# Michigan Chamber Foundation Announces 'Great Ideas for Michigan' Project

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The Michigan Chamber Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, this week launched its "Great Ideas for Michigan" project (www.greatideasformichigan.org) to seek innovative ideas that reach beyond government responsibility and help improve Michigan's quality of life. The project is the newest program of a revitalized Michigan Chamber Foundation.

"Every Michigander has an opinion about what would make Michigan a better place to live, work and do business," said Kelly Rossman-McKinney, Chair of the Michigan Chamber Foundation Board of Directors. "Working families, business owners and community leaders know what Michigan needs and we want to hear from them."

Great Ideas for Michigan is a campaign to encourage innovative and creative ideas that will improve the quality of life for Michigan residents. Submissions will be made through the website and can be rated and discussed in an open online forum. The effort will focus on six categories to improve Michigan: Rebuilding communities and transportation; enjoying Michigan's vast resources; achieving a healthy Michigan; revitalizing Michigan's economy; improving educational attainment; and modernizing all levels of government.

"Michigan needs fresh ideas, bold ideas, creative ideas," said Rich Studley, President & CEO of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. "Everyday citizens from all walks of life are standing around water coolers or sitting at their kitchen tables talking about a good idea that would make their neighborhood, city or the state better."

"We are looking for creative, original thoughts at the neighborhood, regional or statewide level," said Bob Thomas, Michigan Chamber Director of Operations. "They might be innovative concepts that can be developed or concrete projects that can be applied in any community."

Betty McNerney, Michigan Chamber Senior Director of Communications, indicated a published report will be made available in the spring of 2010 highlighting 50 of the ideas as part of the Michigan Chamber's 50th anniversary celebration. "All the ideas will be catalogued on the website, but the top 50 ideas will be selected based on their viability, innovation, and potential for statewide or regional impact," she noted.

McNerney added that the final report will be widely distributed and available to all participants, the media, nonprofit and community leaders, elected officials and candidates that are running for public office. "We are seeking ideas that Michigan can run with," said McNerney.

Great Ideas for Michigan is the newest project of the Michigan Chamber Foundation, which also includes the Leadership Michigan and Future Forum programs and produces research studies and education programs on economic issues facing Michigan. The Michigan Chamber Foundation is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization affiliated with the Michigan Chamber of Commerce.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is celebrating its 50th year as a statewide business organization, now representing more than 7,000 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. The Michigan Chamber was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process. It is only one of four state chambers of commerce in the nation accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

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