

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was made possible with support from the Board of Directors of the Greater Bridgman Area Chamber of Commerce and Growth Alliance as well as staff from the Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber.

2022 Board of Directors

Brett Boyd, President	General Membership
Beth McNeil, Vice President	City of Bridgman
Shane Peters, Secretary	Lake Charter Township
Bob Clark, Treasurer	Lake Charter Township
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Kathy Ramso	Lake Charter Township
Marty Mason	City of Bridgman
Julie Strating	
Tara Heiser	General Membership
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Staff Support

Peg Stine	CGA Bookkeeper
Sarah Spoonholtz	SW MI Regional Chamber
Arthur Havlicek	SW MI Regional Chamber

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Bridgman Social District: The Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber, in partnership with the Bridgman Chamber and Growth Alliance and Bridgman Corridor Improvement Authority, successfully established a Social District in the heart of downtown Bridgman.

Social Districts are intended to support and bolster downtown hospitality establishments by allowing patrons of adjacent bars, distilleries, breweries, restaurants, tasting rooms, and similar food service establishments to purchase alcoholic beverages in specially marked open containers and consume them in the District's "Common Areas."



Discover Bridgman Visitor's Guide: The Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber, in partnership with the team at Far Ahead Advertising (MailMax), produced and published a Discover Bridgman Visitor's Guide highlighting tourism-centric businesses throughout the area.

A total of 7,500 copies have been printed for distribution, most of which are already in visitor centers, hotels, and other hospitality establishments throughout the area.

As the guide so aptly states, in Bridgman "you'll find plenty to keep you charmed all day, all weekend, and all year round."

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Buy Local Bridgman Gift Card: Launched during the height of the pandemic, the Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber and Bridgman CGA have continued to operate the *Buy Local Bridgman Gift Card*.

Unlike reloadable visa debit cards, these ensure the money spent stays completely local. It's also not store specific, which means it can be redeemed at a number of participating locations.

As of today, 173 gift cards have been purchased totaling over \$6,700. Of those, 123 have been redeemed for a total of \$4,539 at participating Bridgman merchants.

Goals Committee: A CGA Goals Committee was formed in an effort to foster greater collaboration between the City of Bridgman, Lake Township, the CGA, and the Regional Chamber. This committee has been tasked with identifying what the immediate and long-term needs are for our community and determining a solution to tackle them. Topics discussed include economic development, housing, hotel accommodations, and more.

Scholarships: The CGA awarded two \$500 scholarships to deserving students in 2021.

Events: The Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber & CGA held numerous in-person public and member-oriented events for the Bridgman community over the past year, including:

- Ribbon Cutting for United Federal Credit Union
- Ribbon Cutting for Lazy Ballerina's new Speakeasy Room;
- Ribbon Cutting for Weko Beach & Campground Restoration;
- Business After Hours at B&L Information Systems;
- CEO Council Meeting at the Weko Beach House;
- Pints & Politics at Haymarket Brewery; and
- Holiday Village in downtown Bridgman.

Holiday Village: 2021 saw the return of this hallmark channel-esque event, bringing hundreds of visitors to downtown Bridgman for family fun in December. Festivities included, yoga with Lake Side Fit, the annual pet parade with Paws to Wash, family friendly activities at participating downtown merchants, dozens of vendors inside the American Legion, a children's Christmas movie courtesy of the Bridgman Public Library, caroling with the Immanuel Lutheran Church Praise Team, a Christmas Tree Lighting with Miss Bridgman Royalty, and a community concert featuring Mark Ficks and the Significant Others at the Weko Beach House.

Makers Trail Festival: We are excited to announce the return of the Makers Trail Festival one June 11th at Weko Beach! Tickets are on-sale at Harding's in Bridgman and online for \$10 in advance, and \$20 at the gate.

Economic Impact Award: The Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber awarded Bridgman's very own B&L Information Systems with their 2021 Economic Impact Award. B&L doubled their office space (9,000 sq ft to 18,000) and their staff as well. While the expansion was delayed due to COVID, B&L forged ahead using local contractors in an effort to keep the money in our community.

Food Trucks: The City of Bridgman coordinated multiple food trucks downtown throughout the year, with marketing and promotional help from the Bridgman CGA and the Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber.

CGA Social Media: We increased our total number of CGA page likes from 1,439 to 1,562 in 2021.











