services).
6. **Kurt Soper**, Davison Township Supervisor, and **Dale Martin**, City Manager for the City of Davison, will share with us the history of cooperation and sharing between the city and township."

"I want everyone to understand that all the symposium steering committee members, including university contributors, ESD Institute and PCF staff," stressed Mr. Hollister, "are here today just as facilitators to take *your* recommendations to the Davison City and Township. In these tough economic times, we have all witnessed the bubbling up of concern as the common thread running throughout Michigan communities. You are here today to turn this concern into positive action; you are here today to get this process started." Before the speakers began their presentations, Mr. Hollister reminded attendees that, "A lot of important folks, for good reason, are watching what transpires here today."¹⁴

"MICHIGAN'S ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION" by Charles Ballard, Professor, Michigan State University

Highlights (see Appendix E for complete presentation):

- Genesee County, Davison Township and the City of Davison are all part of the broader state economic situation.
- Dollars originating in Michigan have decreased from 47% of our state economy to 16%, a steeper decline than the nation's decline in overall manufacturing.
- We in Michigan have lost 2/3 of auto industry jobs.
- Michigan, historically, is relatively affluent, and incomes have grown until recently (2003).
- Incomes have stagnated for the bottom half of Michigan Income Distribution; this has been true for the past 35 years.
- Once you get above median income, incomes have grown; there have been large increases in the incomes of those at the top, like company CEOs.

¹⁴ This portion of the symposium is geared toward setting the stage for attendees by providing pertinent background information. Speakers are solely responsible for the views and opinions expressed in their presentations. The content does not necessarily reflect the views of The Engineering Society of Detroit, the ESD Institute, or the conveners.

- Genesee County has nowhere near the income level of Oakland County; there's a big disparity.
- From the 1950s to 1970s, Michigan did better than the U.S. average in income per capita up until the early 1980s.
- Michigan slid a great deal in a short period of time; Michigan is 39th now and will be 49th soon.
- Massachusetts has done well, with the most highly educated population in the U.S.
- Increase in premium for a college education has grown.
- A high school education is not sufficient in current economy.
- Michigan's legislature has dropped its investment in higher education.
- Fifteen Michigan institutions for higher learning have all had budget cuts.
- Average earnings for men in U.S. as a whole shows higher income for advanced degree.
- Michigan is underinvested in education from preschool to Ph.D. level; it's the whole thing.
- School aid funding is down 15% and the **state's general fund is down 39% to 46%**.
- Revenue is down more than half in just the last 9 years for local communities; a big drop.
- State and local taxes are dramatically down, a long-term trend that is true across the U.S.; very dramatic decreases.
- None of the sources of revenue for the state (sales tax) has kept up with the economy.

"MICHIGAN'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT FISCAL CHALLENGES" by Mark Skidmore, Professor, Michigan State University

Highlights (see Appendix F for complete presentation):

- Michigan townships, villages, cities and school districts have many local units of government.
- School districts in cities and townships can overlap and taxes are paid to different levels of government.
- Townships were originally established for rural areas and cities were established for more urban areas.
- County governments have centralized administrative functions.
- The U.S. has 28 states with township governments.
- Davison Township is 36 square miles.
- 95% of Michigan's land lies within townships and almost half the state's population lives in townships.
- City government: formed for more densely populated communities; cities typically conduct the same business as townships and villages but on a larger scale.
- Over time, responsibilities over townships and cities have blurred.
- Rivalry can hamper the ability of local governments to provide services; increasingly, competition can hamper regional development strategies.
- In Michigan, cities are emptying out and we are left with excess infrastructure.
- **About 28% of the state's budget is allocated to local government, so when the state has an economic crisis, local communities suffer.**
- 22 municipalities in Michigan have an income tax.

- Property taxes are based on home market value; $SEV = (0.5)(\text{market value})$.
- Taxable home value = SEV and is set at time of purchase and is only allowed to grow at the rate of inflation; this means new homeowners pay much higher taxes than those who were long-time homeowners.
- A mill = \$1 per every \$1,000 of property value.
- Cities have higher taxes than townships.
- Five units of local government in Michigan are under receivership today.
- The cost of public services has increased by 16% between 2005 and 2009; local revenues have increased by 7% during the same period.
- 75% of municipalities have costs that exceed revenue growth, so they typically cut funding for parks and recreation and capital spending; public safety is usually spared.
- Michigan government structure was set long ago, but the economy has changed; local governments have to change.
- We are all in this together.
- Economic circumstances force all of us to rethink our systems of government.

