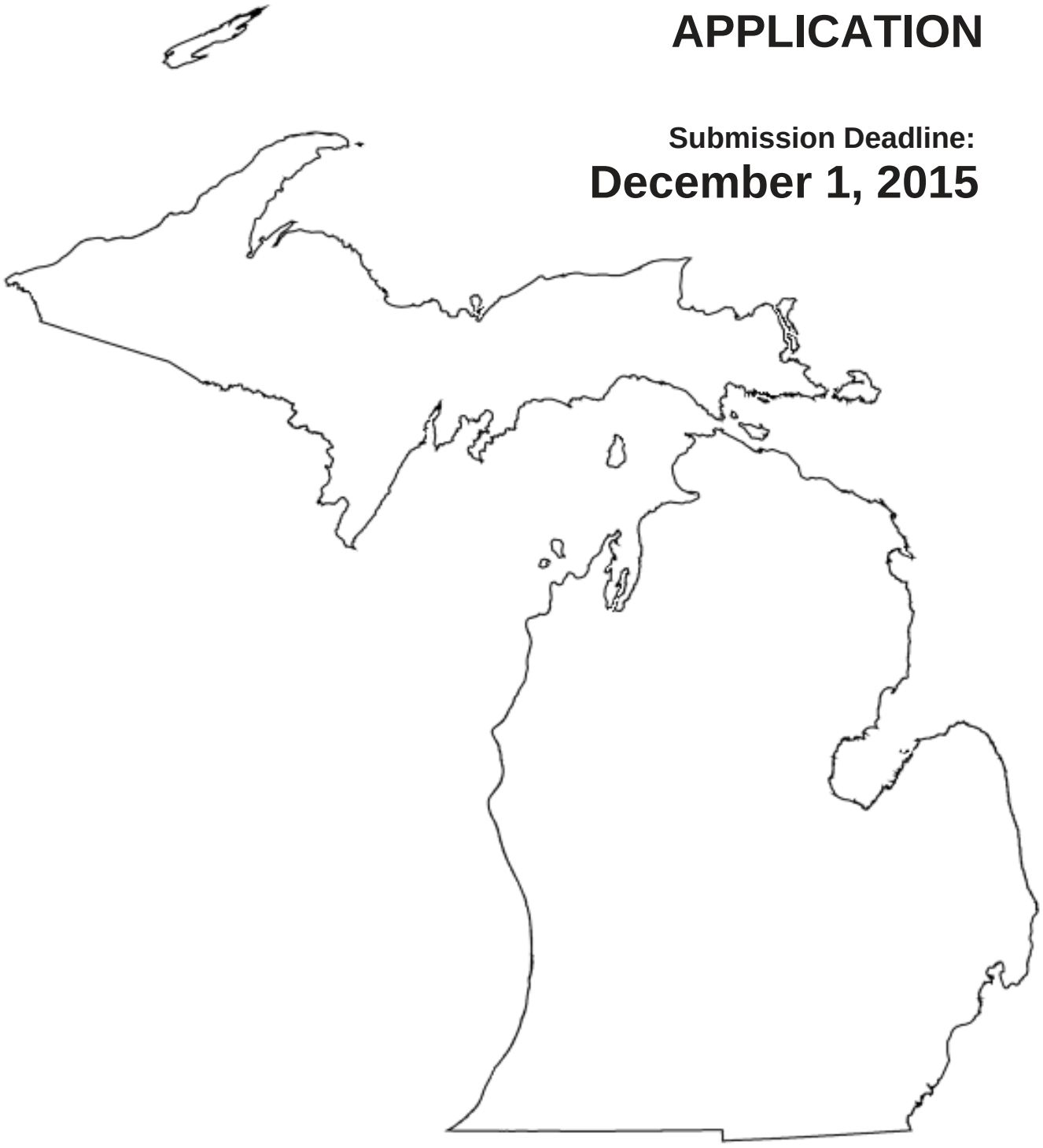
REGIONAL PROSPERITY INITIATIVE APPLICATION

Submission Deadline:
December 1, 2015



Technology, Management & Budget

Regional Prosperity Initiative
Fiscal Year 2016 Grant Application Form

The Regional Prosperity Initiative Application Form was developed to facilitate the application process for grants within designated regions throughout Michigan.

