

Michigan Cool City Pilot Program - Local Cool City Advisory Group

Building vibrant, energetic cities that attract jobs, people and opportunity to our state is a key component of Governor Jennifer Granholm's economic vision for Michigan. Below, please find a few guidelines for the work that we hope your Local Cool City Advisory Group (LCCAG) will help us accomplish. Thank you for including your community in this critical dialogue.

What should my advisory group look like?

We leave the group's size and composition up to you. Our hope, however, is that you will gather a diverse group of citizens from all sectors of the community who can offer input into what makes a city "cool." Local groups can be comprised of historical preservation professionals, retailers, restaurateurs, hotel owners, downtown development professionals, young people, students, arts and cultural organizations, representatives from various religious organizations, representatives from diverse population groups, entertainment venue representatives, city planners and club and coffeehouse owners...to name just a few.

What will the group do?

We hope the group will focus their discussions providing input on five key questions:

1. What defines a cool city? What makes your city particularly special or "cool"?
2. How can the state best help your city – and other communities – be "cool"?
3. What does a cool city look like? How does it use its space? What kinds of services are offered?
4. What does your city – and other communities like it – do to attract jobs and people to your community? What could it do?
5. What does your city – and other communities like it – do to attract young professionals and young people to your community? What could it do?
6. Utilize various tools provided on www.coolcities.com for a community assessment.
7. Work collaboratively to develop your creating cool community plan.

What do I need to do to get involved?

Contact Karen Gagnon, Cool Cities Coordinator, to let her know you have formed a Local Cool City Advisory Group. She will need to know the Mayor's name, address, and phone number and the LCCAG Contact's name, phone number, e-mail address in order to complete the Participating City List.

Frequently Asked Questions About Participating Cities and Local Cool City Advisory Groups

Q: You mentioned eligible communities are ones with a LCCAG in place. What is a LCCAG and how much involvement do you expect from them?

A: It is critical to have a diverse group of citizens from your community involved in the dialogue who can offer input into what makes a city "cool." We hope the group will focus their discussions on (1) what defines a Cool City, (2) how can the State best help your city, (3) what does a Cool City look like, how does it use its space, what kinds of services are offered, (4) what does your city do to attract jobs and people to your community, and (5) what does your city do to attract young professionals and young people to your community? The level of involvement is up to the LCCAG and the city.

Q: Who is in charge of forming the LCCAG?

A: The Mayor's Office.

Q: Can an existing DDA group qualify as a LCCAG?

A: A LCCAG can be a DDA, or any other pre-existing group; however, the main purpose of the LCCAG is to bring non-traditional folks to the table with traditional economic developers. It would be fine, as long as citizens representing diverse ages, diversity, the arts community, etc., are involved.

Q: If your community was invited to participate but not a Participating City yet, how long does it take to get approved?

A: It is a simple and fast process that involves exchanging information. Contact Karen Gagnon, kgagno@michigan.gov or call 517-241-3203.

Q: Is the Core Community list in the Eligible Cities List the same list as Home Team Advantage?

A: Yes

Q: What is the difference between Core Communities and Blue Prints?

A: Legislation enables a Core Community. Blue Print and Main Street cities are economic programs that a city must apply for.

Q: I noticed that townships are not on the eligible cities list. Is this correct?

A: Yes, for this first year of the Pilot Program, our main focus is on cities as a starting point. We'll re-evaluate for next year. There may be a few townships and villages on this year's list because they are part of Main Street or Blue Prints programs or sent a team to the December 2003 Creating Cool Conference.