



# **WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MUSKEGON, MI**

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West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC) celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2020. Staff took this opportunity, and a desire to respond to the ongoing social unrest, to expand on its mission statement and develop an Equity Statement. The larger social movement caused staff to regroup and refocus on how they reach out to underserved communities and ensure that they are “doing all that we can do.” The Equity statement was driven by a desire to put into words the equity and inclusion work they were already doing, while ensuring that future work aligned with the statement. Considering that EDA funding is for distressed communities that have historically been underserved, it was an opportunity to interpret work that was already outlined in the Commission’s CEDS. Commission staff put the statement in their newsletter and in every annual report to ensure it remains a central focus. In addition to the Equity Statement, the Commission also expanded on their Mission Statement to address the Why, How and What behind WMSRDC’s work.

## WMSRDC Equity Statement

*The Commission defines equity as the intentional inclusion of everyone in society. Equity is achieved when systemic, institutional, and historical barriers based on race, gender, sexual orientation and other identities and abilities are dismantled and no longer predict socioeconomic, education, and health outcomes.*

*The Commission recognizes structural racism and other forms of oppression have contributed to persistent disparities which the Commission seeks to dismantle within our region. The Commission strives to engage community members, especially those whose voices have traditionally been marginalized. The Commission works with local governments, residents, and public and private partners to provide resources, support, and opportunities that create prosperous and thriving communities for all citizens.*

*The Commission also strives to provide a work environment that recognizes individual differences, is free from discrimination, and is respectful of the rights and dignity of all individuals. The Commission has built our reputation on the foundations of excellence and integrity, and we expect its employees to exhibit behaviors consistent with these standards.*

*Therefore, the Commission commits to leveraging its resources and assets to create more equitable communities through the programs it administers, as well as to develop racially conscious partnerships and processes that anticipate unintended outcomes to ensure the inclusion of all people in our region and our organization.*