The following checklist outlines the sequence of steps needed to complete an application:

- ✓ Study the Regional Prosperity Guidance and boilerplate to understand the requirements and purpose behind the state's approach to regional collaboration and whether you are eligible to apply on behalf of your region.
- ✓ Note any additional requirements beyond the prerequisites of the grant application form (e.g., letters of support, application deadlines, etc.).
- ✓ Fill out the application form completely, using the format provided.
- ▪ If you are a NEW APPLICANT, enclose your organization's incorporating documents and pertinent memorandums of understanding.
- ▪ If you are a NEW APPLICANT, enclose a list of current board members (include member affiliations and any other pertinent information).
- ▪ If you are a NEW APPLICANT, enclose the most recent audited financial statement (if available).
- ✓ Enclose your organization's current year operating budget.
- ✓ Enclose a list of key organizational staff, including titles and main functions.
- ✓ Applications must be accompanied by a cover letter (no more than one page) stating the region's request and proposed use of funds. This letter should be signed by the directors and board presidents of each of the required regional sectors (i.e. economic development, workforce development, community development, transportation, adult education and regional planning)
- ✓ The application for which you are seeking approval is a collaborative effort with other agencies; include letters of support from collaborating agencies. Each category of required sectors must be represented. (A resolution of support from the lead applicant and a letter of support from each co-applicant are due at the time of submission.)
- ✓ Complete the narrative section on p. 4. (Use 12-point font and one inch margins.)
- ✓ If you are a NEW APPLICANT, complete p. 5 of the application. (Use 12-point font and one inch margins.)
- ✓ If you are a RETURNING APPLICANT (your organization received an RPI grant last year), you must complete p. 6 of the application. (Use 12-point font and one inch margins.)
- ✓ If you are a RETURNING APPLICANT, please enclose a copy of your most current regional prosperity plan, a copy of the accompanying dashboard, and a record of the 2/3 or more vote of support on these items. These documents can be submitted electronically by providing links to the appropriate publically available website. ALL DOCUMENTS ON WEBSITE http://gvmc.org/wmrpa.shtml
- ✓ Enclose a detailed budget and timeline of the projects for which funds are being sought. Prioritize spending from most to least important for successful implementation of proposed projects.
- ✓ Application is due to DTMB by Dec. 1, 2015. Submit by email: harkinsc1@michigan.gov.

Additional questions may be directed to:

Sara Wycoff McCauley
Senior Strategic Policy Advisor
Executive Office of Governor Rick Snyder
McCauleyS1@michigan.gov

Chris Harkins
Director; Office of Health and Human Services
State Budget Office
harkinsc1@michigan.gov

APPLICANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

APPLICATION MADE FOR: Region 4 West Michigan Prosperity Alliance DATE: October 22, 2015
(NAME of REGION)

NAME OF APPLICANT ORGANIZATION:
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

YEAR INCORPORATED: 1990

Tax ID#: 382958726

ADDRESS: (include street address if different)

678 Front Ave NW Ste 200

Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Is the name above the same as it appears on the IRS Letter of Determination? Yes X No ☐

If not, explain:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S NAME & TITLE: John W. Weiss, Executive Director

CONTACT'S NAME & TITLE (if different):

**Note: This will be the individual contacted regarding questions and/or updates about the application's status.*

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER: 616.776.7604

EMAIL ADDRESS: john.weiss@gvmc.org

NUMBER OF FTE POSITIONS: 13

OPERATING BUDGET TOTAL FOR CURRENT FISCAL YEAR:

Fiscal Year: 10/1/15 (From) 9/30/16 (To)

SOURCES OF INCOME:

