

## News Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contacts: Dan Boss  
Program Publicity Specialist  
(231) 929-5047  
danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us

Scott Gest  
Regional Planner  
(231) 929-5091  
scottgest@nwm.cog.mi.us

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## Community Growth Grants Focus on Building Stronger Regional Economy

NORTHWEST MI—Grants to help local units of government build the foundation for a stronger regional economy are available through the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG). The Community Growth Grants program is part of the local response to Governor Snyder's state-wide Regional Prosperity Initiative. The initiative's goal is to encourage local private, public and non-profit partners to create vibrant regional economies through collaboration and local decision making.

Grants of up to \$7,500 in cash and/or technical assistance are available on a competitive basis to all city, village, township, and county governments in Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford counties. The grants represent a geographic expansion of the region's previous New Designs for Growth Community Growth Grants program, which has been providing direct financial and technical assistance support to communities for planning and action-oriented projects in the six county Grand Vision region. The grant application deadline is March 21, 2014.

"The Community Growth Grants program will help communities implement innovative solutions to today's challenges, building a more robust framework for their citizens to flourish," said Scott Gest, a regional planner at NWMCOG.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative's Community Growth Grants program is intended to strengthen the region by removing barriers and creating incentives for greater public and private sector investment in northwest Lower Michigan. Successful projects will create the conditions for sustainable and efficient

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growth and development by implementing strategies that are consistent with local values and community goals. Successful applicants are also likely to demonstrate linkages to principles within The Grand Vision ([thegrandvision.org](http://thegrandvision.org)) and/or New Designs for Growth ([newdesignsforgrowth.org](http://newdesignsforgrowth.org)).

Funding for the program is provided by a State of Michigan Regional Prosperity Initiative Grant received by NWMCOG, and is being implemented with support from the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce, the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, and the Alliance for Economic Success.

More information about the Regional Prosperity Initiative's Community Growth Grants is available at: [nwm.org/growthgrants](http://nwm.org/growthgrants). For questions regarding this grant opportunity, please contact Scott Gest at: [scottgest@nwm.cog.mi.us](mailto:scottgest@nwm.cog.mi.us) or 231-929-5091.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Tom White at [tomwhite@nwm.cog.mi.us](mailto:tomwhite@nwm.cog.mi.us) and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone (231) 929-5044. Check our online Media Room at: [nwm.org/media](http://nwm.org/media)

Founded in 1974, the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, YouthBuild, Small Business & Technology Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business and community services NWMCOG offers if you visit our web site, [nwm.org](http://nwm.org)

NWMCOG's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.