“INTER-JURISDICTIONAL COOPERATION AND PROSPERITY: KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS” by Soji Adelaja, Director, Michigan State University Land Policy Institute

Highlights (see Appendix G for complete presentation):

- The world has changed. Michigan has *really* changed.
- **Michigan’s economy is the worst in the nation** (except for Puerto Rico) and is falling more rapidly than any other state.
- Michigan metro areas are at the bottom of the rankings (Milken Institute rates Michigan cities at the very bottom).
- We had 60 years of national prosperity.
- The trend now is outside manufacturing; that is, manufacturing may not be the basis of our future economy.¹⁵
- You need to attract the right economic conditions to your area.
- Clash exists between old economy and new economy.
- Other states (MA) have reconstructed their economy with knowledge, innovation and education initiatives started 20 years ago.
- Michigan’s industrial legacy means that we haven’t embraced education: auto workers could earn \$60 to \$70K without a college education; this became a way of thinking.
- We need to understand the differences in Michigan: places were defined by what they produced and what skilled workers and machines produced.
- People who worked with their hands were middle-class.
- Our model worked well for Michigan; we were a successful, innovative place.
- This economy has come to an end in Michigan.
- In the 1990s, communication and IT have changed; we now require workers who work with their heads, not their hands.

¹⁵ For other views regarding this subject, see <http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/article/20100721/NEWS03/307210020/Report-says-Michigan-manufacturing-transforming>

- In the past, we expected growth to come and so we made master plans based on that assumption.
- Now, we can't even borrow in bad years.
- Infrastructure (entrepreneurs, IT workers) today goes way beyond what we were comfortable with in the past.
- Competition between local communities was normal in "the old economy model of governance;" regional strategies were not common before; civic community was separate from government.
- Now, the art of moving a place forward has changed; old leadership had to please the voters, but not necessarily to move us forward.
- The old mindset in the State of Michigan: keep taxes low.
- "The new economy model": global entrepreneurial- and knowledge-based economy is now the norm where business success comes increasingly from the ability to incorporate knowledge, technology, creativity and innovation into products and services.
- New people coming to town bring new values.
- Small companies started by innovators and entrepreneurs now provide MOST NEW JOBS.
- It is important to understand knowledge workers.
- Energy and infrastructure innovation are important to attract people to an area; we need beautiful places; think green, think global.
- It is truly a global economy today; China will be the largest economy by 2050.
- We need to look at international economies, not just those locally; **WE MUST THINK GLOBALLY.**
- In the rest of the world, the middle class (China) is growing 10% to 20%—that's where the goods and services are purchased and this "Next Economy" IS the role of government because we are now in competition with everyone around the globe.
- **THE RULES HAVE CHANGED;** old models of government are now obsolete and the new economy will move to places that are functional: places with leadership that understands a "knowledge economy," where education is extremely important and where government enhances and supports creativity and innovators.
- We must understand new partnerships, new assets and how the new world functions.
- **WHAT YOU DO HERE TODAY WILL DEFINE WHAT THIS COMMUNITY WILL LOOK LIKE IN 50 YEARS.**
- **What have successful places been able to do?**
 - Have a plan of what they could be, not what they were.
 - Think critically and are involved in new partnerships.
 - Cooperate regionally because the new economy doesn't happen at the local level.
 - Do not duplicate functions.
 - Have great quality of life.
 - Promote diversity and innovation.
 - Leverage infrastructure and placement.
 - Are green: parks, trails, nature—all key aspects of prosperity.
 - Invest in critical regional infrastructure.
 - Have an effective framework for decision-making.
 - Promote entrepreneurship, quality of place, quality youth and strategic alliances.
 - Understand their assets and the ones that are relevant today; assets aren't the same as they were in the past.

- As an example: Greater Lansing Next: education, knowledge; you need to go beyond doing the same things and do things together but regionally.
 - **New economy assets are different**
 - **Placemaking a “place persona” is very important**
 - **The rest of the state is looking at what Davison is doing, at what is happening today**
 - **Placemaking, strategic growth plan, green infrastructure, connectedness, builds a strong brand and a strong image**

“A CHANGING LANDSCAPE” by Derek Bradshaw, Genesee County Planning Commission

Highlights (see Appendix H for complete presentation):

- Davison Township has a younger population with bigger homes (relative to the City of Davison).
- Township went from a population of 5,000 in 1960 to 14,000 in 1980.
- Half of land has been developed in the Township—a big change.
- Davison is considered a good place to live.
- Young families choose a place to live by the quality of the schools.
- Davison has an excellent school district and is considered a good “location.”
- We know we’re heading towards an iceberg, and we know that we’re going to hit it. We need to minimize the damage.
- Property values have dropped for everyone.
- Genesee County lost 100,000 auto jobs; now at 5,000 auto-related jobs.
- 40% of people (200,000 in region) choose not to live in Genesee County, opting instead to live in Rockport, Lapeer or Northern Oakland Counties.
- Business expectations: we have to be ready for them.
- Davison has a strong sense of community.
- People say, “I’m from Davison,” not “I’m from Davison City” or “Davison Township.”