Government	Federal	58.13%	Fees/Earned Income	1.04 %
	State	19.26%	Individual Contributions	%
	County	3.26%	Corporate and/or Foundation Grants	%
	City/Township/Village	18.31%	Special Events	%
			Memberships	%
			Other	%

Are you applying for (check one of the following):

Regional Prosperity Collaborative **X** (TIER ONE) Regional Prosperity Council ☐ (TIER TWO) Regional Prosperity Board ☐ (TIER THREE)

Are you applying for funds to complete a feasibility study for the purpose of developing a strategy to move to a different tier (check one of the following):

YES ☐ NO **X**

ALL APPLICANTS: ELIGIBILITY, FUNDING AND STAKEHOLDER INFORMATION

***Answers to the following questions may be no more than a total of three pages*

1. **Describe why the region is eligible for the funding tier to which you are applying.**

The Region 4 West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance is eligible for the $250,000 funding requested as it meets all the criteria of Sec. 822f. of the Boiler Plate document including:

(2) Regional planning organizations may qualify to receive not more than $250,000.00 of incentive-based funding as a regional prosperity collaborative subject to meeting all of the following requirements:

(a) The regional prosperity collaborative has created a phase one: regional prosperity plan, as follows:

(i) The regional prosperity collaborative must include regional representatives from adult education, workforce development, community development, economic development, transportation, and higher education organizations.

(ii) The plan is required, at a minimum, to include a 5-year plan focused on economic growth and vitality for the region, as well as a performance dashboard and measurable annual goals to support the 5-year plan.

(iii) The 5-year plan shall address regional strategies related to adult education, workforce development, economic development, transportation, higher education, and business development.

(iv) The regional prosperity collaborative shall adopt the plan by a minimum 2/3 majority vote of its members.

(b) The regional prosperity collaborative adheres to accountability and transparency measures required in the open meetings act.

(c) The regional prosperity collaborative convenes monthly meetings, open to the public, to consider and discuss issues leading to a common vision of economic prosperity for the region, including, but not limited to, community development, economic development, talent, and infrastructure opportunities.

(d) The regional prosperity collaborative makes available on the grant recipient's publicly accessible Internet site pertinent documents, including, but not limited to, monthly meeting agendas, minutes of monthly meetings, voting records, and the regional prosperity plan and performance dashboard.

(e) The regional prosperity collaborative keeps a status report detailing the spending associated with previous regional prosperity initiative grants. Organizations that have successfully received grant awards in previous fiscal years shall be required to make available to the department and on a publicly accessible Internet site information regarding the use of those grant dollars.

2. **Identify all partners participating in this application and specifically denote those that are required partners as identified in the boilerplate language. Outline any additional prospective partners you contacted to participate in this effort but that have not yet submitted a formal letter of support. For returning applicants, denote changes to your participant list from the prior year. If an individual or organization has ceased participating, please explain why to the best of your ability.**

*** MPO and Planning Commissions/Others: (6)** John Weiss -GVMC Dave Bee -WMRPC Erin Kuhn -WMSRDC Steve Bulthuis -MACC Rick Chapla-The Right Place Kevin Stotts - Talent 2025 ***Economic Development Agencies: (3)** Barry County Economic Development Alliance-Open Ed Garner -Muskegon Area First Jennifer Owens - Lakeshore Advantage **At Large Members (7)** Andrew Johnston-West Michigan Chamber Coalition Jim Sandy-Mecosta Co Development Corporation Roger Safford-MDOT Jim Fisher-Padnos, Inc. Simone Jonaitis-GVSU-Cnt for Adult & Cont. Studies Linda Brand-Model Communities Initiative Kathy McLean – Ludington / Scottville Chamber ***Community Development:** (2) – New requirement* Dan Peterson-8Cap Bill Raymond-Ottawa County Community Action	**Workforce Development: (2) – Fewer agencies due to consolidation of agencies* Jacob Maas-West Michigan Works! /Kent County Community Action Agency Paul Griffith-Michigan Works West Central ***Higher Education: (3)** Dan Rinsema-Sybenga -Muskegon CC Bill Pink-Grand Rapids CC Lisa Stich -West Shore CC ***Adult Education: (3)** Michael O'Connor-Holland/Zeeland Adult Ed Brenda Nyhof-Allegan Adult and Alternative Ed Doug Wood-Orchard View Public Schools **Philanthropic (3)** Bonnie Hildreth – Barry County Foundation Carol Paine McGovern – Paine Family Foundation Bob Chapla – Com. Foundation for Muskegon County ***Required Partners**

