



## THE BENEFITS OF BEING A MEMBER OF THE EAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (EMCOG)

EMCOG is a voluntary multi-jurisdictional, multi-discipline organization that is organized as a local unit of government and recognized by the State of Michigan as a political subdivision. As such EMCOG is in the unique position of being able to support many state, local and federal projects and partnerships.

- EMCOG is acknowledged as a neutral community partner to all member counties;
- EMCOG is a State of Michigan statutorily created Regional Planning Agency (P.A. 281 of 1945 as amended);
- EMCOG is the federally authorized U. S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) Economic Development District for the 14 counties;
- EMCOG is the administrator and fiduciary for the East Central Michigan Prosperity Region 5 (ECM PR-5);
- EMCOG has three (3) standing Committees; the Executive Committee, the Regional Economic Development (RED) Team/CEDS Strategy Committee and the Transportation, Logistics and Infrastructure Committee;
- All EMCOG meetings are open to the public.

**Voting membership:** Each dues-paying County is entitled to two members and two alternates. Paid membership by the County entitles each local unit within that county to be eligible for EMCOG benefits. Individual local units are also eligible for membership. If more than two individual local units from a single county become members, it shall be their decision as to whom they select to represent the units.

**Member Appropriations:** Membership appropriations pay for all local match requirements for not only the 3-year EDA grant, but any contracts undertaken by EMCOG on behalf of local units which requires match.

**Federal Project Review:** EMCOG is the sub-state regional clearinghouse for the 14 counties. This responsibility is authorized by statute under federal Presidential Executive Order A-12372 and applies to all grant applications seeking federal and state grant and/or loan funding. EMCOG reviews member projects or applications for consistency with Regional Goals and Objectives as well as the Comprehensive Economic Development (CEDS) Strategy. Letters of support/consistency are written for member projects upon request. Non-member projects and applications are not reviewed for consistency with Regional Goals and Objectives but are numbered, recorded and filed.

**Federal Economic Development District:** The 14-county geographic area known as EMCOG is a U.S. Department of Commerce/Economic Development Administration (EDA) federal Economic Development District (EDD). Annually, the EDD reviews the CEDS as part of a Performance Review and the document is updated/revised every five (5) years. As part of both the Assessment and full rewrite, Council staff works with the RED Team/CEDS Committee to ensure that all defined goals, objectives and strategies have been addressed and are represented within the report. EMCOG staff is also the local liaison for USDOC/EDA. For more information, contact Jane Fitzpatrick, Program Manager - Economic and Community Development Initiatives at [jfitzpatrick@emcog.org](mailto:jfitzpatrick@emcog.org).

**Regional Prosperity Initiative:** In 2014, EMCOG applied for and received funding offered by the State of Michigan through the Department of Technology, Management and Budget to encourage local private, public and not for profit partners to create a unified economic plan that would support vibrant regional economies. The endeavor is known as the Governor's Regional Prosperity Initiative.

EMCOG applied on behalf of the eight (8) counties designated as Prosperity Region 5—Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland and Saginaw. The grant awards were utilized to formalize a collaborative relationship among local and regional partners to create a unified regional strategy for economic prosperity. Having a "Prosperity Plan" ensures that the State of Michigan invests in the success of our regions, their local communities and our economy. The ECM *Regional Prosperity Strategy, a 5-year Plan for East Central Michigan* was developed, approved and submitted to the State of Michigan. The Council has applied for and received funding every year since 2014 to move identified strategies, actions and projects forward on behalf of member units and to institute both a Mini-grant program and a Micro-grant program. In terms of Prosperity Region activities, the Thumb counties – Huron, Tuscola and Sanilac - are part of the RPI-6 region and the northern 3 counties – Iosco, Roscommon and Ogemaw are part of the RPI-3 region.

A stand-out project from our PR-5 Mini-grant program for 2017 was completion of the *US-127 Safety and Economic Development Challenges on US-127 Between Ithaca and St. Johns, Michigan*. The purpose of the study was to document economic and safety challenges associated with US-127 in Central Michigan. The study documented issues stemming from the segment of US-127 connecting the cities of Ithaca and St. Johns. This stretch of highway has received considerable attention in the region because unlike the remainder of US-127, it is a limited access highway and has lower speed limits and therefore represent a "gap" in the highway network.

Over the past two years, EMCOG has funded \$232,000 for 26 grants throughout the region. For more information, contact Jane Fitzpatrick, Program Manager - Economic and Community Development Initiatives at [jfitzpatrick@emcog.org](mailto:jfitzpatrick@emcog.org).

**Solid Waste planning.** State statute, P.A 115 stipulates that all counties are to have a regional planning representative on their individual County solid waste committees. In addition, the Regional Agency has prepared and updated Solid Waste Plans for local units in the past.

**Transportation planning** for MDOT. This program includes, but is not limited to, regional staff assistance to the Heritage Route/Byway planning and management program within the MDOT Bay Region (including M-15 Heritage Route Byway), Highway Performance Monitoring System (traffic counts, etc.), and public involvement coordination on behalf of MDOT Long-Range Plans. EMCOG is also becoming increasingly involved in matters related to rail and freight. For more information, contact Dave Engelhardt, Program Manager – Transportation Initiatives at [dengelhardt@emcog.org](mailto:dengelhardt@emcog.org).

