



The next big thing

A simple way to make every company & institution
in our region, more competitive immediately

Every business, including start-ups and academic institutions in the 47 cities and towns that comprise the South Bend/Elkhart and Southwest Michigan region, is in an intense competitive battle with every other region across the United States and around the world.

Yet, here we are, at the formative stage of a promising economic renaissance that will transform our way of life for decades to come. It's not by accident.

An historic moment

For the first time in history, leaders from across the region are ignoring artificial boundaries to work as a team and make our region stronger. The many business, infrastructure and quality of place projects underway right now are proof that the team approach is working.

To propel us faster

Now, there's something else we can do quickly and easily as a team to advance our regional economy. It's called Project Propel – a deceptively simple statement of policy change made by

regional leadership, that will have significant impact on every company and every institution across the region.

Project Propel does not need funding. No one is being asked for money.

Instead, Project Propel will enhance your organization's productivity and allow us all to save more money than ever before.

It works

When a similar initiative was made in the Greater Grand Rapids region, it's estimated that \$100 million was saved in the first year alone. That's the kind of economic boost everyone can use in our region.

Projects of the same nature were launched in the Rochester, Minnesota; Chattanooga, Tennessee and Asheville, North Carolina regions with similar success.

Connectors

make us an economic powerhouse

Our region boasts of unique, high density digital connections that make working together and with other organizations across the globe effortless. These digital connections are vital in today's global economy. But we cannot forget our physical connections. Doing business with our region, is highly dependent upon those physical connections.

Among them, our own international airport (SBN) – a business asset that efficiently connects us to economic hubs across the country. Face-to-face meetings with new clients, in-person visits with prospective new employees, and onsite inspections that close important new deals, are all made possible by regular and efficient air service to and from our region.

Now is the time

Project Propel is about seizing the momentum we have right now, and making the next big thing happen for our region. It will pour fuel on this region's economic fire. And leadership agrees. We owe this to ourselves. There may never be another moment like this again.

The letter from you, that will change everything

The swift work of Project Propel will be reflected in significant reduction in travel costs combined with significant improvement in our ability to move people in and out of our region faster and more efficiently.

All we need from leaders across the region is a simple 1-page letter. A template for that letter is available for download on this website.

Surprising travel cost facts

Your letter is an expression of your company's official policy that will tell national airline carriers you're making SBN a first choice in business air travel. It is the one thing that will compel them

to provide more direct connections, larger aircrafts and more frequent service. Nothing else matters more to the airlines than a commitment to using our own airport.

Ironically, adopting a Fly Local First policy that favors SBN over any Chicago airport, will actually save every company in the region money on travel expenses each year. For many companies, the savings alone will be in the tens of thousands of dollars. The facts are on your side.

Chicago departures add hundreds in costs

Don't let lower ticket costs in Chicago fool you. The average additional cost to fly out of Chicago O'Hare, after adding tolls, parking and your company's lost productivity while driving is **\$332.18**.

The average additional cost to depart from Chicago's Midway is **\$295.44**.

Take action now

We may never have this chance again as a region

As a business leader, your policy letter, along with all the others, will show national carriers that we are serious. We need more direct flights to cities that matter, higher frequency of flights and larger aircraft. This in turn, makes doing business with our region, easier, faster and less expensive. Now is the time.

Your success and our success as a region, will be achieved through your willingness to make a commitment to our own regional air service. That commitment is reflected in your adoption of a Fly Local First policy that favors our region over the Chicago region.

Please download the flexible Fly Local First policy template from this website and return your company's version to:

Project Propel
4477 Progress Drive
South Bend, IN 46628
Attn: Mike Daigle