

Metropolitan Affairs Coalition (MAC) 2025 Work Program

MAC's work program is driven by its coalition of business, labor, government, and education leaders; this coalition is dedicated to equity and sustainability, creating economic opportunity, improving quality of life, and promoting regional cooperation in Southeast Michigan. The work program stresses dialogue and collaboration, consensus building, and practical actions to move Southeast Michigan forward. MAC seeks to impact policy and economic development issues and bring its unique perspective to important activities for the betterment of the region.

MAC's special affiliation with SEMCOG affords access to outstanding research, data, and technical expertise that provide a strong foundation for its work. There are four main areas of work.

1. Public Policy

Purpose

Develop and communicate MAC common-ground positions to leadership in Lansing and Washington, D.C., the media, and opinion leaders. Pursue opportunities to promote policies that respond to current economic and political challenges and regional and state priorities, inform the public, and encourage action.

Methodology

a. Federal and State Platform

MAC's 2025-2026 Federal and State Platform will incorporate policies from the Healthcare Task Force recommendations and identify priority policies for which MAC will pursue legislative/administrative action. The policies will build on MAC's core mission to promote equity, inclusion, and shared prosperity by focusing on public policy issues related to economic development, infrastructure, the environment, education, healthcare, and government operations. In addition, the platform will recognize policies related to SEMCOG projects including the Healthy Climate Plan, Justice 40 Communities Task Force and Vision 2050 – the Regional Transportation Plan.

MAC will implement the platform by proactively pursuing a few identified priority policies and promoting other policies through activities that may include: convening issue advisory teams; creating opinion papers; co-sponsoring "Pulse of the Region" citizen surveys; sponsoring issues forums; and utilizing media releases, guest commentaries, and letters to the editor to share consensus positions. MAC will publish information and activities related to this work in our online newsletter, on our website, and on our Facebook page.

2. Economic Development

Purpose

To enhance economic activity in the region, moving from recovery to opportunity and shared prosperity.

Methodology

- a. Engaging Southeast Michigan's Economic Development Council in the development of the 2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) while continuing to support implementation of the region's 2021 CEDS.

In 2023, SEMCOG was officially designated as the Economic Development District (EDD) for Southeast Michigan by the Economic Development Administration (EDA). EDD's are focused on driving a regional economic development planning process that engages the public, private, and non-profit sectors to establish a strategic blueprint. EDDs prepare and maintain a region's CEDS, assist with implementation and providing technical assistance to local governments and economic development organizations.

In 2024, SEMCOG established the Southeast Michigan Economic Development Council (EDC) as the governing body of the EDD. This includes representatives from MAC member organizations in business, labor and government. In addition, Kalil Rahal, Economic Development Director of DTE is one of two co-chairs. With the support of the EDC, SEMCOG held three forums on the three pillars of the CEDS – Talent, Business and Place. SEMCOG also held four county outreach meetings in the more rural parts of the region – Livingston, Monroe, St. Clair and Washtenaw.

In 2025, the EDC will begin developing policies and actions based on the findings of the forums, outreach meetings, conversations with key economic development stakeholders, and public surveys to further economic growth. The goal is to leverage regional economic and place-based assets and identify new opportunities in high growth sectors to increase economic and environmental resiliency, skilled workforce and shared prosperity.

- b. Education, Talent, and Workforce

MAC will continue to promote labor force participation by addressing challenges in accessing and succeeding in higher education and postsecondary training, particularly for underrepresented populations. Data shows improved earnings, job security, economic stability and lower unemployment rates for individuals with post-secondary education and training, yet enrollment is declining for many institutions. This is despite State efforts to enable recent high school graduates and adults to attend programs at no or very low cost in addition to supports to help them overcome barriers such as transportation, childcare, books and other costs associated with higher education.

In 2025, MAC will work with education, business/employer, labor and government members to establish enrollment trends among different populations, identify reasons for declining

enrollment and develop strategies and messages to promote the value of higher education and training.

3. Building One Community

Purpose

Promote efforts that encourage and strengthen leadership and cooperation to contribute to a stronger, more cohesive, and prosperous region.

Methodology

a. Shining Light Regional Cooperation Awards

MAC will collaborate with the Detroit Free Press on the annual *Shining Light Regional Cooperation Awards*. Key elements will include: a public nominating and selection committee process; seeking sponsors and opportunities with local media to promote the event and honorees; supporting student involvement; and using the program as a vehicle to encourage regional cooperation and highlight MAC and its mission.

b. Collaboration and Partnerships

MAC will continue to develop new and strengthen existing partnerships to help maximize the effectiveness and impact of policy, economic development and education priorities. These include civic organizations such as Detroit Regional Chamber, Citizens Research Council, Business Leaders for Michigan, Detroit Regional Partnership, Detroit Public Television, and SEMCOG.

4. MAC Administration

Purpose

Conduct management, development, planning, and communications activities in support of MAC's mission.

Methodology

- General administration (Board meetings and engagement, financial management, Audit and Nominating functions, Board committees)
- Fundraising and development activities (renew annual/seek new funding sources, prepare funding requests and applications, manage corporate and foundation grants and other revenue sources)
- Communications and website management (maintain MAC website, Facebook page, and contact management database in coordination with SEMCOG.) This year will include an update to the MAC and Shining Light websites, in conjunction with an update to SEMCOG's website.

10/29/2024