“DAVISON’S GOVERNMENT: SERVICES AND FINANCES OF THE COMMUNITY” by Armen Hratchian, Senior Consultant, Public Sector Consultants, On Special Assignment to Prima Civitas Foundation

Highlights (see Appendix I for complete presentation):

- Government services include: police, fire, judicial, zoning, garbage, parks, etc.
- **40% of your tax dollars go to police** to keep a place safe.
- 8% goes to garbage pick-up.
- How does Davison (city and township) pay for services?
- Half is local monies (the rest is state and federal resources).
- Taxable value in city is less than township, about 1 to 5.
- 2,000 parcels in city; 7,000 in township.
- Lansing has to mow lawns now on foreclosed properties: unanticipated expense.

The big question: How do you effectively and economically continue services?

- City of Davison has 7 police officers; Davison Township has 15.
- What are the tradeoffs of consolidation?
- Most of city and township budgets go for salary and benefits.
- Existing collaboration (between city and township): Davison Area Library, fire department, emergency services, senior service and parks and recreation.
- Should certain services be fee-based? Should people who have more garbage have to pay more than someone who has less garbage? Will I be willing to pave my road?
- How do we preserve the best attributes of the city and the township?

“HISTORY OF COMMUNITIES SHARING” by Kurt Soper, Davison Township Supervisor and Dale Martin, City Manager, City of Davison

Highlights:

Kurt Soper:

- There is a history of cooperation in Davison community: fire, senior, parks and recreation are already shared services.
- Walgreens sits in both municipalities; it was a challenge, but the city and township met it.
- Police departments do some things together: TEAM, police mutual aid, simulation training, accident reconstruction team; already collaboration.
- Recreation master plan covers both townships (Richfield and Davison).
- City and school boards cooperate, which is unusual.
- We collaborate on special events, regional surveys, updating recreation master plan.
- We need to work on “An Idea of Place” and include the Historical Society, The Veterans’ Court of Honor, M15 Scenic Byway Grant and Black Creek Trail Connection (which will connect city and township).
- Historical agreement: special assessment for paving and snow removal; city does this even though areas are outside city boundaries.

Dale Martin:

- Welcome to Davison!
- Today is an exceptional gathering of talent and experience in one room; we have the Michigan Municipal League, the Office of the Governor, township and city officials.
- We’re being carefully watched as a potential prototype for other Michigan communities.
- We can be leaders.
- Don’t be timid.
- Be bold!
- Be Davison!

PLENARY SESSION (DAY 1)

To start the creative brainstorming stage of the symposium, attendees were asked to identify solutions and how to get there, keeping in mind the timeframe of “Now, New and Next.” Davison community “pioneers” were challenged to find out: “What is the glue of the NEW Davison community?” As with past symposia, this brainstorming is a critical first step in the process. If the attendees inordinately considered barriers or limitations, their ideas would likewise be restricted. To encourage and foster the open-minded symposium process, attendees were encouraged not to hold back based upon real or perceived obstacles; no idea would be viewed as impossible at this early stage.

Facilitators organized and recorded all comments into workgroup categories (Government Structure, Education, Economic Development and Service Delivery) and wrote down attendees’ comments or questions on large sheets of paper that were posted on the walls around the room. This dynamic interaction set the parameters of the work to come and without it new and exciting ideas might never surface. It also serves as a means of team building and later as a guide as the attendees self-selected into the identified workgroups that would later be formed to accomplish the reality assessment of the ideas generated during brainstorming.

BRAINSTORMING SESSION IDEAS, PLENARY SESSION (DAY 1)

Brainstorming Questions & Opinions From Attendees

1. Why is city millage higher than township? **Government Structure*¹⁶
2. Regional Government:
 - a. How to create?
 - b. What is regional government?
 - c. How do we take what’s outside our boundaries and make it part of our communities (schools)?
 - d. How do we leverage regional assets?
3. How do we define the region?
4. How do we efficiently eliminate duplication of services? **Service Delivery*
5. Township wants city water, but not its mills, so do we need water authority? **Structure*
6. How can city, township, district do more to improve school district and have more collaboration? **Education*
7. How do we stimulate more jobs and entrepreneurship? How do we leverage jobs? **Economic Development*
8. How do we develop entrepreneurship in young people. **Education*
9. Need to integrate school learning with business needs—put students in business settings. **Education*

16 This reference is used in this section of the report to identify the idea with a specific symposium workgroup such as Government Structure, Economic Development, Education and Services. Ultimately after attendee self-selection, the Economic Development and Education workgroups were merged. Due to the intensity of the brainstorming session, not all workgroup assignments were captured in this report.

