



Strategic Communication Solutions (SCS) Projects and Initiatives for City of Rochester Hills

SCS is retained to provide research, tracking and advocacy on legislative issues that impact the City of Rochester Hills, both in Lansing and Washington, D.C. SCS also provides strategy support services that includes identification of funding or financing programs that support economic development, writing and/or organizing proposals, and communication/outreach with the Michigan Legislature and Congressional Delegation.

[Projects and initiatives that include SCS planning, support or services:](#)

- North Oakland County Water Authority (helped convene roundtable discussions that included SEMCOG; wrote and organized grant application; supported public relations efforts)
- Madison Park (convened meetings with developer, staff from City, to develop updated project goals and objectives; site plan updates; pre-development budgets; met with ASTI environmental engineers to discuss geo-technical issues)
- Local Development Finance Authority (1/3 of SCS contract comes from LDFA; conducted research, provided presentations on PPT reform, tax-capture reform, and economic development offerings from feds and State that could complement LDFA goals and objectives)
- Van Hoosen Farm and Museum (attended and supported staff on tour with MSHDA; researched digital archiving campaign)
- Tax Capture Reform Legislation (participated in, and monitored, reforms contemplated for all tax capture districts)
- Transportation Funding and Financing Programs (developed white paper on all federal and state funding programs, with emphasis on transit-oriented development)
- GROW America (research and summarized federal spending bill introduced)
- PACE Bonds - Commercial/ Industrial/ Office Energy Retrofit Program

[Funding/ Financing Opportunities \(State and Federal\):](#)

- Michigan Department of Treasury; wrote and organized \$1,785,000 grant from Community Grant Assistance Program (CGAP) to facilitate capital improvements and equipment purchase associated with the formation of a regional water/ utilities collaboration.
- Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), Certified Local Government (CLG) Program; wrote and organized \$33,000 grant for an interpretive area that encourages walking and biking, architectural and social understanding and history
- Michigan Department of Treasury, Community Grant Assistance Program (CGAP) ; wrote and organized \$85,000 grant for mobile air trailer that would allow the Rochester Hills Fire Department to refill SCBA air cylinders at response sites.

Potential Sources of Additional Funding. These opportunities are on the immediate horizon, but do not constitute every funding program SCS plans to pursue:

- Police Department - The Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP)
- Police Department - COPS Community Policing Development (\$100,000)
- Police Department - Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG)
- Police Department - Verizon Foundation; \$5,000 - \$10,000
- Fire Department - CGAP; due in June; up to \$1,000,000
- DPS - Michigan Clean Diesel Program
- Economic Development - EPA Brownfield Assessment
- Economic Development - EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund (up to \$1 million)
- U.S. Department of Treasury - Build America Bonds Program (potential financing program)

Oakland University Incubator (OU INC.)

- OU INC. is a SmartZone Business Accelerator, in collaboration with the City of Rochester Hills, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and various industry partners. OU INC's focus is in the Energy, Medical Device, and Information Technology sectors. The City of Rochester Hills provided an initial \$100,000 start-up investment, and the Local Development Finance Authority (enabled under State law, but incorporated by the City of Rochester Hills) provides the vehicle which created the SmartZone. SmartZones are geographically-bound clusters of entrepreneurs, research and technology-based firms, supported by academia and government, to advance business growth and jobs in emerging sectors of the economy.
- OU INC. has expressed a need to grow the pipeline of potential entrepreneurs, small-businesses and private sector companies that it can help support through its menu of programs. They are looking for the City of Rochester Hills to help them spread this message and assist them in growing the pipeline of potential projects. OU INC. is also interested in collaborating with Oakland County, Automation Alley, OU-Macomb and the City of Rochester Hills in the pursuit of additional financial support from the State of Michigan in order to diversify and grow their internal offerings for prospective entrepreneurs and companies in Rochester Hills.
- SCS was contacted to offer input on the two needs by OU INC. The goal for SCS would be to leverage the success of OU INC. into new jobs and economic investment within Rochester Hills. Both Rochester Hills, and the LDFA, as governmental units, are applicable for certain funding programs that OU INC. cannot leverage on its own. Sustaining and growing the relationship between OU INC. and Rochester Hills will continue to be a goal for SCS and its support services related to economic development.

SCS Assists With Introduction of Two Bills

- Legislation has been introduced in the State Senate based on a slip and fall accident on the road in front of a house of a Rochester Hills resident. Margaret Debler represented the City of Rochester Hills in the lawsuit and recommended the settlement based on current law. But Ms. Debler also pointed out that if the same legal standard applied to slip and fall accidents on a sidewalk compared to the same accident on a roadway that Rochester Hills could have escaped liability for the accident or could have possibly settled it for a nominal amount. Ms. Debler drafted an amendment to current law to apply a sidewalk "two inch crevice" rule to roadway accidents and SCS took it to Sen. Mike Kowall who agreed to introduce a bill in the state Senate.

- After a number of revisions suggested by attorneys in the Legislative Service Bureau, the bill was turned in to the Clerk of the Senate for introduction the first legislative session day in 2014, January 8. The bill has been designated SB 773 and was assigned to the Elections and Local Government Committee, where it awaits a hearing. SCS arranged a meeting between Sen. Kowall and Michigan Municipal League representatives to develop a legislative strategy and reaffirm support for the bill by MML. It awaits a hearing in the Elections and Local Government Committee.
- SCS is also working on a second bill to broaden the investment options for the Cemetery Perpetual Care Trust for the Rochester Hills Cemetery. The bill is a technical one, but generally it will allow investments in the cemetery perpetual care fund to mirror the long term investments allowed in pension funds. The bill was introduced by Sen. Jim Marleau and designated SB 854. It awaits a hearing in the Elections and Local Government Committee.