



EMCOG NEWS

From your East Michigan Regional Planning Resource Team

FIRST EDITION

JANUARY 2010

Welcome to the first edition of the EMCOG News in 2010. This newsletter is brought to you by your EMCOG Regional Planning Resource Team and is meant to give you the latest and greatest news and information from throughout the organization.

CONTENTS

Section 1 - The Council and its Reorganization.....	1
Section 2 - Why Pay Dues?.....	2
Section 3 - 2010 Work Program & Budget.....	2
Section 4 – Economic Development	2
Section 5: Economic gardening.....	3
Section 6: Transportation.....	3
Section 7: MDEQ Coastal Zone.....	4
Section 8: Transportation, Land Use & GIS.....	4
Section 9: Intergovernmental Review.....	4
Other: Additional information, Awards, etc.....	5

SECTION 1 – THE COUNCIL & AND ITS REORGANIZATION

On October 1, 2009 the East Central Michigan Planning & Development Regional Commission was officially reorganized and recognized as the East Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG) by the U. S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (USDOC/EDA). EDA is the federal host agency for our 14 county Economic Development District (EDD) status. The East Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG) is a voluntary organization consisting of 14 counties and numerous local governments including the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan located in east central Michigan for the purpose of fostering cooperative efforts to resolve problems and to formulate policies and plans that are common and regional, all with maximum efficiency and economy. The Council is enabled under Michigan P. A. 281 of 1945, as amended.

SECTION 2 – WHY PAY DUES?

Dues for EMCOG are used as match for a Planning Grant from the U. S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). Each year, EMCOG receives \$52,628 from EDA and has to provide a match (see Economic Development Section below). EMCOG also seeks other grants that sometimes require a match – so dues are essential for funding programs that are valued by member communities. The 2009-2010 Budget identifies dues revenues of \$50,000 which is 12% of the total budget. So for each dollar of dues collected, the EMCOG brings in another estimated \$8.42 to maintain the total regional program – from a variety of sources including EDA, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Coastal Management Program and specific community-based projects such as Master Plans and Recreation Plans.

The EMCOG accomplishes many activities and brings in hundreds of thousands of dollars to the east central region of Michigan utilizing very few material resources. Our offices are very simple – we have 1970's era furniture, four computers, a copy machine, a plotter and two printers. We are the largest region in terms of population and square miles (8,735 square miles) and have one of the smallest staffs - four people to cover those 8,735 square miles and assist any one or more of our 337 constituents if a request is made.

While seeking EDA funding for our communities is an essential role of the EMCOG, it is only one of many roles that the Council, the RED Team (CEDS Committee), Transportation, Land Use and GIS (TLAG) Committee and staff of EMCOG fulfill. EMCOG has a very close relationship with MDOT and works to coordinate efforts between communities, counties and MDOT. EMCOG staff have built contacts with many State and Federal agencies through projects and other partnerships; i.e., USGS, EDA, MML, MTA, MAC, NADO, USDA, etc. Members of EMCOG are provided periodic updates on development and any aspect of planning and governance through our newsletter, website, e-mails and meetings. EMCOG is also an active member of the Michigan Association of Regions and brings back valuable information and knowledge to our regional partners/patrons.

SECTION 3 – 2010 WORK PROGRAM & BUDGET

The EMCOG 2010 Work Program & Budget was unanimously adopted at the September 2009 Full Council meeting. The Agency's work program and budget is continually evolving and changing in response to State and federal requests and/or needs. The basic document, approved in September, however establishes core programs and focus areas for 2010. There will be heavy emphasis this year on Energy, Economic Development Transportation, Land Use and GIS applications for use throughout the region. Copies of the Work Program are available by contacting the Regional office at 989-797-0800. For more information, please contact Sue Fortune, Executive Director at sfortune@emcog.org.

SECTION 4 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1968, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) designated the then ECMPDRC Regional Council as one of their official Economic Development Districts (EDD). To maintain our status as a federally recognized Economic Development District, every five years EMCOG must prepare a fully rewritten and updated regional economic development plan or Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The major component of the CEDS is a "priority list" of projects that may be submitted to the EDA for future funding consideration. Every year, an annual update to the CEDS must be prepared which meets EDA rules and regulations.

