GVMC

GRAND VALLEY METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

ADA TOWNSHIP • ALGOMA TOWNSHIP • ALLENDALE TOWNSHIP • ALPINE TOWNSHIP • BELDING • BYRON TOWNSHIP • CALEDONIA TOWNSHIP • CANNON TOWNSHIP • CASCADE TOWNSHIP • CEDAR SPRINGS COOPERSVILLE • COURTLAND TOWNSHIP • EAST GRAND RAPIDS • GAINES TOWNSHIP • GEORGETOWN TOWNSHIP • GRAND RAPIDS • GRAND RAPIDS TOWNSHIP • GRANDVILLE • GREENVILLE HASTINGS • HUDSONVILLE • IONIA • JAMESTOWN TOWNSHIP • KENT COUNTY • KENTWOOD • LOWELL • MIDDLEVILLE • OTTAWA COUNTY • PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP • ROCKFORD SAND LAKE • TALLMADGE TOWNSHIP • WALKER • WAYLAND • WYOMING

A Resolution In Support of Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's Participation in the Regional Prosperity Alliance Phase II

WHEREAS, Governor Snyder and the Michigan Legislature have created the Regional Prosperity Initiative, and,

WHEREAS, the Regional Prosperity Initiative is intended to foster greater communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private companies, and,

WHEREAS, the West Michigan Regional Prosperity Initiative will serve a 13 county area which includes over 340 local governments, 5 higher education institutions, 6 Work Force Boards, 3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations, 2 Regional Planning Agencies, 3 Rural Transportation Task Forces, and many Economic Development and non-profit organizations, and,

WHEREAS, only the four existing metropolitan planning and regional planning agencies in our 13 country region are qualified to receive funding under the Regional Prosperity Initiative, and

WHEREAS, The Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission and The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission have requested that Grand Valley Metropolitan Council be the applicant and fiduciary agency for the grant on behalf of the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance, and,

WHEREAS, The above mentioned partners have completed Phase I of the Regional Prosperity Initiative with exceptional cooperation and collaboration with their efforts recognized statewide.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that, the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council Board of Directors hereby endorses our participation in the Regional Prosperity Initiative and,

Be It Further Resolved that the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council is honored and pleased to provide leadership in this regional venture by submitting the grant application on behalf of our West Michigan Region.

Approved on October 2, 2014 by the Board of Directors of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council.

John W. Weiss
Executive Director, Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

10/4/2014
Date

Al Vanderberg
Chair, Grand Valley Metropolitan Council

10/3/2014
Date

678 FRONT AVENUE NW • SUITE 200 • GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49504 • PH. 616 77-METRO (776-3876) • FAX 774-9292 • WWW.GVMC.ORG

LAKESHORE
ADVANTAGE

October 21, 2014

Mr. John Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Avenue NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Re: 2015 Regional Prosperity Initiative

Dear John,

Please let this letter serve as Lakeshore Advantage being in support of the preparation and submission of a $250,000 grant to continue the regional collaborative started during 2014.

We are also in support of the expansion of the steering committee to include three representatives from the philanthropic community. The grant funding, if approved, will support further regional collaboration in West Michigan.

We are looking forward to working together to support projects in our region.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Owens

Jennifer Owens
Lakeshore Advantage
President

201 W. Washington Loft 410 Zeeland, Michigan 49464 PH: 616.772.5226 FX: 616.772.5602
www.lakeshoreadvantage.com

WMSRDC
WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

October 13, 2014

Mr. John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave. NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, as an active partner in the West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance (Region 4), supports the grant application of the Grand Valley Metro Council for a second year of funding through the State of Michigan's Regional Prosperity Initiative.

The level of communication, cooperation, and partnership gained in Region 4 over the past year as a result of the Regional Prosperity Initiative and development of the Regional Prosperity Plan is unprecedented. The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission looks forward to continuing our participation and partnership with Region 4 in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,

Erin Kuhn
Executive Director

316 Morris Avenue - Suite 340 - PO Box 387 - Muskegon, MI 49443-0387
Telephone: 231/722-7878 - Fax: 231/722-9362
www.wmsrdc.org - wmsrdc@wmsrdc.org

Area Community Services
Employment & Training Council (ACSET)
Creating opportunities for economic self-sufficiency for low-income, economically disadvantaged, elderly, disabled, unemployed and underemployed individuals, and dislocated workers.

