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Projects in the East Central Michigan Prosperity Region 5 Receive Grant Dollars

Eight projects will receive a boost in funding thanks to the East Central Michigan Prosperity Region 5 Mini Grants awards announced this week from the East Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG).

The first time mini-grants, funded by Michigan's Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI) will distribute \$100,000 to projects that will support various economic development, transportation, educational, outdoor recreation/tourism and place-making initiatives throughout the 8 county region. In total, 14 projects competed for this first round of funding. The following projects were selected for this first year grant cycle:

Greater Gratiot & Middle Michigan Development Corporations: \$18,262 – The funding will be used for a collaboration of the two economic development corporations to research and analyze how upgrading the US 127 corridor within the area to a limited access expressway would positively impact economic development, safety and tourism within the region.

Saginaw Intermediate School District: \$8,278 - The funding will be used to purchase the *Inspire* add-on to Career Cruising for the 2017-18 school year with the purpose of enhancing the educational development planning process. *Inspire* will provide a more direct link from businesses to classrooms in Saginaw County by creating a safe platform that local companies can join and connect with students.

Great Lakes Bay Regional Alliance: \$10,000 – The funding will be used by the GLBRA to bolster the Employer Talent Pipeline work carried out in conjunction with Delta College and Mid Michigan Community College through support of training for an online career planning tool for business and education staff in the 8 county East Central Michigan Prosperity Region 5.

City of Beaverton Downtown Development Authority: \$18,262 – The funding will be used for development of the Beaverton Downtown Development Ross Lake Trailhead, connecting hiking, biking and water trails from Beaverton and Gladwin and other areas as part of a countywide walking/bike path asset.

Gladwin Conservation District: \$3,196 – Funding will support a collaborative effort to develop a Children's Garden Project which will teach young people the fundamentals of good land stewardship through hands-on projects and collaborative efforts through the establishment of a flower, fruits and vegetables garden created by youth to include a "garden to table" luncheon in the fall.

Beaver Township (in Bay County): \$11,870 – Funding will support a "Place Making Through Play" project in the heart of Bay, Saginaw and Midland counties to include an ADA accessible playscape, nature trails and wooded forestlands in an area of the region with a higher than average amount of younger families.

Cass River Greenway: \$11,870 – Funding will support the development of an interactive regional marketing website for the Cass River Water Trail that consists of 13 public boat launch sites along 38 miles of rivers passing through Tuscola and Saginaw counties and passing through the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. The interactive website will be part an initiative to obtain the National Park Service National Water/Trail Designation status.

City of Standish: \$11,870 – funding will support ongoing place-making efforts in the city by enhancing the city park with new playground equipment and other amenities to encourage the presence of families in community recreational activities.

To learn more about EMCOG and the Regional Prosperity Initiative visit www.emcog.org For more information, contact | Jane Fitzpatrick | EMCOG Programs Manager | 989-797-0800 | or jfitzpatrick@emcog.org