3. **What is the total amount of funding requested? Please provide an itemized and prioritized list of what is intended to be accomplished with the funding. Include a timeline and information about any funds you will leverage in this effort. Discuss any instances of collaboration between Prosperity Regions or sub-regions. If you have carryover money from the last grant cycle, you must acknowledge that in your overall budget proposal.**

Region 4 West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance is requesting Tier I $250,000 funding. WMRPA has been intentionally fiscally responsible with the Phase II funding by leveraging donations of staff and personnel; food and meeting space; as well as printing and public relations, so that it can carry over monies to help fund the Region 4 "Projects of Economic Significance".

With a renewed grant of $250,000 plus the carryover of $149,721.51 from the 2015 grant, the West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance plans to continue its collaborative efforts; increase marketing & public education; create an in-depth regional dashboard (see attachment); lend political & philanthropic help to fund the projects; as well as supply "seed" money to jumpstart and leverage additional state, federal and philanthropic funding.

Additionally, WMRPA intends to work with Region 2 and Region 8 to the north and south to explore partnerships in rail, tourism and environmental issues. We also plan to work with the East Central Michigan Planning and Development Commission (Region 5) to investigate freight rail service between the two regions extending from Saginaw to our priority project of the

"Muskegon Port Logistics Hub". We have aggressively sought opportunities to work with other regions on important issues. Finally, we will begin to investigate opportunities to potentially move the organization to Tier II.

Revenues	
2015 Carryover	$149,721.51
WMSA Donation	$2,650.71
2016 Request	$250,000.00
Total Available	$402,372.22

Expenses	
Grant Administration/RPI Leadership	$32,000.00
Communications/Public Education	$24,000.00
Region to Region Collaboration	$10,000.00
Regional Economic Analysis / Data Development / Regional Dashboard	$60,000.00
Strategic Planning & Plan Refinement	$30,000.00
Regional Collaboration, Cooperation, RPI Meetings, Collaboration Efforts	$50,000.00
Priority Project Support/Financial Assistance/Staff Support of Projects/ Leveraging	$196,372.22
	$402,372.22

Prioritized Goal List	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	March 2016	April 2016	May 2016	June 2016	July 2016	Aug 2016	Sept 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016
1. Economic Analysis & Data Development												
2. Call for Projects												
3. Evaluate Projects												
4. Award Project Grants												
5. Consultant Search												
6. Work w Consultant / Plan Refinement												
7. Implement Refined Plan												
8. Communications & Public Relations												
9. Monthly Meetings												
10. Ongoing Support & Monitoring of Funded Projects												
11. Outreach to Other Regions												

1. **Are the proposed counties to be served in accordance with the regional prosperity map? If not, why not? How do you intend to begin to work in the region outlined in the aforementioned map going forward?**

YES – We have already begun the process of serving the entire region. The West Michigan Prosperity Alliance currently involves representatives from not only the targeted areas, but also is geographically balanced. We have been communicating with over 150 leaders from throughout the region and will include this regional group in our collective efforts to develop our Projects of Regional Significance. This is already a regionally based initiative.

