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## U-M report recommends strategy of economic gardening to boost economy

Published: Thursday, November 11, 2010, 12:16 PM Updated: Thursday, November 11, 2010, 12:16 PM



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Policy makers and local economic developers could improve the economy by pursuing a strategy of cultivating existing businesses called "economic gardening," reports **WWJ**. Economic gardening enjoys widespread support from local governments across the state.

A report from the **Center for Local, State and Urban Policy at the University of Michigan** reveals that more local economic developers are targeting their efforts toward existing businesses rather than trying to attract new businesses to relocate in their jurisdictions.

Local governments are granting existing businesses tax abatements or deferments, for example, or developing infrastructure to support local businesses.

Meanwhile, the report says, state officials have been targeting their economic development efforts toward attracting new businesses to the state. This means a disconnect between state and local governments' efforts.

And although the U-M report does not argue against the state's efforts to attract new and diversified business, it says that state and local governments could better coordinate their economic development efforts with a focus on economic gardening.



AP photo

A new report from the University of Michigan reveals widespread support among local governments for an economic development strategy of economic gardening.

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