1550 Leonard NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505
Telephone (616) 336-4100
Fax (616) 336-4118
www.acset.org

October 10, 2014

John Weiss
Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave. Ste 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

It has been my pleasure to serve as Vice-Chair for the West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance (Region 4). As a member of the 25-person Steering Committee over the last year we have prepared the 5-year plan which will identify efforts that will improve the economic competitiveness of the region.

The initiative has allowed greater regional collaboration among the many organizations that impact economic development efforts. This initial planning effort has and will set the stage for an even bigger initiative in the future, especially involving private sector interests who need to embrace and support the value of this type of initiative as essential to their economic success.

Please accept this letter as affirmation that Michigan Works! Kent, Allegan & Barry Counties is in support of the second round of grant applications. We have accomplished a lot since initially sitting down in January and the continuation of the initiative will continue to benefit the whole region.

If there is anything else you need, please don't hesitation in reaching out.

Sincerely,

JACOB MAAS
Executive Director
Area Community Services Employment & Training Council (ACSET)
1550 Leonard NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

(616) 336-4128 *office*
(616) 336-4118 *fax*

MICHIGAN WORKS! Kent & Allegan Counties
Helping People. Changing Lives. community Action PARTNERSHIP of Kent County

Michigan Works! and Community Action Partnership are divisions of ACSET.
ACSET is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary Aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Michigan Relay Center 1-800-649-3777.

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
GRAND REGION

KIRK T. STEUDLE
DIRECTOR

October 3, 2014

Mr. John Weiss
Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Avenue, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss:

On behalf of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Grand Region Office, I would like to express our support for the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's (GVMC) collaborative application for the Regional Prosperity Initiative on behalf of the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative is intended to foster greater communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private companies. The GVMC application has the support of the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission and the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, all agencies with contractual and operational relationships with MDOT. The MDOT Grand Region staff will provide any assistance needed to GVMC, and your partner agencies, to make this initiative a success.

Please feel free to contact me if we can be of further help in the application process or during the implementation phase.

Sincerely,

Roger L. Safford, P.E.
Region Engineer

BOH:GRAND:RLS:ck

cc: D. Wresinski
D. McBurrows

MICHIGAN WORKS! WEST CENTRAL

LARRY EMIG
Chairperson, Local Elected Officials
WILLIAM STANEK
Chairperson, Workforce Development Board
PAUL J. GRIFFITH
Executive Director

14330 Northland Drive • Big Rapids, Michigan 49307 • 231.796.4891 • Fax: 231.796.8316 • www.michworkswc.org

October 1, 2014

John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Avenue NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Subject: Regional Prosperity Initiative

Dear Mr. Weiss:

This letter is written in support of the collaborative application from the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance for the Regional Prosperity Initiative.

It has been truly remarkable, over the last year, to see the new partnerships forged among Steering Committee members and the collaboration that has been shown. It is very exciting to see the large number of initiatives established that can benefit our region, and we are eager to see the top-rated projects move forward in the year ahead.

Serving the rural counties of Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, and Osceola, Michigan Works! West Central has always been committed to improving regional employment conditions and enhancing the economic development of our region. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

Sincerely,

Larry Emig

Larry Emig, Chairperson
Local Elected Officials

William Stanek, Chairperson
Workforce Development Board

WMRPC

WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

1345 Monroe Avenue NW • Suite 255 • Grand Rapids, MI 49505 • (616) 774-8400 • www.wmrpc.org

September 24, 2014

Mr. John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Avenue, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504

Subject: Letter of Support for Regional Prosperity Initiative

Dear Mr. Weiss,

The West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC) supports the ongoing Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI) and plans to fully participate in the 2015 program year.

I continue to enjoy serving on the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance (WMPA) Steering Committee. I look forward to another productive year of working with the Steering Committee as well as all of the organizations that submitted top-ranked projects for the WMPA to assist in implementing in the coming year.

Please let me know if there is anything the WMRPC can do to assist in the 2015 application to the Regional Prosperity Initiative.

Sincerely,

Dave Bee

Dave Bee, AICP
Director

OUR MISSION STATEMENT
To assist planning efforts in community and economic development, provide a regional forum for sharing information and ideas, and promote cooperative solutions to regional issues.