**Management of MDOT's Rural Task Force process.** EMCOG manages MDOT's Rural Task Force activities throughout the 14-county Region. EMCOG's Transportation Program Manager is also one of two Regional Planning agency representatives appointed to MDOT's State RTF Advisory Board which is focused on Rural transportation planning in Michigan. EMCOG staff work with all member counties (or individual member units) on matters related to Transportation. For more information, contact Dave Engelhardt, Program Manager – Transportation Initiatives at [dengelhardt@emcog.org](mailto:dengelhardt@emcog.org)

**Comprehensive and local planning technical assistance;** i.e., master plans, recreation plans, grant reviews, zoning ordinances, and MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program. For more information, contact Bill Ernat, Regional Planner - Special Projects at [bernat@emcog.org](mailto:bernat@emcog.org).

**Census Affiliate:** EMCOG is the Census affiliate/State Data Center repository for the 14 counties. The most current data is available from the office and on the EMCOG website – [www.emcog.org](http://www.emcog.org). EMCOG will be working with the U.S. Census Bureau as part of the 2020 Census.

**Environmental planning.** EMCOG has been involved with Water Quality issues since the 1970's and remains engaged in these and other issues throughout the 14-county Region as part of initiatives underway through the Partnership for the Saginaw Bay Watershed, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Saginaw Bay Land Conservancy, and others.

**Hazard Mitigation Plans:** Since 2014, EMCOG has updated Hazard Mitigation Plans for five (5) of our counties. In 2017, EMCOG staff began assisting Sanilac and Gratiot Counties with their Hazard Mitigation Plan update and staff will begin work with Bay County on updating their Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2019. For more information, contact Bill Ernat, Regional Planer - Special Projects at [bernat@emcog.org](mailto:bernat@emcog.org).

**Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC)** - EMCOG has been under contract to the Transportation Asset Management Council of Michigan since 2003 to conduct PASER ratings on federal-aid highways throughout the Region except for those areas designated as MPOs. These pavement assessment ratings are used by local road commissions and the State to determine investment priorities for repair or/ or replacement of pavement. This activity also allows local units to comply with GASB 34 accounting requirements.

In 2018 EMCOG served as the fiduciary agent for completion of a regional Culvert Inventory as part of the TAMC work program. In 2019 there will be increased focus for local units of government to adopt an Asset Management Plan which will allow the transfer of funds within their transportation budgets to do more work on local streets. For more information, please contact Lynne Parker at [lparker@emcog.org](mailto:lparker@emcog.org) or Dave Engelhardt, Program Manager–Transportation Initiatives at [dengelhardt@emcog.org](mailto:dengelhardt@emcog.org)

#### **Water Asset Management Council (WAMC)**

The Water Asset Management Council (WAMC) advises the newly created Michigan Infrastructure Council (MIC) on water-related infrastructure topics. This new Council is supported by the Michigan DEQ. Together, the Water and Transportation asset management councils will advise the Michigan Infrastructure Council on a statewide asset management strategy and develop templates for transportation, drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater asset management planning. For more

information, please contact Jane Fitzpatrick, Program Manager – Economic & Community Development Initiatives at [jfitzpatrick@emcog.org](mailto:jfitzpatrick@emcog.org).

**Integrated Asset Management** – This is a new initiative for EMCOG in 2019. EMCOG will be working regionally to coordinate the advancement of integrated asset management as part of the overall Michigan Infrastructure Council mandate. EMCOG, in partnership with the Michigan Infrastructure Council, will be holding two Integrated Asset Management Communications and Coordination summits within the EMCOG region during 2019. For more information, contact Jane Fitzpatrick, Program Manager - Economic & Community Development Initiatives at [jfitzpatrick@emcog.org](mailto:jfitzpatrick@emcog.org).

**Non-Motorized Trail Planning:**

EMCOG staff is finalizing the update process for the MDOT Bay Region Non-Motorized Plan and Bike Map update. For more information, please contact Bill Ernat, Regional Planner – Special Projects at [bernat@emcog.org](mailto:bernat@emcog.org) or Dave Engelhardt, Program Manager – Transportation Initiatives at [dengelhardt@emcog.org](mailto:dengelhardt@emcog.org)

**Iron Belle Trail Planning:**

EMCOG staff is under contract to MDNR to provide staff assistance for the siting of the Iron Belle Trail route through Tuscola, Bay, Saginaw and Arenac Counties. For more information, please contact Bill Ernat, Regional Planner - Special Projects at [bernat@emcog.org](mailto:bernat@emcog.org).

**The EMCOG Staff:**

The Regional Agency has a staff of five. The Regional Office is located at: 3144 Davenport Avenue, Suite 200, Saginaw, MI 48602. TEL: 989-797-0800; FAX – 989-797-0896. WEB: [www.emcog.org](http://www.emcog.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Includes Hazard Mitigation, Local Technical Assistance, Iron Belle Trail, MEDC/RRC