10. Youth involvement in all areas
11. Emerging sectors—identify where they are and target emerging sectors of new business
12. Charter schools—Education and year-round schools **Education*
13. Better cooperation between Davison and state government and more state monies for Davison. **Economic Development*
14. Attract and RETAIN existing businesses. **Economic Development*
15. What is the new economy and its practices? **Economic Development*
16. Collaboration for proper zoning to attract businesses. **Economic, Services, and Structure*
17. Kalamazoo Promise (college funding) for Davison. **Education*
18. What does it take to compete? adult training? **Global business education*
19. Reduce tax dollars, leaving the community to state and county government—keep more control of local tax dollars. **Government Structure*
20. How to finance government in the future?—Different tax structures?—understanding government and its costs.
21. Make sure Internet technology is in place. **Technology Infrastructure*
22. Introduce early college into high school in collaboration with colleges.
23. Leveraging school and government assets.
24. How do we merge/combine the city and township into one regional governmental body? **Government Structure*
25. Anticipation that we will be successful in the future. How to keep costs down for services if we bring in new business—controlling future service costs—streamlining—requirements for new businesses to help coordinate infrastructure with growth.
26. Sidewalks to suburbs: Connect community.
27. Encourage low-cost housing for young families and less multi-family (trailer parks). **Economic Development*
28. Bring in new businesses: How to coordinate or match that with a “small county” feel and not lose our identity? Not lose the best of Davison with growth.
29. Regional government and affecting state legislation: Layers of government in Michigan; Oakland County has 40 cities, for example. City, township responsibilities—understanding government layers; second, what is the legislation required to modify government layers?—This may help resolve regional cooperative efforts; thirdly: talk about potential changes to the Headlee Amendment, Proposal A—unfair treatment in the law.
30. Recognize that agriculture is still the #2 enterprise in the state and that Davison has strong agricultural presence; get county ditches cleaned up; width of roads for machinery; stop growth of water and sewer into agricultural areas—causes urban sprawl and keeps our services more local. Need to preserve the country feel we have now. Complement urban growth with development; urban growth boundaries.
31. Strictly tie salary increases to cost of living index. **Government Structure, Service Delivery.*
32. Use existing teachers and schools in the evening for adult education and retraining.
33. Soji Adelaja’s comments: how do we educate the community on the points Soji made; if people in community don’t understand, we’re stuck.
34. Change public mindset, awareness of new economy, global economy.
35. Use social media tools to reach the public on new ways of thinking. **Services, Government Structure.*

36. Look at alternate revenue sources other than taxes. **Government Structure*
37. Growth boundaries and tax disparities—linking public service boundaries with taxation. **Government Structure, Service Delivery.*
38. Paper: rethink electronic government, paperless government, can do government permits on line; automated local government delivery and one-stop shopping for local businesses.
39. Think about psychology of it; Ann Arbor cannot keep its image if it's known as "Ann Arbor—Chelsea—Livingston." How do you stay unique while expanding services to get economies of scale? How do you create the community image to attract knowledge workers? Branding & marketing of Davison. Destination for knowledge workers.
40. Alternative energy sectors, employers, new companies.
41. Education and youth development programs and activities.
42. How to protect existing businesses as new developments come in; attracting business without hurting established businesses.
43. How do we "Be Green" in everything we do?
44. Promote community ownership by promoting community service and maybe give a tax deduction; get people more invested in community; volunteer service.
45. Tourism destination like Frankenmuth.
46. Have government lead the way by restructuring wages, health services, retirement to be accountable; costs of government and legacy costs of government.
47. Changing government redundancy, less administrative hierarchy, take the electoral process into consideration. How do you choose government leaders (qualifications)?
48. Transportation options within the community: bike paths, buses, trolleys, mass transportation options.
49. Legislative changes on incentive side to remove barriers to innovation and service collaboration—labor contracts; change legislative barriers; state needs to provide incentives to local communities who want to collaborate.
50. Minimizing the stigma of being so close to Flint by maximizing art/cultural amenities of Flint to help Davison; dealing with the "Flint Effect"; pull what's good about Flint—maximize assets.
51. In Davison, we have a rather large problem with utilities. Consumers Power bought a right-of-way for a power line that never happened. This land should come back into private hands. Eminent domain reversal and utility problems.
52. What does the end result look like (to keep young college graduates here) down the road? And then have that picture and see what we need to do now to get there.
53. What is uniqueness of Davison to region? What is public image of Davison? And how does it fit within bigger picture? **Branding, Economic Development*
54. Subsidies and loans available for larger firms, but most of the growth in jobs is in smaller businesses that have trouble obtaining financing. How can Davison help small business?—Re: credit?
55. Modification in the financial requirements in state/local financing ability for local governments?
56. Small business incubation centers and micro-loan programs; agricultural incubators.
57. Three elections this year in Davison, another in November; try to reduce elections to reduce costs.
58. Is territorial-based government a "dinosaur?"
59. MEDC should be more involved in Davison's economic development.