The agency receives, from USDOC/EDA, an annual appropriation of \$52,628 to run our Economic Development Section and prepare this document. This is a matching grant – currently at 80% federal and 20% local – see "Why Pay Dues" above.

As part of the COG's EDD designation, local governments that concur with the EMCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy are eligible to apply for and receive EDA grants if they have projects that meet EDA's criteria. To be eligible to be on the priority list, the applicant must confirm the availability of local

matching funds, provide a detailed cost estimate, and be able to begin the project within ninety days of the date of grant award.

To assist in the development of the CEDS, EMCOG has created a Regional Economic Development Team (RED Team), made up of private and public sector individuals from member entities to review proposed projects to determine if they can qualify to be on the priority list and possibly receive EDA funding. This Team is the “CEDS Committee.”

Eligible awards are for infrastructure, public works projects, water/sewer, curb/gutter, etc. To qualify for a grant award, the project must support the generation of new jobs or the retention of existing jobs. The annual priority list will be finalized by March 1st of each year for this COG, but projects may be submitted anytime. Due to the limitations of EDA funding, it is possible to submit only one or two grant applications per year. For more information, contact Kathleen TenWolde, Economic and Community Development Program Coordinator, ktenwolde@emcog.org

The CEDS document includes a number of components, Economic Strategy, Data Analysis, Environmental impacts, land use impacts, Transportation, etc. In terms of the land use component the Team also coordinates with the Transportation, Land Use and GIS (TLAG) Committee. Projects submitted for sub-state clearinghouse review should, ideally, also be listed in the CEDS.

SECTION 5: ECONOMIC GARDENING

In November 2009, the East Michigan Council of Governments (EMCOG) approved entering into a partnership with Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) to develop and link EMCOG members together into a robust *Economic Gardening PLUS (EG+) Network* whose purpose is to help spur and enhance community and economic recovery, diversification and development in the EMCOG region. It is expected that the Network approach will use shared services, aggregation and a regional approach to overcome the *significant financial hurdles* associated with Traditional Economic Gardening for individual communities. The partnership will seek funding for the EG+ Network from a variety of sources including, but not limited to, the Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Agriculture, Community Foundations and others. For more information, contact Sue Fortune, Executive Director at 989-797-0800 or sfortune@emcog.org

SECTION 6: TRANSPORTATION

In 2010, the Council looks forward to another successful year of its long-standing partnership with the Michigan Department of Transportation. The Agency performs contracted duties for and on behalf of MDOT/Lansing and the MDOT Bay Region. In 2009 the Council executed not only its annual MDOT contract but worked on special projects such as the very successful: **“A Safe Route to Schools”** event held at Arthur Hill High School and **Phase I of the proposed M-25 Heritage Route project**. The Council also is under contract to provide technical assistance to the M-15 Recreation Heritage Route Management Committee and the Huron Shores Heritage Route (formerly US-23 Heritage Route) Management Committee. For more information on any of the Heritage Route projects, please contact Kathleen TenWolde, Economic and Community Development Program Coordinator at 989-797-0800 or at ktenwolde@emcog.org

Related to MDOT is the role that EMCOG fulfills to Michigan’s Transportation Asset Management Program. The Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) was created eight years ago to develop a better way to maintain roads in Michigan. Michigan’s regions/councils of government are responsible for coordinating the data collection for all of the roads in each of Michigan’s 83 counties. Each year the EMCOG schedules and coordinates the collection of road ratings and schedules necessary training for communities, Road Commissions etc. including Internet reporting. This is a very successful program that will likely expand in the future to facilities other than just roadways. For additional information, contact Anamika Laad, Program Manager, at

alaad@emcog.org.

SECTION 7: MDEQ COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT

Since 2008, the East Michigan Council of Governments has been under contract to MDEQ/Coastal Zone Management Division to work on three CZM projects; 1) the Arenac County CZM Study, 2) the Tuscola County Coastal Needs Analysis and the Saginaw Bay Coastal Resource Guide Study. The Arenac study was complete in 2009; the Tuscola County Needs Analysis will be complete in early 2010. Work on the Saginaw Bay Coastal Resource Guide continues well into 2010.

