

## **SUMMARY OF I-69 THUMB REGION - REGIONAL PROSPERITY STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

The I-69 Thumb Region Regional Prosperity Steering Committee met at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 8, 2017 at the Lapeer County Health Department.

**Present:** Chairperson Patricia Lucas, Andrew Northrop, Carl Osentoski, Geoffrey Donaldson, Jody Kerbyson, Linda Burchell, Mary Ann Ketels, Rachel Verschaeve, Sidney Grinnell, Thomas Crampton, Vicky Sherry, Paula Nas, Tom Young, Mike Connors, Anna Pinter, Jacob Maurer and Debby Compton.

Chairperson Lucas called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

### **I. Introductions**

Committee members introduced themselves.

### **II. UM Flint University Center for Community and Economic Development**

#### **a. Paula Nas**

Chairperson Lucas introduced Paula Nas of UM Flint to the committee.

Ms. Nas stated that the mission of UM-Flint's EDA Center for Community & Economic Development is to coordinate, inform, and contribute to economic development efforts that cultivate innovation and advance high-growth entrepreneurship in the 7-county I-69 Thumb Region. Three primary buckets 1) website/portal – provide access to regional economic data, offer entrepreneurs and existing businesses access to resources and disseminate the EDA University Center programming and research information; 2) asset mapping and review previous 5-7 years economic studies and reports, collect data, map locations and, 3) faculty and student research. Ms. Nas emphasized that they want to help and not be a burden to the I-69 Thumb Region. Discussion ensued.

### **III. Partnership Projects Status Update**

#### **a. Regional Trainings**

Ms. Anna Pinter stated that in December 2016, 20 individuals attended the Incremental Development lecture in Davison. Members of Incremental Development Alliance discussed how regular people are rebuilding neighborhoods in small increments. There was a presentation showing typical barriers to small development, examples of small projects in other locations and general strategies community groups and governments can take to support redevelopment. The Incremental Development Alliance group also spent one day in Marlette providing local leaders specific ideas and strategies they could use to redevelop their downtown.

Recast City will be giving a Small-Scale Manufacturing & Downtown Vibrancy training today at the Lapeer Country Club. Ilana Pruess will describe how to expand job opportunities in small-scale manufacturing and integrate these businesses into downtown/neighborhood reinvestment. Tomorrow, February 9<sup>th</sup>, Recast City will spend the day in the City of Vassar with the local leaders discussing their needs in small-scale manufacturing and downtown vibrancy. Discussion ensued.

**b. Catapult Your Craft Food & Beverage Business Competition**

Ms. Anna Pinter advised that all first place winners received \$2,000 and competed in the regional finale with the chance to win \$5,000 for first place, \$3,000 for second place and \$1,000 for third place. The Regional competition was held on January 24, 2017 at the I-69 Thumb Region's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Summit. The winners were Elk Street Brewery, first place, Harsens Island Brewery, second place and The Tap Room at Bird Creek Farms, Third place. Discussion ensued.

Chairperson Lucas thanked Anna and Dan Casey. Anna for all her work on this project and Dan for planning it all for the group.

**c. Talent Tours**

Ms. Anna Pinter advised that over \$17,000 was spent on the Talent Tours with more than 4,000 students participating at 77 different companies.

Ms. Anna Pinter showed a few video's from the I-69 Thumb Region Agri-tourism Directory.

**IV. Tourism Subcommittee Status Update**

Mr. Jacob Maurer advised the committee that the Tourism Subcommittee has had several calls and e-mails. The Subcommittee has been discussing these three (3) work items: Developing an Ecotourism Directory (along the same lines of the Agri-tourism Directory), Ecotourism Symposium, looking for a place to hold it, bring in national speaker, and have break-out sessions. The third item is having a mini grant opportunity with a range between \$500 and \$750. Eco-Tourism Kick-off meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 15, 2017.

**V. 2017 Regional Prosperity Initiative Funding**

Ms. Anna Pinter advised the committee that staff just received word that the 2017 funding was awarded. It is less than what was requested so the 2017 Regional Prosperity Initiative Budget will have to be revised. An additional meeting will be scheduled to review the budget.

Chairperson Lucas advised that MEDC has agreed to host a Redevelopment Readiness session in Lapeer on March 20, 2017. Discussion ensued.

**VI. Next Meeting**

**a. Wednesday, April 12, 2017**

Ms. Anna Pinter advised that the next meeting is scheduled for April 12, 2017. At this time it appears there will be an additional meeting before the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting date.

Chairperson Lucas adjourned the meeting at 10:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debby Compton, Secretary  
GLS Region V