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James Craig plans to visit with Donald Trump this week

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The Detroit News

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James Craig, former Detroit police chief and a Republican candidate for Michigan governor, confirmed in an interview Sunday that he's planning to visit former President Donald Trump later this week.

Craig, who received a positive reception at the Mackinac Republican Leadership Conference over the weekend, declined to go into detail about his upcoming trip to meet with the ex-president, whose endorsement has been sought by GOP candidates in primary races nationally.

"I do have a plan to do that, but I'll just leave it there," Craig said when asked about a potential trip this week. "I am planning on a visit."



"I think I've been public that certainly, I welcome support from President Trump," Craig said.

It's unclear how the meeting had been arranged. However, Meshawn Maddock, co-chairwoman of the Michigan Republican Party and a vocal supporter of the former president, is also expected to visit with Trump, The Detroit News has learned.

"What she does in her personal capacity we do not comment on," said Gus Portela, the party's communications director.

Trump has already endorsed election critic and lawyer Matthew DePerno of Kalamazoo for Michigan attorney general and GOP state committee member Kristina Karamo of Oak Park for secretary of state. But so far, he has not

gotten involved in the race for governor with at least 11 Republicans hoping to challenge Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Trump foe, in 2022.

During a panel discussion at the GOP conference on Saturday, John Yob, Craig's chief adviser, was asked about the influence of Trump's endorsement.

“His endorsement is very, very important in the party,” Yob replied. “My hope is he endorses candidates that can actually win the general election.”

Other Republican gubernatorial hopefuls have also been hoping for Trump's backing, including Mattawan chiropractor Garrett Soldano, conservative commentator Tudor Dixon of Norton Shores, and Metro Detroit businessman Kevin Rinke. Dixon has multiple individuals with ties to Trump working on her campaign.

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Craig won an unscientific straw poll of attendees at the three-day Mackinac Republican Leadership Conference on Mackinac Island over the weekend. The survey of a little more than 740 Republicans, sponsored by The Detroit News, found the former chief with support from 58% of those surveyed. Dixon finished in second place with 19%.

In August, Craig told reporters he would accept Trump's endorsement if offered but he wants to be defined as himself, not the former president.

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Staff Writer Beth LeBlanc contributed.