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## **Governor Granholm Announces 2005 Cool Cities Designees Expanded Cool Cities Program includes 29 projects**

**JUNE 27, 2005** – Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today announced that 29 projects have been given Cool Cities Neighborhood designations. The Cool Cities Program is part of the Governor's economic plan that is designed to help revitalize Michigan's cities by retaining and attracting the jobs and people critical to the emerging economies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The program is funded by redirecting existing resources in state government.

Thirteen projects have received the Cool Cities "Neighborhoods in Progress" designation, which gives them priority access to existing state grant funds, loans, tax credits, or services that can help create vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods. They also will receive a catalyst grant of \$100,000 each. The 13 projects receiving the Cool Cities Neighborhoods in Progress are located in **Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Detroit (4 projects), East Lansing, Grand Rapids (2 projects), Holland, Kalamazoo, Lansing, and Traverse City.**

"Building vibrant, energetic cities that attract jobs, people and opportunity to our state is a key component of our economic vision for Michigan," Granholm said. "The first year of Cool Cities exceeded our expectations, so I am pleased to announce that the program has been expanded and incorporates 29 projects across the state. All of these programs announced today will strengthen our neighborhoods and downtowns and attract jobs and people to our state."

Granholm added that the guiding principles of the Cool Cities Initiative are based on best practices used in neighborhoods of the most vibrant communities in the United States and around the world.

New to the Cool Cities Initiative this year are 16 additional projects that will receive the Cool Cities Neighborhood designation and other state resources as part of the expanded Cool Cities Grants & Planning Programs. Those 16 additional projects were selected for the following new categories: *Cool Cities Michigan Main Street*, *Cool Cities Blueprints for Michigan's Downtowns*, and *Cool Cities Blueprints for Michigan's Neighborhoods*.

Like the Neighborhoods in Progress, these designees will receive "Cool Cities Neighborhood" designation, special consideration for some MEDC and/or MSHDA programs and participation in a State Resource Fair. The programs and recipients are:

- **2005 Cool Cities Michigan Main Street: Ishpeming, Grand Haven, Howell, and Midland.** These projects will receive more than \$200,000 in technical assistance and training as part of a long-term management approach to revitalizing and maintaining a successful downtown through organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.
- **2005 Cool Cities Blueprints for Michigan's Downtowns: Big Rapids, Vassar, Utica, Romeo, East Tawas, Grass Lake, Iron River, Whitehall, and Saginaw.** Based on a market driven approach, HyettPalma, MEDC and MSHDA staff team up to provide a very public process, and action-oriented strategy to revitalize the downtown in a 3 – 5 year period including a market study for the downtown. Designees receive a 50/50 match and MSHDA/MEDC pay for half the consultant fee.

- **2005 Cool Cities Blueprints for Michigan's Neighborhoods: Vassar, Alpena, and Manistee.** A consultant works with the local unit of government to identify a vision and priorities for a target neighborhood adjacent to the downtown or traditional commercial district; then provides a specific neighborhood strategy for revitalization including a market plan and course of action. Local unit pays for consultant. Cities receive Community Development Block Grant funds.

The first year participants in the Cool Cities Neighborhood Award program say the designation helped create 400 new jobs and retain 500 existing jobs. The year-old program enabled 19 projects to have priority access to more than \$100 million in existing grants, loans and other resources. As a result of the first-year success, the Cool Cities Grants & Planning Programs was created to include the aforementioned Neighborhoods in Progress, in addition to other programs aimed at building vibrant, energetic cities that attract jobs, people and opportunity to Michigan.

"Last year's 19 recipients reported that the Cool Cities designation helped them leverage significant monetary investment from various entities. In total, more than \$350 million was contributed by local, state, and private organizations. Due to the overwhelming response, we expanded the program so that this year 29 city projects will have new doors opened to them in 2005," said David C. Hollister, director of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, who oversees the Cool Cities program.

A multi-agency team reviewed each application, looking for those that demonstrated close partnerships with existing community organizations and the private sector and offered plans for creating large-scale neighborhood or community improvement. The projects not designated as part of this program will receive individual letters offering constructive feedback to their submission.

