



Grand Vision Growth & Investment Areas

Regional Network Meeting

Monday, March 12th, 2012: 10a.m. – 12p.m.
1209 S. Garfield Ave.– Michigan Works!

Mission Statement: Facilitate the growth and entrepreneurial culture of unique cities and villages that strengthen our region by encouraging business development, removing barriers, utilizing incentives, and fostering public and private improvements.

Proposed Agenda

I. Welcome & Introductions (10:00 a.m.)

Wally Delamater (Suttons Bay)	Kathy Egan (Suttons Bay)
Blake Smith (USDA)	Dean Farrier (Kalkaska DDA)
Erick Takayama (Acme)	Shannon Fender (Ellsworth Farmers Market)
Kurt Schindler (MSU-E)	
Bob Carstens (Acme Twp)	Debbie Stanton (Mesick)
Joe Myers (Antrim County)	Tom Stephenson (MI Connect)
Mary Faculak (East Jordan)	Connor Miller (Northsky)
Warren Call (Huntington Bank)	Jaclyn Sanborn (NWMCOG)
Carrie Bourdages (NWMCOG)	Mike Woods (NWMCOG)

II. Optimizing Infrastructure Investment (10:15 a.m.)

A. Rural Development Community Programs

The USDA spent about \$1 billion in loans in rural areas of MI alone this past year. These loans are available to communities for utilities, housing, and community infrastructure. Recently funded local projects include sewer/water improvements in Kingsly, Suttons Bay, and Mesick. Applications to receive USDA grants are scored on a point system. Smaller population and/or lower income communities are positively affected by the point system and are especially encouraged to apply. Schools are eligible for USDA grants as well.

B. Broadband Connection

Connect MI has a map of all broadband areas within the state of MI. MI is the 2nd highest in the nation for broadband participation. Businesses that offer online service are up 20%. 1 in 5 residents now telework and in doing so, save about \$2000/year in automobile related expenditures. The Village of Empire and Kalkaska presently have community hot spots.

C. Discussion/Action

- ❖ Start a petition and/or work with a local provider to implement broadband into your community. Having a champion in the community to lead the charge helps the process.
- ❖ Create a community page or tie your community page into the NWMCOG site in order to make your community more visible and thus more attractive to investment.



- ❖ Communities can join a broadband certification program for no charge. Ask Tom Stephenson for details.

III. Ongoing Business (11:15 a.m.)

A. G&I Placemaking Subcommittee Update

The committee met on February 13th and proposed scheduling changes for the plenary speakers at the Traverse City Placemaking Summit.

V. Community Growth Grantee Updates

Elmwood – Adopted a Gateway plan through a corridor task force. A corridor plan will be completed by the end of September. A master plan process will begin in April/May

Mesick – The public forum on Feb. 28th to discuss the Mesick Master Plan was well attended with enthusiastic participants.

Acme – Will be interviewing consultants on March 27th for the Shoreline Placemaking plan.

Ellsworth – Sharon Fender attended the MSU farmers market training. She is working on signage for the market and working with agriculture classes in high schools. The market is scheduled to open on the 2nd Tuesday in June. It will be the first evening market in the region.

Kalkaska – The Village and DDA are working with LIAA to develop a community brand. A trout has been the selected artwork for 15 new banners that will be hung on light posts downtown in the spring.

VI. Community Updates, Sharing, and Public Comment

Jaelyn Sanborn (NWMCOG) – Communities will soon be receiving a request from the NWMCOG for publicly owned economic development projects (sewer/water, etc).

Kurt Schindler – The State of MI want to pre-qualify communities and certify them for any grant money that passes through.

Carrie Bourdages – Student project involvement in the Grand Vision. Students will be given class credit for creating a video that reflects the 6 guiding principals of the Grand Vision.

Mary Faculak – The Breezeway is planning to host a marathon and mountain biking event this summer. A list of breezeway related events can be found at www.ridethebreezeway.com.

Mike Woods – Mid-term progress reports are due for all communities that received the 2011 community growth grants. Reports should be no more than 1 page and consist of progress and expenditures to date related to the grant. Please submit to michaelwoods@nwm.cog.mi.us.

VII. Adjourn (12:00 p.m.)

This meeting is open to all who wish to attend. If you are planning to attend and have a disability requiring any special assistance at the meeting, please notify the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments – Matt McCauley (231-929-5061/E-mail at mccauley@nwm.cog.mi.us)