



STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

JOHN D. CHERRY, JR.
LT. GOVERNOR

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What makes a city “cool”? Is it a leafy, green park and an inviting public square? Or is it a sidewalk bistro and an Internet café? Maybe it’s a jazz club or a coffee house that invites office workers to linger in your downtown well past 5:00. Maybe it’s nothing more extravagant – or more important – than a quality neighborhood school, a job within walking distance and a safe path for getting to both.

Whatever your vision of a cool city, I want to help you achieve it.

Building vibrant, energetic cities that attract jobs, people and opportunity to our state is a key component of my economic vision for Michigan. Vital cities will not only open new horizons for urban residents, they also enhance our effort to preserve the green space that surrounds our metropolitan areas and attract the diverse mix of workers so essential to our new knowledge-driven economy.

I have asked Director David Hollister and the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG) to coordinate my administration’s overall agenda for cities and specifically to oversee our “cool cities” initiative. While you may have seen me wearing sunglasses as a fun symbol of this effort, our goal is much more concrete. Our intention is two-fold: first, to raise the dialogue about supporting and investing in our cities to a state-wide discussion, and; second, to determine – from your perspective – what state tools will be most effective in your city-building efforts.

Specifically, we would like you to convene a Local Cool Cities Advisory Group to find ways to make people – and particularly young people – more interested in living, working and shopping in your city. The composition, operation and duration of your local advisory group would be up to you.

This won’t be easy given the current budget constraints I know that we all face, but with creativity and hard work, I believe we cannot only succeed, but have fun in the process. This is, as I said in my State of the State address this year, an excellent opportunity for us to work in the rain instead of merely waiting for the storm to blow over.

For more information on this initiative, please contact Bob Johnson, Senior Executive Assistant Director, DLEG at (517) 335-6799, rejohns@michigan.gov, or Karen Gagnon, Cool Cities Coordinator at (517) 241-3203, kgagno@michigan.gov.

Thank you for taking the time to help me think about what makes our cities “cool.” As my teenage girls take great glee in telling me, I’m the least cool person they’ve ever met...so your help is truly critical. This will be fun work with a serious goal: making Michigan and her cities magnets for economic growth and opportunity. Thank you for being part of it.

Sincerely,

Jennifer M. Granholm
Governor