Following are brief descriptions of the 13 projects receiving the Cool City Neighborhoods in Progress \$100,000 catalyst grants.

#### Cool Cities Neighborhoods in Progress

- Battle Creek –
  - Applicant: Battle Creek Unlimited
  - Project: Riverfront Condominium Project
  - Project Description: Unique mixed-use development of three historic structures into 24 market-rate condominiums and five first floor retail on Michigan Avenue alongside the Battle Creek River. Targeted retail tenants include an independent art gallery, arts/crafts supply store, restaurant with outdoor cafe, and office space for the Downtown Partnership. The grant will be used to rehabilitate historic buildings to mixed use.
- Lansing -
  - Applicant: Allen Neighborhood Center in Partnership with City of Lansing Parks & Recreation
  - Project: Growing in Community: A Walk in the Park
  - Project Description: Installation of walking path and hoop house in Hunter Park to promote healthy activity and lifestyles. The hoop house will be constructed for year-round production of vegetables, fruits, herbs, etc., and house a neighborhood-based Community Supported Agriculture project including seasonal backyard gardening classes and a youth garden scholar program. In conjunction with neighborhood schools, a portion of the hoop house will be designated as a teaching and entrepreneurial site.
- Kalamazoo -
  - Applicant: City of Kalamazoo
  - Project: Washington Square Revitalization
  - Project Description: Phase One of the catalyst project will include selective demolition, the restoration of a key historic façade, rehabilitation of the associated retail space, and construction of new infill building for retail. Relocation of adult entertainment businesses clustered in Washington Square. Phase Two, the adjacent private parking will be upgraded to serve both the new and existing retail and possibly function as an outdoor venue for small events and festivals, such as the annual Diversity Celebration. There will also be public right-of-way enhancements. Grant to be

used for façade improvements of historic building, demolition of non-historic adult entertainment building, new building construction for retail.

- Traverse City
  - Applicant: City of Traverse City
  - Project: City Opera House Technologies Project
  - Project Description: Equipping the newly restored historic opera house with new technology for lighting, audio, communications makes it economically feasible to reintroduce a dynamic cultural attraction with frequent and diverse programming, with ability to increase audience capacity by 50%. It will also extend the nightlife of Traverse City into the evening with retail. Grant to be used for wiring, sound system, high tech electrical, and specialty lighting.
- Detroit
  - Applicant: Woodbridge Neighborhood Development Corporation
  - Project: Woodbridge Cultural Corridor
  - Project Description: The 4731 project is an arts incubator whose local mission seeks to accomplish three primary goals, to provide an anchor for the Woodbridge neighborhood, support and promote self-sustaining artists, and to preserve architectural history. The project plans include the development of three arts-focused incubators (micro-enterprise virtual companies fashion, film, and furniture/design) live-work housing, multiple examples of public art, food and beverage, and retail space. It is located on Grand River Avenue, immediately north of Corktown. The grant will include façade improvements on 9 buildings; some are historic.
- Detroit
  - Applicant: New Center Council, Inc.
  - Project: New Center Council Facilities Project
  - Project Description: The primary goal is to develop a new cultural amenity and community meeting place in New Center as it develops its residential core. The facility will support the Council's efforts in developing a 24-hour district, while offering a variety of cultural programming to the district's current and future employees and residents. The Council will become a ground floor tenant in the rehabilitated building. New Center Park improvements will include construction of a three season concession building, restrooms, perimeter fencing, and a permanent stage canopy that adjusts to a movie screen. The project is located across from the Fisher Building – Southwest Grand and Second Avenue. The funding will be used for park improvements, construction of 3 season concession building, restrooms, perimeter fencing, a permanent stage canopy – to adjust to a movie screen, security system, kitchen, and sound system.
- Detroit
  - Applicant: Greater Corktown Development Corporation
  - Project: Workers Row House Experience
  - Project Description: Restoration of the Row House, an important piece of nineteenth-century workers' history, to its original 1850s appearance. The house will be a location for people interested in Corktown to visit and to learn about available housing, entertainment options, investment potential, and/or begin a self-guided audio tour of the historic neighborhood. It will be a staging area for the Annual Corktown Home and Garden Tour, a location for community meetings, potluck dinners, and video viewings. The GCDC will utilize the Workers Row House Experience as a satellite office, which will enable them to extend their neighborhood outreach efforts. The project is located in southwest Detroit, south of old Tiger Stadium. The catalyst grant will be used to preserve 3 unit row house structures, one unit as a museum and two units as a satellite office.
- Ann Arbor
  - Applicant: Ann Arbor Cool Cities Task Force
  - Project: Creative Interactions: An Urban Catalyst
  - Project Description: An interactive indoor gathering space will be the creation of three microcinema lounges at the award winning Michigan Theater that will morph into a state-of-the-art audio-visual social node for digital filmmakers to showcase their work. The grant will be used for microcinema digital projection system, flat screens, digital cabling, WiFi, digital upgrades for sounds and computer video, renovations, furniture.
- Holland