TALENT 2025
Great Talent • Great Life • West Michigan

October 2, 2014

Mr. John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave, NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

TALENT 2024 is proud to support the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance's prosperity plan – a strong addition to the region's network of initiatives to create a vibrant regional economy.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative serves to increase alignment, create collaborative relationships, and establish communication within organizations involved in economic and workforce development, higher and adult education, transportation agencies, local and state government, and private and non-profit companies. All of this is essential if West Michigan and the State of Michigan will be equipped to attract and retain talent that is crucial for remaining globally competitive.

TALENT 2025 is a collation of more than 80 CEOs from 13 West Michigan counties with a mission to act as a catalyst to ensure an ongoing supply of world-class talent in West Michigan. Our vision is to gain top-20 global recognition for West Michigan's workforce by 2025. Our regional goal is to create a culture of continual learning and skill development among individuals and employers across the region.

For these reasons, we believe supporting this initiative allows our region to become more responsive to the needs business and supports the region's economic growth by ensuring our finite resources are used wisely to enrich our communities.

Sincerely,

Kevin Stotts
President

Adult Learning Partners of West Michigan

September 29, 2014

John W. Weiss
Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Ave. Ste 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear John,

On behalf of the Adult Learning Partners of West Michigan (ALPWM), I would like to extend our continued support of the efforts of the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance. Under your leadership, the group has coalesced into a working body with the single focus of promoting prosperity within Region 4 through creative collaboration.

As a member of the Steering Committee, I remain committed to our work and look forward to the coming year with anticipation and excitement. We have such potential when we work together for the good of our community!

Sincerely,

Kathleen J. Sullivan

Kathleen J. Sullivan, facilitator
Adult Learning Providers of West Michigan (ALPWM)

Muskegon Community College

September 25, 2014

John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave. NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

I'm writing on behalf of Muskegon Community College in support of Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's grant application for a second year of funding for the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

The college has been an active partner in the Regional Prosperity Initiative project for West Michigan that got underway over the last year. Dan Rinsema-Sybenga, our Dean of Workforce and Talent Development serves on the steering committee and the college was honored to host the steering committee for its August meeting.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative is intended to foster greater communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private companies.

Having been part of the process over this last year we can definitely say that these goals are being accomplished in West Michigan and that communication and regionalization has made great strides under the Regional Prosperity Initiative. The plan that the region has worked on involved many project submissions that would be helpful for the future of the West Michigan Region.

Therefore, we continue to support the Regional Prosperity Initiative, and with this letter confirm our support of the Grand Valley Metro Council applying for further funding for this project. As an institution of higher education, we believe we can benefit by collaborating with our partners and other organizations in the region to better serve our constituents, which the Regional Prosperity Initiative is addressing.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dale Nesbary
President, Muskegon Community College

221 S. Quarterline, Muskegon, MI 49442 • (231) 773-9121 • muskegoncc.edu

Ottawa County
MICHIGAN WORKS!

616.396.2154
www.miottawa.org/michiganworks
Michigan Relay Center callers use 800.649.3777

September 30, 2014

Mr. John Weiss
Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Avenue, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear John,

On behalf of the Workforce Development Board of Ottawa County Michigan Works, I am submitting this letter in support of the 2015 Regional Prosperity application for the Region 4, West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

As outlined in the application West Michigan has many strengths, but also faces critical challenges related to talent development, infrastructure, diversity, transportation, educational preparation and more effective collaboration, to mention just a few.

With that in mind, the Ottawa County Workforce Development Board and Ottawa County Michigan Works strongly endorse the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance application for 2015. The plan outlined in the application will build on the good work begun in 2014 and the projects outlined hold much promise for collectively moving the needle forward in the arena of regional collaboration and prosperity.

The projects represent a diverse mixture of ideas and all hold promise of impacting the entire region.

Ottawa County Michigan Works and the Ottawa County Workforce Development Board look forward to working with the prosperity alliance and in helping to bring these projects to fruition.

Sincerely,

Chad Tuttle
Chair
Ottawa County Workforce Development Board

William L. Raymond
Executive Director
Ottawa County Michigan Works!

