



**William Tyler White CEcD**, 517 903-6040, whitewi5@msu.edu  
13630 Main Street, Bath MI 48808  
born in Detroit, Michigan, 1950

### **Professional Experience and Goals**

Introduced to economic development as a serial entrepreneur with over thirty years of retail, service and property management experience, my focus is **spurring economic development in smaller communities of Michigan with an emphasis on arts and culture**. Based on economic gardening principles and Sirolli's facilitation method, sustainable development is also an important goal. My primary interest is developing vibrant, walkable communities with a high quality of life and strong sense of place. A background in Downtown Development Authorities, TIFA funding, Historic Districts and Brownfield Redevelopment was accrued while serving as a consultant and on municipal boards over the last twelve years.

### **Economic Development Achievements**

#### **Entrepreneurial and Small Business Development Strategies**

Founding board member of the **Meridian Asset Resource Center** for small business (2006-2013). This **small business incubator** resulted from participation in the **Creating Entrepreneurial Communities** pilot program of the MSU Extension Service and Land Policy Institute. It was instrumental in being recognized by the University of Michigan as one of seven **top performing communities** in the state at **fostering entrepreneurial growth and economic development**. Created or facilitated a dozen small business and nonprofit startups.

#### **Economic Development Marketing and Attraction**

Involved in the design and implementation of **municipal outreach pieces**, web site development and regional ED cooperative initiatives. Completed **SWOT analysis** for municipality to determine if there is a strong location quotient to attract specific enterprises. Prepared **Market Analysis** survey in a DDA district. Developed **marketing plan and advertising** for many businesses and nonprofits over thirty-six years. Founding board member of the nonprofit Michigan Fiddlers Association (1978), fostering community economic development. Founding Board Member and Executive Director of nonprofit Michigan Arts & Culture Alliance.

**Workforce Development:** Set up educational and training programs for entrepreneurs as a member of the Meridian Asset Resource Center. Helped create a separate **Youth Entrepreneur Boot Camp** in conjunction with local school districts, the YMCA and small business mentors. Aided an increase in K-12 development of business-related curriculum. Developed an **apprentice program** for musical instrument restoration. Instituted a restaurant employee training program. Participant in **Moving Ideas to Market** initiative with regional partners using a federal **WIRED grant** administered by the Prima Civitas Foundation.

#### **Business Retention and Expansion:**

Assisted small businesses with site selection, expansion, relocation and down sizing plans as consultant. **Owned and managed mixed-use property that leased flexible space to startups**. Helped refine the municipal EDC asset mapping, survey and advisory processes, along with staff responsibilities to determine the best strategies for BRE efforts. Worked on baseline analysis to determine measurable metrics for EDC annual reports. Advocated for a BRE position in municipal planning staff that was created. Helped develop a **Revolving Loan Fund** for small business with the municipal EDC in partnership with the regional CDLF.

#### **Real Estate Development and Reuse**

Led the effort to create a **Mixed-Use ordinance** to allow proposed developments to be designed and built for a walkable community. Since the ordinance was passed, several new mixed use projects have been built in the Township, the first in over 50 years. Repurposed several buildings for different uses. Participated in annual **Master Plan reviews, walkability audits, planning and rezoning hearings**. Worked with county **Brownfield**

**Authority** to complete Phase I and II environmental studies. Chaired a committee for an overlay district using form-based code to simplify and encourage infill redevelopment in a struggling heritage district. Participated in **a regional study of affordable housing** with the Greater Lansing Housing Coalition supported by a HUD Sustainable Communities grant to the Mid-Michigan Program for Greater Sustainability.

### Strategic Planning

Served on two Downtown Development Authority founding boards which **formulated TIFA and finance plans** to implement long-range goals for their respective districts. Helped guide Meridian Township EDC plan to become a development-ready community by streamlining processes and addressing customer-oriented staff issues. Currently engaging stakeholders to create a public/private partnership for an infill development project

**Managing Economic Development Organizations:** Helped steer the Meridian Township EDC toward more effective ED efforts. Championed the creation of a Downtown Development Authority. Chaired the initial DDA board, helped write bylaws and form a twenty-year plan. **Cofounded a small business incubator** (the MARC) through the EDC, eventually migrating it into a public/private partnership with the local Business Association. Promoted regional cooperation strategies with other EDO's, pushed for more funding and full-time status of planning staff member dedicated to economic development.

### Positions Held

- Board member of the **Meridian Township Economic Development Corporation** (2001-2013, vice chair 2003-7). Led the effort to create a **Downtown Development Authority (DDA)**. Worked on changing ordinances to be more entrepreneur-friendly.
- Founding chair and board member of **Okemos Downtown Development Authority** (2006-2013, chair/vice chair 5 yrs). Supervised the creation of a **20-year Tax Increment Finance Authority** to improve the infrastructure of the district and a Comprehensive Development Plan for future commercial uses. Worked to obtain grant funding and a \$200,000 bond issue to install LED street lights, which received an **Environmental Stewardship award**.
- Founding board member of the **Bath Downtown Development Authority** (2011 – 2014)
- Founding board member of the nonprofit **Michigan Arts & Culture Alliance** (2011 – 2014)
- ♦ Founder and principal of **Fifth Element Economic Development** (2004). Independent consultant and developer of small business projects. Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) of the IEDC.
- ♦ Cofounder and owner of **White Bros. Music** (est. 1976), a Michigan LLC. The music store trained and employed dozens of people, some in an **apprenticeship program** who went on to create their own business.
- ♦ Cofounder and owner of **Travelers Club International Restaurant & Tuba Museum** (est. 1982), a Michigan corporation. The restaurant trained and employed hundreds of students and second-career adults.

### Other Affiliations

Member of: Friends of Historic Meridian, Great Lakes Renewable Energy Association, Greater Lansing Housing Coalition, International Economic Development Council, Meridian Area Business Association, Meridian Commercial Recycling Group, Michigan Downtown Association, Michigan Economic Development Association, Michigan Election Reform Alliance, Michigan Restaurant Association, Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council, Michigan Energy Options, National Motorists Association, Small Business Association of Michigan.

### Education

Continuing education student at Michigan State University in economic development and political science. Completed course work in Energizing Entrepreneurship from the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship. Five years of study to become a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) by the IEDC. Preliminary study and consulting on LEED standards for future certification.