RETURNING APPLICANTS ONLY: NEEDS, GOALS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Answers to the following questions may be no more than a total of four pages

1. **WEB PRESENCE: Please indicate the appropriate website at which the required grant documents can be viewed, including the region's published plan, dashboard and transparency documents (meeting notices, agendas, minutes) for the 2015 Fiscal Year.**

   All above mentioned documents can be viewed on: http://gvmc.org/wmrpa.shtml. Vote of approval of prosperity plan in minutes of 10/10/2014 Steering Committee Meeting.

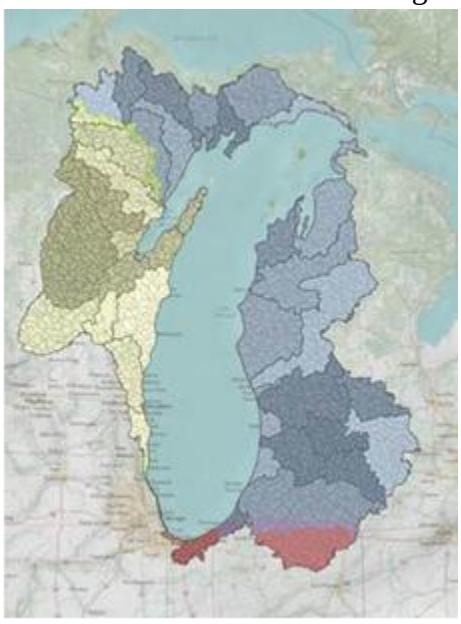
2. **DEMONSTRATION OF SUCCESS: Please illustrate how collaborative planning has led to meaningful action. Define success for your region and explain your method for measuring it. When defining the region's success, please pay careful attention to the deliverables proposed in the prior year's grant application, evidence of engagement from community partners, adherence to your budget, timeline and the open meetings act, as well as the ability to leverage additional funding.**

   Success will be measured by continued monthly meetings by the group and transparency; expanded collaboration efforts within our West Michigan Region and with other Regions; ongoing guidance to priority project organizers & continued refinement and redevelopment of 5-year plan; and any investigation of moving to Tier II. Most of all, success will be measured by our continued partnerships to promote collaboration which will lead to increased prosperity in our region. Additionally, fund receivers will be required to report on progress, success & challenges.

   Demonstration of Success of Prior RPI Grants

   - **Project Grantee Success Reports**
     - **Michigan Work Ready Communities** - Created, funded and carried out a 3-6 month marketing plan and public awareness campaign to employer engagement in the Michigan Work Ready Communities Initiative and create a critical mass of employers across the region using the NCRC-National Career Readiness Certificate.

     - **Clean Water** - The West Michigan Watershed Collaborative (WMWC) Project is being managed by a team consisting of staff from the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council (MACC), West Michigan Regional Shoreline Development Commission (WMSRDC) and Grand Valley Metropolitan Council (GVMC). The management team met several times in FY2015 and made contact with all watershed organizations within the region to build awareness and support for the WMWC project. All groups within the region expressed interest in participating in the project. The first meeting to form the West Michigan Watersheds Collaborative was held on June 23, 2015 in Grand Rapids, MI. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the goals of the project and gauge interest from the watershed partners on the development of a regional watershed framework. Representatives from 23 watersheds within Region 4 attended the meeting and provided input to the process. This information was summarized to create the basis of a Water Quality Plan. Water



resources are a strategic advantage for the state and are likely to become more so in the next twenty to forty years. The impact of this effort has already expanded beyond Region 4 into areas to the north (Region 2), south (Region 8), and east (Regions 5 and 7) of Region 4, since they also contain watersheds that contribute to Lake Michigan. These watersheds are unified in that they all have a common goal of improving water quality in their watersheds that will ultimately protect the water quality of Lake Michigan. This project is promoting cooperation among these other regions and encouragement for them include this effort as a priority in their prosperity plans.

- **Emerge** – Web Connect-a program focused on a web portal linking entrepreneurial support resources with entrepreneurial start-ups in the 13 county West Michigan region. Laurie Supinski is the Project Manager (commenced April, 2014) for Web Connect and her responsibilities include website development and maintenance, follow-up with both entrepreneurs and entrepreneur support organizations, and leading programs to support networking and education.