60. Involve Michigan SHDA in work—alternative housing for young people. Housing options. It does good job for low-income residents, but not for owner-occupied, redoing a loft, for example.
61. A new Davison might set example for how local governments work with state government.
62. Election days should be on weekends, not working days.
63. Why don't we just combine the city and township governments into one? Why pay for two when we might only need one governmental unit?
64. Movement in Genesee County for home rule; maybe now we are more equal to Flint and we should look at a single, county-wide government. **Government Structure.*

While attendees voiced their input, facilitators wrote down contributor comments on the large sheets of paper that were taped up on the walls around the room. This was a very intense, high energy and exciting process that engaged everyone in the room. This spontaneous, fun and creative public input was a wonderful opportunity to experience the best of citizen participation and democracy at work for a productive purpose. Such is the creative talent that is fostered by our symposium process. Once you have participated in a symposium, you'll forever be bored at a typical "event."

PRIORITIZING IDEAS AND ORGANIZING WORKSHOPS

After the facilitators finished writing all the attendee input onto the sheets, 10 green adhesive-backed dots were handed out to each person in the room. Attendees were told that they would use their green dots as votes to identify which items or ideas they felt had the highest priority or importance. Again, everyone present exercised their power to help determine the kind of workshops they wanted for the Davison Symposium. It only took a few minutes before it was apparent that certain topics or comments were more "popular" than others. People were genuinely surprised (either pleased or otherwise) at seeing the prioritization evolve through organized public participation. One recorded comment, in particular, garnered a swarm of green dots (attendee comment #24, "How do we merge/combine the city and township into one regional governmental body?").

FOUR WORKGROUPS BECOME THREE (DRIVEN FROM THE BOTTOM UP)

The conveners thanked everyone for their enthusiastic participation in the prioritization process. With the help of facilitators, categories for the symposium workgroups were distilled based on the recorded attendee input and the green-dot weighing of preferred topics.

As determined by attendee consensus, four workgroup categories were announced:

1. **Government Structure**
2. **Service Delivery**
3. **Economic Development**
4. **Education**

The conveners then asked for a show of hands from the audience to determine how many people were interested in participating in a given workshop. It turned out that a rather large group wanted to be involved in Government Structure. For this reason, Webb divided the Government Structure Workgroup into two sections; this was done by asking those interested in Government Structure to call off as “1” or “2.” There were a smaller number of participants who elected to be involved in deliberations on Education and Economic Development, so those two workgroups were combined into one.

The four workgroups were assigned to individual meeting rooms within the two-story St. John Parish Family Center. The four workgroups were organized as follows:

- Government Structure Workgroup 1
- Government Structure Workgroup 2
- Education and Economic Development Workgroup
- Service Delivery Workgroup

Attendees then divided up and headed to their assigned rooms for the hard work ahead, including more brainstorming, argument with candor and enthusiasm and assessment. This process is captured in the complete workgroup reports found in Appendices J through M. We will, for purposes of this report, jump to Day 2 and our symposium’s second Plenary Session. At the conclusion of Day 2, the work of workshop groups (determined on Day 1) was reported (by respective symposium workgroup facilitators) to all attendees present.

PLENARY SESSION (DAY 2)

On the second day of the symposium, Jim Smiertka of the Prima Civitas Foundation welcomed everyone back to the work at hand. Mr. Smiertka reviewed the different workgroups and summarized how they were broken down on the previous day. The facilitators, two assigned to each workgroup, were welcomed to the front of the room and assigned as follows:

- Christy Hicks and Tom Schneider: Government Structure Workgroup 1
- Claire Layman and Garry Bulluck: Government Structure Workgroup 2
- Sue Butterwick and Barbara Johannessen: Combined Education and Economic Development Workshop
- Julie Pioch and Eric Hufnagel: Service Delivery Workgroup

Each workgroup’s facilitators presented the priority concepts defined in Day 1 meetings. In addition to naming the five priorities described in this report, facilitators also reported on opportunities or actions steps identified. After the facilitators’ summary presentations, Mr. Smiertka complimented the attendees for their hard work, creativity, civility and collaboration in their respective workshops and noted that it is important for all the citizens to know about what has been accomplished at this symposium.