- Applicant: Park Theatre Foundation
- Project: Park Theatre
- Project Description: Restoring and renovating the River Avenue façade of the Historic Park Theatre to its original beauty. The Park Theatre makes a significant impact on the cultural, artistic, and business aspect of the entire community. The grant will be used for historical theatre façade improvement.
- East Lansing
  - Applicant: City of East Lansing
  - Project: Downtown East Lansing Pedestrian/Technology Connection
  - Project Description: There are three new mixed-use developments occurring in downtown East Lansing. Creating free Internet hotspots spanning between them will showcase cool attributes, such as public art and gardens, that attract residents and visitors downtown. The funds will be used for parks and streetscaping associated with parks, wireless internet system and public amenities, public art, and gardens around the new plazas.
- Grand Rapids
  - Applicant: West Grand Neighborhood Organization
  - Project: Turner Gateway Project
  - Project Description: A large portion of the requested funding will create grants to leverage private spending. Elements of the project will enhance the area's business districts, housing quality, environmental responsiveness and overall aesthetic appeal. Improvements include two gateway gardens, ten commercial facade improvement projects, ten business district greening grants, ten residential homes will enhance their appearance and qualify for the NEZ tax abatements through \$3,000 matching grants. Additionally, an improved pedestrian underpass, two mural projects, and five matching grants to build native gardens will be included. The project, which also includes a privately funded native rain garden, will be a sustainable model for urban greening and soft path pollution mitigation strategies. The grant will be used for business district façade program, gateway sites and entry gardens, pedestrian underpass façade, farmers market, mural projects, and housing rehab matching grants.
- Grand Rapids
  - Applicant: Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association
  - Project: Grandville Avenue Renovation Project
  - Project Description: Restoration of the red brick Engine House No. 12 in the center of the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood that was purchased for \$1 by the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan to serve the Hispanic newcomers arriving in West Michigan. Deteriorating conditions of the building forced them to move out in 1998. The Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association has offered to head up the capital campaign to restore the old fire house and make it a welcoming haven for the Hispanic community offering second floor offices to provide client services and a large, open ground floor community space for all residents of all ages. The catalyst grant will be used for historic building renovation – firehouse – community center.
- Detroit
  - Applicant: University Cultural Center Association
  - Project: Woodward Willis Mixed-Use Development
  - Project description: This mixed-use, mixed-income development is bold and creative. It will be constructed on three vacant parcels of land on the northeast corner of Woodward Avenue, the main artery to and from Detroit, and West Willis Street. The architecture will be reminiscent of the industrial warehouses designed by Albert Kahn and imbued with the Sullivanesque-style of commercial architecture prevalent in Midtown. Commercial space will be on the first floor and a small offering of high quality loft-style condominiums on the remaining floors. Two of the units are specially priced for individuals or families with lower incomes. The project is located at Woodward Corridor. The catalyst grant will be used toward new construction of Woodward Willis building.

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