  Mentor Connect-a program modeled after the highly successful Springboard program from CONNECT in San Diego. Project Manager Catherine Creamer, commencing her work in August, 2015, has over 50 West Michigan leaders and industry experts who have volunteered to serve on panels supporting start-ups and helping them to either prepare to pitch for funds or "fail fast" in identifying critical flaws in their concepts or business plan/infrastructure.

- **Connect Michigan**- has been working with several counties within the West Michigan Prosperity Region over the past three years to help improve the access, adoption and use of broadband technology in those communities through our "Connected Community" methodology. In each of these projects, Connect Michigan facilitates a Community Broadband Assessment to raise awareness of the current broadband environment within the community, followed by a Technology Action Planning process to establish actions and projects to improve broadband effectiveness in that county.

  With 2015 funding from the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance, we are extending this program to the remaining counties in the 13-county region. New "Connected Community" teams and projects have officially been launched in Muskegon, Ionia and Montcalm counties, with the Kent County project kickoff meeting scheduled for November 13. Concurrently, significant progress has been made through the assessment and action planning process in Allegan, Mason, Oceana, and Newaygo counties, with Newaygo being recognized as the newest "certified" Connected Community in Michigan on November 10. Lake, Osceola, Mecosta and Barry counties had already established action plans in prior years and are continuing to build on these actions. Ottawa County remains to be launched soon.

  Connect Michigan's plans for 2016 will include completion of remaining county assessments and action plans, development and execution of specific projects resulting from those action plans, consolidation of county results into a region-wide action plan and ongoing consultation and support from Connect Michigan on other broadband-related initiatives.

- **Muskegon Port** - The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission in partnership with the Muskegon County Port Advisory Committee have been actively working on promoting the developing the Port of Muskegon as a multi-modal regional logistics hub. The project received overwhelming support through the West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance (WMPA) as the number one project for the 13-county region

and financial support totaling $31,250. The support and financial contribution from the WMPA was a springboard to raising an additional $31,250 through local contributions as matching funds for a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration grant totaling $62,500 to conduct and Infrastructure and Governance Structure Analysis focusing on the Port of Muskegon as a regional logistics hub. The EDA grant was awarded in September 2015. A local steering committee is being formed and a request for proposals is being developed. The study is expected to cost $125,000 and be underway by January 2016.

- **Addition of three philanthropic and two community development representatives**

- **Budget adherence & surplus** - The West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance was intentionally frugal and fiscally responsible in budget management so that monies could be carried over to help reach next year's goals. Of the Phase II RPI $228,750 grant, $149,721.51 will be carried over to 2016 to assist with funding to support the 5 priority projects; expand our initiatives and regional collaboration; develop new regional projects and further plan refinement.

- **Transparency & open meetings act** – Web posting of meeting notices, minutes, agendas, and news articles http://gvmc.org/wmrpa.shtml . Vote of approval of prosperity plan in minutes of 10/10/2014 Steering Committee Meeting.

- **Increase marketing & public education** through ongoing public speaking events; creation & distribution of Executive Summary; media articles (see listing on dashboard); GVMC Weekly Update articles; Governor's Economic & Education Summit; Michigan Work Ready promotion; WMRSDC Updates; Leadership West Michigan; as well as website & Facebook presence.

- **Lend political and philanthropic help** – WMRPA Region 4 used its leadership to promote the RPI program, educate political and philanthropic representatives on its benefits, successes, and ongoing needs; and show WMRPA Board and area-wide support for the 5 projects and other collaborative endeavors helping to leverage additional state, federal, local & nonprofit funding.

- **Funding projects & leveraging project funds** – Five projects of regional economic significance have been funded to an extent of $230,500.

