

PETOSKEY REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE POSITION PAPER

Emmet County's Funding of the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance

STATEMENT:

The Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce (PRCC) has been a partner with the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA) and has collaborated with them on various projects over the years. The chamber supports the continuation of funding for the NLEA as the recognized economic development organization serving Emmet County and the neighboring counties of Antrim, Charlevoix, and Cheboygan.

Our region's businesses rely on the NLEA for specific services and expertise that help them expand operations and grow jobs, or at minimum retain local jobs. Beyond our businesses, our communities rely on the NLEA for assistance in funding enhancements and providing services for community issues such as housing and transportation. **An established, strategic, economic development organization is essential to the fiscal health for our communities by supporting business growth, expanding the tax base, providing jobs for our residents, and bringing new jobs and residents to our region.**

The PRCC recognizes that economic development in rural areas must be regional in nature and requires the collaboration of many entities to be successful. These collaborations and partnerships must come from both the private and public sectors. Emmet County has been an integral partner in this process since helping to create the NLEA more than 30-years ago. Therefore, the PRCC urges Emmet County and the NLEA to resume negotiations immediately to find a resolution to allow economic development services to resume as soon as possible.

SUPPORTING DATA:

In the past five years, the NLEA has successfully completed 54 projects with a total investment of \$50,665,386 and the creation/retention of 1,173 jobs in Emmet County alone.

Two of their current projects in Emmet County support two large manufacturers that will collectively total \$13 million and an investment of 105-jobs.

In its four service counties in 2018 the NLEA assisted with 18 business expansions that resulted in more than \$269.5 million in investment and 455 jobs.

Emmet County's annual investment for the NLEA of approximately \$89,000 provides access for our businesses and communities to a full-time economic development staff of six.

The NLEA's budget is comprised of 40% funding from its four partnering counties, and 60% funding from other funders in the private and public sectors, service fees, and events. The PRCC is a financial contributor to the NLEA.

This is a regional economy because we know that approximately 18,000 people work in Emmet County. Of those, 9,000 are county residents, so another 9,000 are coming into Emmet County to

work from outside of the county. We also know that approximately 5,000 Emmet County residents travel outside of Emmet County to go to jobs elsewhere in the region.

There is a new owner of the 200 E. Lake Street property in Downtown Petoskey, a property identified as a priority for development by the City of Petoskey. It is feasible that work could begin soon to design and develop a project at this location. This could be a critical time for this project and the services of economic development professionals will be necessary to navigate through the process.

If you wish to contact a county commissioner and the NLEA, contact information follows:

Emmet County Commissioners:

DISTRICT 1: (Townships of : Wawatam, Bliss, Carp Lake, Cross Village, Readmond, Center, McKinley)

Toni Drier
231-420-6832
tdrier@emmetcounty.org

DISTRICT 2: (Townships of: Friendship, Pleasantview, Maple River, and West Traverse)

Neil Ahrens
231-242-4076
nahrens@emmetcounty.org

DISTRICT 3: (Little Traverse Township)

Charlie Macinnis
231-526-1557
cmacinnis@emmetcounty.org

DISTRICT 4: (Littlefield and Springvale Townships)

Bill Shorter
231-347-7478
bshorter@emmetcounty.org

DISTRICT 5: (Bear Creek Township)

James Kargol
231-489-9544
jkargol@emmetcounty.org

DISTRICT 6: (Resort Township)

David White
231-499-5296
David.white@emmetcounty.org

DISTRICT 7: (City of Petoskey)

Izzy Lyman
231-758-7707
ilyman@emmetcounty.org

Northern Lakes Economic Alliance

Andy Hayes, President
231-582-6482
andy@northernlakes.net