

# **The Mid-Michigan Program for Greater Sustainability**

By Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and its many partners  
in the Greater Lansing Michigan Region of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties.

## ***Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program***

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) joined with many partners in the greater Lansing community of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties to submit a proposal to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program. Our proposal, "The Mid-Michigan Program for Greater Sustainability" is awarded \$3 million over the next three years for regional planning efforts that integrate housing, land-use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure development in a comprehensive and integrated manner. TCRPC and its partners offered more than \$7,200,000 in local matching contributions of services, expertise, participation and matching funds to make this program worth over \$10 million. With HUD funding and regional community participation, we are empowered to consider how all of these factors will work together to bring economic competitiveness and revitalization to the Greater Lansing three-county region.

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission places a priority on regional collaborations between local governments; social service, neighborhood, and community groups; and economic development, arts and culture, and environmental protection efforts. Together, we all bring innovative ideas to the regional planning process. In 2005, the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission completed a regional visioning initiative with our partners. "Regional Growth: Choices for Our Future" produced a recognition by area leaders and residents that we must collaborate to rebuild our strong core cities, support healthy live-able communities in our area, and move our entire region towards economic, social, and environmental sustainability. To date, collaborative efforts by TCRPC's many partners have included master planning, shared services initiatives, housing support and redevelopment programs, increased bike-able, walk-able, and healthy communities initiatives, and efforts to address climate change, energy efficiency, and our regional green infrastructure. This proposal builds on the momentum in the mid-Michigan region.

With this HUD grant award, our region can fully plan and implement a regional transformation that manages our declines in population, employment, and fiscal capacity while improving our economic opportunity, social equity, and environmental quality. Through this partnership and support from the HUD Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program, we will make mid-Michigan and its Capital City, Lansing, into a 21<sup>st</sup> century model of sustainability.

*Please see page 2 for more information.*

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Over the next three years in the Greater Lansing region, projects will be implemented by Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's many partners and their task forces to meet the goals of this sustainability planning initiative. Much of the effort will be demonstration projects along the 19-mile Michigan Avenue-Grand River Avenue corridor stretching from the state Capitol through Lansing, East Lansing, Meridian Township, Williamston area, to Webberville. The corridor includes urban and small town central business districts, challenged neighborhoods, student housing, suburban commercial tracts, and rural areas. It is the region's "main street" with over 1.7 million transit trips annually. The primary projects of this grant funded sustainability planning effort will be:

- 1. Development of a Comprehensive Fair and Affordable Housing Plan** for the region.
- 2. Development of a Regional Affordable Housing Study** to provide an accurate diagnosis of current housing and set practical achievable goals to improve housing affordability in the region.
- 3. Establish a Community Reinvestment Fund to Build Capacity** in the region for traditionally underserved and marginalized populations. This fund will assist to involve traditionally underserved or marginalized communities in planning and development activities in our community.
- 4. Develop an Energy Audit Study of Built Structures.** Energy audits will be part of a complementary Corridor Design portfolio to educate and offer guidance on sustainable land use and transit developments.
- 5. Build Capacity for a Regional Urban Services Management Area** to address and preserve quality, sustainable public services such as water and sewer throughout the urbanized area while protecting our farmlands, open spaces, and rural quality of life in undeveloped areas.
- 6. Promote a Multi-faceted and Prioritized Green Infrastructure System.** Through the Greening of Mid-Michigan project our region's 'green' infrastructure, our parks, paths, and natural areas, were identified. Now, we will continue to identify the benefits of open space and watershed protection while planning sustainable low impact development strategies for the region.
- 7. Build capacity for Complete Streets planning and implementation.** Complete Streets integrate multi-modal transportation with traffic calming, safety, and accessibility. This activity will focus on improving safe routes to school.
- 8. Create an Online Portal for Sharing Information, Evaluating, and Promoting Sustainability** efforts in our region and beyond.