Before the entire group broke into their individual workgroups, conveners followed up Mr. Smiertka’s comments by emphasizing that: “We’re urban pioneers

here today. You are writing the headlines for tomorrow's generations. Your challenge is: What is Davison? What is your 'glue'? Who are the enablers? What are the unifiers? What are the 'win/wins' for Davison? Consider these questions as your to-do list or your plan that you now need to implement."

The conveners asked symposium participants to keep in mind that: "You are working with the *Now*; you've been challenged to get at (discover) all the required facts needed to address your initiative. You've done that in your workgroups (on Day 1), and now you have to press on. So, on Day 2 you have to challenge your group to finish it. It's not easy. You're moving into the *New*; you're considering what it is you want Davison to be in five years." The conveners reminded everyone to keep a collective vision in their minds of "where you and everyone want to go; honing down, identifying *who* is responsible for your action items is a big part of your work today."

Using a RASI process described below, the group was entering into "probably the toughest work of the symposium. After the action items have been identified, workshop participants must address responsibilities that must be undertaken to move things forward. For example: *Who* is responsible for following up and making things happen? *Who* can get it done? *Who* is responsible for informing the public? Without the responsible person or group to get it done, all you have is a report."

ESDI Co-Director David Skiven joined the conveners at the podium to explain RASI in more detail relative to the workshop-identified action items:

- **R = who is Responsible?**
- **A = who has the Authority to approve or to provide the funding?**
- **S = what Support do you need to get it done?**
- **I = who needs to be informed?**

With inspiration from all of the conveners and facilitators and armed with the tools from the facilitators' synopses from each workgroup, everyone headed to their assigned rooms to continue the real work of the Davison Symposium. Participants were asked to return to the main room mid-afternoon on Day 2 for their final reports and distillation of ideas into action. A bit weary but understanding the importance of translating conflict into consensus, attendees rolled up their sleeves to accomplish the challenging work of the symposium for the benefit of generations to come. What follows is the work of volunteers who live and work in Davison; it represents their hard work and is a beacon of thought and action combined—a vision of what a great community can accomplish when it comes together purposefully and positively for the greater good. The following is a summary of the four Davison Symposium workgroup reports.

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE WORKGROUP 1: SYNOPSIS

Note: for complete and unedited Workgroup 1 Results, please see Appendix J

This synopsis represents the work of one of two groups that examined the Government Structure framework. The group agreed that, in order to effectively counter the looming challenges of the state and local economy and maintain each community's high quality of life, key questions needed to be explored.

The first of these questions was to determine if or how the communities of Davison and Davison Township might combine for mutual benefit. Group members saw an opportunity to envision a new way of governing while increasing quality of life for themselves and their children, and potentially overcoming the rising costs and limitations of separate entities. They also expressed their full awareness of the difficulty and challenges that could lie in the path of such a change. The exploration, analysis and communication of each idea, grounded in sound policy, creative thinking and absolute transparency, was the focus of this diverse and committed group.

The workgroup utilized a sticky-dot voting process to determine the five most important discussion topics to explore:

- **Combine city and township government (1)**
- **Consumer-friendly government (2)**
- **Enabling legislation to allow more government cooperation (3)**
- **Understand what layers of government do; reduce layers of government (4)**
- **Youth involvement and retention of young professionals (5)**
- Expansion of combined services
- Incentivize and reduce barriers for innovative government structure
- Do we want to be a great retirement-aged community?
- Do we want to lure knowledge-economy workers to Davison?

Following the assessment process, the group decided to focus on the one priority concept it felt was the most crucial to moving forward: ***combining city and township governments.***

Actions:

- Establish a win-win proposition for the township & city (re: taxes)
- Develop a plan to get feedback from local voters
- Find out what city & township citizens view as potential benefits/challenges of a new structure

The structural tax differences between the two communities were identified as the most significant barrier to successful creation of a combined municipality.