As part of the Saginaw Bay Coastal Resource Guide project, EMCOG will develop a Saginaw Bay Coastal geographic information system (GIS) Resource guide with assistance, guidance and participation from an advisory committee of DEQ and DNR staff and Saginaw Bay coastal community representatives, county officials, land conservancies, and recreation, tourism, and conservation organizations. The Resource Guide will serve as a reference and resource guide for coastal land use, conservation, and recreation and tourism planning in Saginaw Bay counties. DEQ staff will determine a basic set of data layers to be required and the advisory committee will identify additional layers to be included. The final product at the end of the grant period will be a Saginaw Bay Coastal Atlas GIS that EMCOG will provide to MDEQ and make available to communities and groups upon request.

For more information, please contact Anamika Laad, Program Manager at 989-751-6022 or alaad@emcog.org.

SECTION 8: TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE & GIS

In 2009, the Council created the Transportation, Land Use and GIS (TLAG) Committee. TLAG provides a regional platform to share and learn about Transportation, Land Use and GIS. The general purpose of the Committee is provide a forum for GIS practitioners to come together to discuss issues related to individual member GIS capacity as well as the interconnectivity of the areas of transportation, land use and GIS. The Committee will examine issues related to potential refocusing of public investment to serve and revitalize existing developed areas with emphasis on;

- designing livable communities with housing near jobs, recreation, transit and services;
- providing real transportation choices;
- providing assistance and a common platform for discussion of local, regional and state issues;
- reforming pricing incentives which promote unsustainable development; and
- Addressing important GIS needs

SECTION 9: INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER A-12372

EMCOG is authorized under Executive Order A-12372 to conduct sub-state review of any project submitted for state or federal funding. SEMCOG is currently the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) within the State of Michigan with all other Regional Planning Commissions/Councils of Government performing the sub-state review. It is the policy of the Council not to automatically review projects submitted for state or federal funding from non-members. Consideration of all applications for funding, however, is solely the prerogative of the funding entity.

SEMCOG is currently evaluating which programs it wishes to retain for review as the SPOC. Discussions will soon be underway as to how this will affect the programs for review that the Sub-state regional clearinghouses may have responsibility over. The role of the sub-state clearinghouse may, in fact, be changed to accommodate those programs SEMCOG no longer wishes to include in its roster of reviewable categories but a determination

on that is in the future.

OTHER ACTIVITIES - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: AWARDS, ETC.

Other activities performed by EMCOG that benefit our communities include:

- Community plans (Master Plans, recreation plans, energy plans)
- U.S. Census information repository and Data Center
- Library of land use plans, recreation plans, master plans and other planning resources
- Digital mapping base
- EMCOG serves as the sub-state regional clearinghouse for projects – which provides coordinating services between communities and ensures compatibility with EMCOG Regional Goals, Objectives and Policies.
- In 2009, EMCOG developed a list of *Proposed Economic Stimulus Projects* and submitted it to the State and federal legislators. Projects included economic development and transportation projects which were gathered from across the Region.
- A newly created website that will provide a variety of resources related to economic and community development, transportation, land use and GIS, Coastal Zone projects, reports, etc.

Awards: In 2009 the EMCOG received its second National Association of Development Organization's (NADO) Excellence in Regional Transportation Award for the creation – first in the nation – of our Transportation, Land Use and GIS (TLAG) Committee. Anamika Laad, Program Manager accepted the award in Savannah, Georgia on behalf of EMCOG.

Other: EMCOG has also applied for two unique grants in 2010; one focusing on Energy and one focusing on GIS.

- The Energy grant “Clare County - **Four-County Cooperative Energy Reduction Project**” covers Clare, Gladwin, Iosco, and Roscommon Counties. Grant application amount: \$159,541 total.
- The USGS/GIS grant, applied for, through the TLAG Committee is for a “Regional Entities Geospatial Partnership and Data Delivery (REGPADD) Program.” Grant application amount: \$70,000

Members and non-members are invited to contact the Council offices at any time – 989-797-0800 for information on services, benefits, reports, etc.

We look forward to an exciting 2010. We hope you will join us.

Sue Fortune, Executive Director