Ottawa County Michigan Works! is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids, services, and other reasonable accommodations are available upon request to individuals with disabilities

Holland
121 Clover Street
Holland, MI 49423
P. 616.396.2154
F. 616.396.1597

Grand Haven
OCMWA c/o Central High School Building
106 South Sixth Street
Grand Haven, MI 49417
P. 616.850.6862
F. 616.850.6824

Administrative Offices
115 Clover Street, Suite 200
Holland, MI 49423
P. 616.494.3400
F. 616.494.3434

GRAND RAPIDS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

September 30, 2014

Mr. John Weiss
Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Ave. NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss:

On behalf of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, I write to support the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's 2015 application for the Regional Prosperity Initiative on behalf of the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

Collaboration, cooperation and public-private partnerships are hallmarks of the West Michigan community. To move our region forward, we need a comprehensive economic development strategy. This can only be realized when leaders in the business development, talent development and infrastructure development communities unite in a common vision and strategy. The West Michigan Prosperity Alliance has made great strides in this effort but there is clearly much more to be done.

Supported by the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission and the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, this effort to align the thirteen county region is no small undertaking. It is already paying dividends and approval of this application will advance the workforce and economic development efforts already underway in West Michigan to help employers meet our talent needs.

The Chamber is committed to this work in collaboration with our community partners and we offer our strong support for Grand Valley Metro Council's application.

Sincerely,

Rick Baker
President & CEO

111 Pearl St. NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
T 616.771.0300
F 616.771.0318
www.grandrapids.org

BARRY county
chamber of commerce & economic development alliance

October 8, 2014

John Weiss
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Ave. NW Ste. 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear John:

On behalf of the Barry County Economic Development Alliance I would like to express our support of the Region 4 Regional Prosperity Initiative. Barry County leadership has actively engaged in the process laid out in the original grant objectives for the region and appreciates the opportunity to work strategically to enhance economic development initiatives that have greater regional impact.

The Barry County Economic Development Alliance appreciates the opportunity to serve as a representative of economic development as a part of the Region 4 steering committee providing input on behalf of our rural community and would look forward to continuing in that role moving forward.

We fully support the efforts of the Grand Valley Metro Council in partnership with the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission and the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission in making application for funding through the state of Michigan for fiscal year 2014-15 as part of the Governor's Regional Prosperity Initiative.

Thank you for your work in engaging our 13-county region to create a vibrant and collaborative environment for economic growth.

Best regards,

Valerie Byrnes
President

phone: 269.945.2454 | fax: 269.945.3839 | 221 W. State Street Hastings, MI 49058 | miBARRY.com

Macatawa Area Coordinating Council

A Cooperative Effort Among Units of Government

Policy Board

- William Vanderbilt
- Blaine Koops
- Hannes Meyers, Jr.
- Pankaj Rajadhyaksha

Howard Baumann, Jr.
Joseph Baumann
Thomas Bird
Ken DeWeerdt
Kurt Dykstra
Terry Hofmeyer
Gerald Hunsburger
John Kleinheksel
Kevin Klynstra
John Lanum
Al Myaard
Terry Nienhuis
Jim Storey
Russ Te Slaa
Todd Wolters

- Executive Committee

October 9, 2014

John Weiss
Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Avenue NW, Ste. 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear John,

The Macatawa Area Coordinating Council is pleased to provide this letter in support of the application for FY 2015 funding from the Regional Prosperity Initiative. The West Michigan Prosperity Alliance (Region 4) has made significant progress in its first year and is poised in 2015 to strengthen its collaborative efforts and implement the activities identified in its Prosperity Plan.

Thanks for your leadership on this important initiative and I look forward to 2015 as we continue the journey!

Sincerely,

Steve Bulthuis

Steve Bulthuis
Executive Director
Macatawa Area Coordinating Council

301 Douglas Avenue, Holland, Michigan 49424
phone: (616) 395-2688 - *fax*: (616) 395-9411

www.the-macc.org
email: info@the-macc.org

ORCHARD VIEW
Community Education
A Division Of Orchard View Schools

*Inspiring you to **LEARN**.*
*Encouraging you to **PLAY**.*

October 15, 2014

John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave. NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

I'm writing on behalf of Orchard View Community Education in support of Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's grant application for the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative is intended to foster greater communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private companies. The West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance serves a 13 county area that includes over 340 local governments, 5 higher education institutions, 6 Work Force Boards, 3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations, 2 Regional Planning Agencies, 3 Rural Transportation Task Forces, and many Economic Development and non-profit organizations.