- **Inter organizational cooperation and fostering relationships between regions**
  - Inter-regional collaboration and cooperation has been promoted through an official agreement between WMRSDC and WMRPC
  - Michigan Works consolidation
  - West Michigan Watershed Collaborative

3. **APPLYING LESSONS LEARNED: What lessons will you take from last year's grant award? What are the most significant challenges to the region's collaborative success in for the coming year? How can the region's previous work and a renewed Regional Prosperity Grant inform a strategy for the upcoming year and increase opportunities for success?**

   Lessons range from the very simple but sometimes difficult lesson of learning how to listen to others, to resolving conflicting priorities among both sectors and geographies. The WMPA is a large and diversified region. The 2014 & 2015 teamwork built a foundation of trust, communication, partnering, collaboration and cooperation. We have now laid the groundwork to enable us to make exponential progress in the future.

Without the building of trust and models for working together, we would not have the unlimited potential for progress we have today. In addition, we have our targeted regional priorities and processes in place to make an even greater impact on our region in 2016.

4. **NEEDS STATEMENT: Explain the need for a continued collaborative economic strategy in your region. Identify the needs a renewed grant would fulfill. Acknowledge similar existing projects or agencies, if any, and explain how your proposal differs, and what effort will be made to work cooperatively.**

   The West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance has been highly successful in reaching its goals for the past two grant cycles. However, there still is much that can be done to promote the success of existing and future projects of economic significance, as well as foster cooperation and collaboration by other methods throughout the region. With a renewed grant of $250,000; the carryover of $149,721.51 from the 2015 grant; and a donation of $2,650.71 from the West Michigan Strategic Alliance, REGION 4 plans to continue its collaborative efforts including hiring of a consultant to review and refine the prosperity plan; increase communications & public education; lend political & philanthropic help to fund projects; as well as directly funding ongoing and new project initiatives. Additionally, it will help fund a regional dashboard with drill down capabilities to analyze data and trends on a region-wide as well as site specific basis. Indicators will include economic, education, environmental, talent, livability, etc. (see attached Minneapolis example).

   The West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance is truly a unique organization in Region 4 in that it brings together representatives from Higher Education; Planning and Transportation; Adult Education; Community Development; Economic Development; Workforce Development and the Philanthropic Community to jointly address the prosperity of the region. These representatives were able to work collaboratively, seeing the big picture and working for the betterment of the entire region, rather than taking a narrow view and promoting only their individual jurisdictions.

5. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Please address anything else about your organization or project you think is relevant to the proposal.**

   Additionally, the success of Region 4's RPI efforts has resulted in a partnership with the West Michigan Strategic Alliance as they closed their doors. The Strategic Alliance donated its intellectual property and data along, with a small fund balance to Region 4's endeavors. The recognition of this partnership by Strategic Alliance stakeholders and the philanthropic community, along with the donation of the intellectual property and data, will be critical in the next phases of the Regional Prosperity Initiative.

Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

Senior Staff

John Weiss – Executive Director - Plans, develops and implements programs and policies of the Metro Council. Oversees all operations including MPO, REGIS, Environmental Programs, and Legislative. Develops and monitors the annual budget, oversees all activities, represents Grand Valley Metro Council in public forums and develops and maintains effective interagency and public lines of communication.

Abed Itani - Director of Transportation Planning - Responsible for administration of the transportation planning program, development of the Council's transportation unified work program and policies, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, establishment of project budgets, management of the transportation staff, management of the transportation department budget, staff coordinator of GVMC Transportation Committees, and coordinates with state and federal agencies.

Jason Moore, REGIS GIS Manager – Project manager and staff supervisor for the Regional Geographic Information System (GIS). Supervises a staff of GIS professionals engaged in a variety of activities related to the REGIS.

Gayle McCrath, Director of Human Resources and Administration – Oversees Human Resources and Compliance issues. Facilities Management and Administrator for office. Plans and coordinates special events. Serves as the lead contact for Council members.

Wendy Ogilvie, Director of Environmental Programs – Oversees NPDES, LGROW and a variety of environmental and land use issues.