

News Release
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Seasonal Economy Summit December 3 in Traverse City

TRAVERSE CITY, MI – Community leaders will learn about and discuss seasonal populations and impacts on traffic, population, business activity, and agriculture at a day-long summit in Traverse City. *Tis the Season: Planning for Northwest Michigan's Seasonal Economy* will be held on Tuesday, December 3 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Hagerty Conference Center, 715 E. Front Street.

With an economy tied to agriculture and tourism, communities throughout the region must account for seasonal activity when budgeting and planning for services, transportation, public safety, and workforce housing. How can they plan for large seasonal populations on small year-round budgets? How do they accommodate ever-fluctuating needs for workforce housing, transportation, and public safety? What are the costs, benefits, and impacts of tourism and a seasonal economy?

“As an example, the Village of Empire is considered a “gateway” to the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore,” said Sarah Lucas, Director of Community Development at Networks Northwest.

“That means, over the course of the year - and mostly in the summer - many of the National Park’s 1.7 million annual visitors pass through Empire at some point. Yet, the community is home to a year-round population of 400 people, with limited tax revenues and resources for accommodating a large seasonal influx of visitors.”

“Empire’s situation is common throughout Northwest Michigan. Yet, the impacts of a large seasonal population often aren’t clearly understood, or even discussed at a broad level,” said Lucas. The Summit will begin the conversation about seasonal population impacts, and how communities can prepare.

(MORE)

This workshop is for local governments and other community partners interested in learning about trends and best practices in planning for tourism, agriculture and other seasonal businesses, seasonal transportation issues, and more. To register, or for more information, please visit nwm.org/lugsummit.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: networksnorthwest.org/media

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, Small Business 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 Networks Northwest offers if you visit our website, networksnorthwest.org. Networks Northwest's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.