The work of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council over the last year has been impressive in coordinating and catalyzing conversations and actions within our region. We believe continued funding will allow our region to sustain this excellent work as we pursue economic development strategies and leverage our resources to benefit our communities.

Sincerely,

Doug Wood
Director, Orchard View Community Education

MICHIGAN WORKS!®
Muskegon–Oceana

Muskegon Site

316 Morris Avenue,
Suite 300
Muskegon, MI 49440

Phone 231.724.6381
Fax 231.724.6687

Shelby Site

195 N Michigan Avenue
Shelby, MI 49455

Phone 231.861.2073
Fax 231.861.6300

www.miworksmo.org

October 16, 2014

John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave. NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

I'm writing on behalf of Michigan Works! Muskegon-Oceana in support of Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's second year grant application for the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative is intended to foster greater communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private companies. The West Michigan Regional Prosperity Initiative serves a 13 county area which includes over 340 local governments, 5 higher education institutions, 5 Work Force Boards, 3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations, 2 Regional Planning Agencies, 3 Rural Transportation Task Forces, and many Economic Development and non-profit organizations.

We believe this funding will allow our region to continue to pursue economic development strategies and leverage our resources to benefit our communities.

Sincerely,

Deborah Groeneveld
Executive Director
Michigan Works! Muskegon-Oceana

GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY
www.gvsu.edu

October 15, 2014

John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave. NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

I am writing on behalf of Grand Valley State University in support of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's grant application for the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

Over the last year, the leadership Grand Valley Metropolitan Council has provided has been impressive. It is no small task to convene representatives from a 13 county area from various sectors, including workforce development, government, education and private industry. The conversations have been collaborative and relevant, resulting in a coordinated approach to building and sustaining the vitality of West Michigan.

Although much has been accomplished, there is great opportunity to build upon the existing and expanded collaborations that have been developed over the past year. Continued funding will allow us to further develop strategies and leverage resources, to the benefit of our communities.

Sincerely,

Simone Jonaitis, PhD
Executive Director
Center for Adult & Continuing Studies
Grand Valley State University

Mecosta
County
Development
Corporation

www.mecostaedc.com James M. Sandy, Executive Director
246 N. State Street, Big Rapids, MI 49307 ph: (231)592-3403 fax: (231) 592-4085 email: jsandy@co.mecosta.mi.us

October 16, 2014

John W. Weiss
Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Ave. Ste 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear John,

The Mecosta County Development Corporation continues its support for the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance and the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's 2015 grant application which is designed to build on fine work that has been completed in 2014.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative has greatly improved communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private companies in the West Michigan region.

We believe continued funding will allow the region to sustain this excellent work as we pursue economic development strategies and leverage our resources to benefit our communities.

Warm regards,

Jim Sandy, President

October 21, 2014

John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave. NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

I'm writing on behalf of PADNOS in support of Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's grant application for the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative is intended to foster greater communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private companies. The West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance serves a 13 county area that includes over 340 local governments, 5 higher education institutions, 6 Work Force Boards, 3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations, 2 Regional Planning Agencies, 3 Rural Transportation Task Forces, and many Economic Development and non-profit organizations. PADNOS, a 109 year old company with over 650 employees, represents the substantial private sector in West Michigan.

The work of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council over the last year has been impressive in coordinating and catalyzing conversations and actions within our region. We believe continued funding will allow our region to sustain this excellent work as we pursue economic development strategies and leverage our resources to benefit our communities.

Sincerely yours,

Jim Fisher, Director, PADNOS

Muskegon Area First
380 W. Western, Suite 202
Muskegon, MI 49440
(231) 724-3172 direct
(231) 728-7251 fax
muskegonareafirst.org

October 20, 2014

John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Avenue NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

This letter is to indicate that Muskegon Area First (a county-wide economic development corporation) is in full support of Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's grant application for additional funding from the Regional Prosperity Initiative.