RASI Evaluation

RASI Evaluation for Workgroup 1 presented six action items with responsible parties for implementation under the following three general categories:

- **Category 1: Formalize Benefits/Incentives (Taxes and Financial)**
 - *Action Item 1:* Explore feasibility of tax credits and other state incentives: Kurt Soper/Dale Martin
 - *Action Item 2:* Build model to level millages: Kurt Soper/Dale Martin
- **Category 2: Explore the issues & Specifics of Different Models (Township/City/New Entity)**
 - *Action Item 3:* Conduct a SWOT Analysis (strengths and opportunities) of each model: Kurt Soper/Dale Martin

- **Category 3: Communicate and Engage Legislators, Local Residents, Media, Stakeholders and Resources**
 - *Action Item 4:* Press roll-out: Della Cassia, ESD
 - *Action Item 5:* Share Soji Adelaja’s data presentation via Town Hall Meeting, including a roll-out of the ESDI Report, volunteer sign-up opportunity and unveiling of Guiding Principles: Dale Martin
 - Monthly status updates or progress reports: Dale Martin

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE WORKGROUP 2: SYNOPSIS

Note: for complete and unedited Workgroup 2 Results, please see Appendix K.

After a difficult Day 1 of working to agree on priority items, participants took part in a “Making Headlines” activity on Day 2. They broke into small groups of two or three members and wrote a headline for local news stories five years in the future. Each group then rotated around the room, building on the headline written by the group in front of them. In this way they were imagining a positive future for Davison. The headlines and stories were based on the five areas they identified for consolidation.

Following this activity, some of the tension in the room dissipated, and participants were livelier, although they still wanted a more concrete plan. One participant suggested finally that they focus on the problem this way: **“How can we best service this 36-square-mile area with the money available?”** David Hollister encouraged the group to be visionary, and to forget the current barriers, as they had an opportunity to create a pilot for the rest of Michigan, an entirely new structure not based on city or township.

Ideas for funding this “Innovation Community” were put forth, including:

- A local income tax
- A state income tax credit
- Local sales tax
- Local gas tax
- Petition the legislature to increase state revenue sharing to absorb the cost of the new community, or to earmark revenue sharing for communities who adopt innovative communities
- Grants from the federal government, the Mott Foundation, other private sources
- Allow some government employees to work from home

Participants were excited about the idea of becoming the first “innovation community” and came with multiple ideas for how to achieve that.

RASI Evaluation

Workgroup 2 RASI Evaluation produced 15 action items with the responsible party being an Education Task Force comprised of four workgroup participants:

1. Index cards
2. Talking points
3. Series of articles in Davison index/flagstaff
4. School district cable channel
5. Facebook page of city

6. High school students
7. Newsletter
8. Tax bill note
9. Targeted public meetings—Kiwanis, churches, optimists, service clubs, chamber
10. Local government fair
11. Grocery stores—handouts in bags
12. Library
13. Senior center
14. A moderated chat room or interactive site
15. Barber shops and salons

An additional action item was to form a Leadership Steering Committee to create the model innovation community.

SERVICE DELIVERY WORKGROUP 3: SYNOPSIS

Note: for complete and unedited Workgroup 1 Results, please see Appendix L.

Briefly put, the Service Delivery Workshop participants decided to work on the top five issues as suggested by the ranking process. The discussion of these selected topics was framed by asking how these would look in “Happy Land.” The group tried to stay on track by not restricting but by projecting a view of the future and working to describe a vision.

Priority Issues for Discussion:

1. Elimination of duplication of services (City of Davison and Davison Township)
2. Increase incentives for small business development
3. Collaborative planning and zoning (City of Davison and Davison Township)
4. Services to accommodate the “new economy” (infrastructure)
5. Technology and communication infrastructure

As an example of how workgroup efforts evolved, priority issue #1 was addressed in the following process: **Eliminate duplication of services.**

A list all of the services that were provided by the two units of government (The City of Davison and Davison Township) was generated, including those that were already done collaboratively (not duplicated). It was decided that each one of the services would need deeper analysis and measurement to have a really meaningful discussion.

- Water
- Sewer
- Roads
- Police
- Fire, recreation, seniors—already provided in a combined effort
- Assessing (city has an assessor, township has an assessor)
- Planning and zoning
- Ordinance development and enforcement
- Sidewalks

- Solid waste (currently single contract with private hauler—different in each community)
- Cable (currently shared contract, single competitor)
- Administration services
- Facilities (maintenance)
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA—township, LDFA—city)
- Vehicle maintenance
- Transportation (supported with county millage)

The group prioritized two areas that could be accomplished first in terms of looking for opportunities to eliminate duplication: administrative services and police services.

SWOT Analysis

An example of the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis performed in this workgroup for police services is representative of how the other workgroups also addressed individual topics:

SWOT Analysis for Police Services:

- **Strengths**
 - Co-location of city/township police improves communication (facility savings potential)
 - Cost savings
 - Better coverage
 - Standardized reports
 - Shared equipment
 - One philosophy
 - Enhanced special projects/specialized units
 - For the same amount of money, combined units would provide services
 - Potential for setting higher standards
 - 24-hour coverage enhanced for total community
 - Opportunity for collaboration (management cut, single person in charge of one force)
- **Weaknesses**
 - Potential loss of jobs
 - Loss of facility options (especially in case of emergency)
 - Risk community expectations/service levels, change in philosophy
 - Cost to train
 - Physical size of coverage area will increase
- **Opportunities**
 - Attrition (retirement)
 - Economy—people will accept change
 - Crime is down
 - Timing is right to combine force
 - Savings down the road/equipment
 - Grant opportunities to facilitate the combination
 - Strong respect for current police force allows for rally point of community
 - Past sentiment agrees

■ Threats

- Union laws (collective bargaining arbitration)
- Loss of safety
- Fear of cost
- Lack of trust between two publics
- Officer resistance to merger

RASI Evaluation

Eighteen action items were identified by Workgroup 3, with items divided under:

1. Planning and Zoning
2. Police
3. Public Works
4. Administration

The number of action items identified by this workgroup is too large to present in this summary; to see the complete RASI Evaluation and responsible parties identified, please see Appendix L.

COMBINED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION WORKGROUP 4: SYNOPSIS

Note: for complete and unedited Workgroup 1 Results, please see Appendix M

The group began with a review of the concepts brainstormed and prioritized in the plenary segment. In summary, the topics that received the highest priority by the largest group of symposium participants were:

■ Education:

- Creating connections between business and youth to foster entrepreneurship
- Educating people about the new economy/global economy/emerging sectors
- Educating people on the structure of government and its costs

■ Economic Development:

- Building on Davison's uniqueness that fits into this region
- Creating an image or brand for Davison
- Creating a climate for entrepreneurialism and the Emerging Sector economy through micro-loans and small business incubation centers—including agriculture
- Attracting businesses that draw people to Davison for jobs
- Attracting businesses that draw people to Davison generally (retail, services, etc.)

This workgroup group was intrigued by the concept of “placemaking” introduced by a plenary presenter and spent some time identifying existing characteristics of Davison as a unique destination. The results of this discussion could not adequately be addressed in this summary but can be found in the full report appearing at Appendix M.

Based on the workgroup discussion and the plenary brainstorming and prioritizing, the group determined to narrow its focus into four general topic areas:

1. **Davison as a destination**
2. **Prepare Davison's students and adults for the emerging sector/entrepreneurial new economy**
3. **Foster a mutually beneficial business climate**
4. **Identify and pursue appropriate/complementary emerging sector business for business growth**

SWOT analysis was conducted for the four identified topics. Thirteen action items were identified in the RASI Evaluation and all items could not be adequately addressed in this summary; please see Appendix M for the complete data for this workgroup

CLOSING SYMPOSIUM REMARKS

“You have seen here the culmination of two days of hard work,” said the conveners after the symposium facilitators had presented their respective workshop’s cumulative efforts in the RASI reporting. “What can be this symposium’s ‘take away’ today in a 5- or 10-word sentence?” All conveners and facilitators believed that the attendees had captured the symposium challenge and taken it to another level.

Building Davison 48423 seemed to become a rallying cry for the entire group. And again, *Building Davison 48423* was indeed an appropriate tag line, or call to arms, for everyone who “soldiered on” in their purposeful hard work and difficult collaborative effort to meet the goals of the two-day Davison Symposium. *Building Davison 48423* garnered the loud verbal and enthusiastic support (with clapping and comments) of symposium attendees. The work now was to “look at what next steps will implement *Building Davison 48423* for the present generation of residents in Davison and beyond.”

ESDI Co-Director David Skiven explained to everyone that this was the sixth symposium he had worked on so far. “I am impressed with the thought process used in identifying roles and responsibilities,” said Mr. Skiven. “You understand what needs to be done now. Conveners can develop a framework now. This is a great piece of work! And now the real work of convincing your local elected officials to make this effort a reality is at hand.”

“I am very moved and impressed by what I’ve seen here. Many of your elected and appointed public officials have shown courage and vision by bringing this challenge to the table, not knowing how it would play out,” said Mr. Skiven. “I am impressed with the leadership they have shown. The groundwork has been laid for this community to be a model for the state and perhaps for the country. Think of the assets you have going forward! Davison has so many amenities—just these gorgeous rolling hills out there, for one—you’ve got a lot going for you and we’ve seen and shared together a lot of it in the last two days.” He concluded the Davison Symposium by saying, “I would like to thank Prima Civitas Foundation and Armand, MSU and Professor Skidmore, and the whole team for their participation and especially, each one of you, thank you for your vision.”