As a member of the West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance steering committee, our agency worked to ensure that our Regional Prosperity Plan was developed with a high level of participation from all 13 counties represented by the Alliance, and that the projects identified would enhance our long-term economic viability.

We intend to continue with our participation in the Prosperity Alliance as we move forward with the implementation of our Prosperity Plan because of its importance to our region.

Sincerely,

Edward L. Garner
President & CEO

THE RIGHT PLACE

Advancing the West Michigan Economy

October 21, 2014

Mr. John Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metropolitan Council
678 Front Avenue NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Re: 2015 Regional Prosperity Initiative

Dear John,

Please let this letter serve as the Right Place being in support of the preparation and submission of a $250,000 grant to continue the regional collaborative which started during 2014.

We are also in support of the expansion of the Steering Committee to include three representatives from the philanthropic community. The grant funding, if approved, will be used to improve the economy of West Michigan through strategies and projects involving infrastructure, workforce development and economic development.

The West Michigan Region 4 Prosperity Initiative is off to an excellent start. We are delighted to serve on the Steering Committee and to continue the momentum of the initiative into 2015.

Best regards,

Birgit M. Klohs
President & CEO

161 Ottawa Avenue NW, Suite 400 Grand Rapids, MI 49503 p 616.771.0325 f 616.771.0555 e info@rightplace.org

HOLLAND/ZEELAND
MODEL COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

10/21/14

John W. Weiss
Regional Prosperity Initiative
Region 4 Chairperson

Dear John,

This letter confirms that as the Executive Director of the Holland/Zeeland Model Community Initiatives, I have been involved in the Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI)process and will continue to participate during 2015. The Holland/Zeeland Model Community Initiatives is a group of 15 community leaders who have come together to support processes that fuel business growth, talent development and improved governance.

We appreciate the work of all those in our region who are contributing time and talent to this effort.

Please contact me with any questions.

Linda R Brand

Linda R, Brand
Executive Director
Holland/Zeeland Model Community Initiatives
616-836-1570
lrbrand@me.com

cc: Jim Brooks

Zeeland/Holland
Adult Education
616-494-8803
115 Clover Ave
Holland, MI 49423

October 22, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of the continuation of the Michigan Regional Prosperity Initiative (MRPI) in which I will continue to participate as a member representing adult education in Region #4 which consists of 13 counties. This very important endeavor is key in developing educational and economic development partnerships which are vital in our region.

As of July 1, 2014, the Section 107 Adult Education state funding and the delivery of services has been legislated to operate on a regional basis with the Kent Intermediate School District serving as the fiscal agent for the 13 county region. The Zeeland Adult Education Program which I operate encompasses all of the school districts in Ottawa County as well as Fennville Adult Education in Allegan County. It is imperative that the MRPI be funded for another year so that we may continue to form partnerships which support our regional plan which will result in a much more streamlined approach to life-long learning opportunities to meet the needs of residents and employers.

As a member of the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance Steering Committee, I must applaud Mr. John Weiss, Chair, of the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance for his leadership role in this process and recommend that he continue to serve in his role as Chair in leading the committee forward to accomplish its second year goals.

Sincerely,

Mike O'Connor,
Director, Zeeland Adult Education Consortium
Superintendent, Glenn Public School

GRCC

1914 - 2014 GREAT PAST. BRIGHT FUTURE.

October 24, 2014

John W. Weiss, Executive Director
Grand Valley Metro Council
678 Front Ave. NE, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Dear Mr. Weiss,

On behalf of Grand Rapids Community College, we support Grand Valley Metropolitan Council's grant application for the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance.

The Regional Prosperity Initiative is intended to foster greater communication and collaboration among organizations involved in economic development, education, work-force development, regional planning and transportation agencies, local and state government, and private companies. The West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance serves a 13 county area that includes over 340 local governments, 5 higher education institutions, 6 Work Force Boards, 3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations, 2 Regional Planning Agencies, 3 Rural Transportation Task Forces, and many Economic Development and non-profit organizations.

The work of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council over the last year has been impressive in coordinating and catalyzing conversations and actions within our region. We believe continued funding to the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council will allow our region to sustain this excellent work as we pursue and support economic development strategies and leverage our resources to benefit our communities.

Sincerely,

Fiona Hert

Fiona Hert, Ed.D.
Dean, School of Workforce Development