



January 27, 2022

Leelanau County Board of Commissioners
8527 E. Government Center Drive
Suttons Bay, MI 49682

Dear Leelanau County Commissioners,

It is no secret that there is something special in Northwest Michigan. When problems arise, our community pulls together to meet the challenges we face. That collaborative spirit is alive and well in our region as we work together to utilize resources available from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

In 2019, the Community Development Coalition of Northwest Michigan was launched; a cross-sector group of leaders from Leelanau and neighboring counties, representing environmental, social, and economic organizations. Together, we created and maintain a [scorecard](#) to track progress on the toughest issues facing our region.

Our ask to you, is that you please consider allocating ARPA resources towards endeavors that advance metrics on our shared scorecard – specifically:

- Improved access to housing
- Improved youth mental health and well-being through social-emotional learning and child safety
- Increased school readiness
- Improved arts and culture resources and experiences

ARPA funds are available for programs and services such as those listed above. By pursuing this once-in-a-generation opportunity, in coordination with the diverse and organized [partners represented in this Coalition](#), we will together be able to tackle long-standing issues that have been exacerbated by the on-going pandemic.

We thank you for your leadership in ensuring Leelanau County remains a bright star in this region and a wonderful place for families to call home. Thank you for considering this request, and please reach out if you would like to learn more about the Coalition.

Respectfully submitted,

Northwest Michigan Community Development Coalition
c/o Dave Mengebier, President and CEO, Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation



September 6, 2022

Mr. Chad Benson
LIHTC Allocation Manager
Michigan State Housing Development Authority
735 E. Michigan Avenue
Lansing, MI 48912

Re: The Flats at Carriage Commons Phase I & II

Dear Mr. Benson:

Please accept our letter of support for The Flats at Carriage Commons – a transformational, transit-oriented development that will create up to 210 affordable homes next to a transit center in Northern Michigan. The Michigan Legislature has demonstrated their support of the Project via a \$6 million commitment in the 2023 fiscal year budget and we are hopeful that MSHDA will consider funding this invaluable transit-oriented development under its “Strategic Investment Category.”

The Traverse City Housing Commission (TCHC), in partnership with Smith & Henzy Affordable Group, Inc. (“Smith & Henzy”), will be submitting a 9% and 4% blend Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) application to MSHDA to bring the first 118 apartments, a community clubhouse, and other amenities, such as walking trails, a picnic area, and open greenspace to fruition. The Flats is slated for development near the corner of LaFranier Rd. and W Hammond Rd. in Garfield Township, just south of Traverse City in Grand Traverse County.

With a mix of studio, one-, and two-bedroom apartments for individuals and families with incomes from 30%-80% AMI, this project will house some of the community’s most in need – our low-income workforce. While Grand Traverse County has been a desirable locale for many years, with the onset of COVID-19, an increase in remote work, and thus, the ability for families to seek homes in Northern Michigan, demand for housing in the Traverse City area has skyrocketed. Service and essential workers have been left scrambling to find affordable apartments that are near transit and employment centers.

While TCHC and Smith & Henzy are developing the residential portion of The Flats, the Bay Area Transportation Authority (“BATA”) is developing its new headquarters and bus transfer station on the project site, which will give residents unmatched access to public transportation and therefore, to the amenities, recreational opportunities, and employment centers throughout the region. Residents will have the ability to take reliable, convenient, and affordable public transit from just outside their front doors. This proximity to transit, particularly in a non-urban setting, is what makes The Flats truly innovative and deserving of MSHDA’s finite resources.

We implore MSHDA to award 9% LIHTC to The Flats at Carriage Common under the “Strategic Investment Category,” which was created to reward projects such as this for leading the way in transforming their communities. Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions regarding our support for the Project, please contact David Mengebier, President and CEO of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation at dmengebier@gtcrf.org.

Sincerely,

David Mengebier, President and CEO, Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation
Warren Call, President and CEO, Traverse Connect
Marty Colburn, City Manager, City of Traverse City
Sarna Salzman, Executive Director, SEEDS Ecology & Education Center
Yarrow Brown, Executive Director, Housing North
Kelly Dunham, Executive Director, Bay Area Transportation Authority
Sara Harding, Vice President of Climate and Community Impact, Cherry Republic
Sakura Takano, Executive Director, Rotary Charities
Steve Shugart, Chief Support Officer, Networks Northwest
Dr. Nick Ceglarek, Northwest Education Services
Edwin A. Ness, President and CEO, Munson Healthcare
Ginger Kadlec, Executive Director, Traverse Bay Children’s Advocacy Center
Trevor Tkach, President and CEO, Traverse City Tourism
Dr. Nick Nissley, President, Northwestern Michigan College
Doug DeYoung, Board Member, Habitat for Humanity
Christina Schuett, Owner, Rarebird Brewery and Founder, Pour for More



September 16, 2022

Dr. Jonathan Hare

National Marine Fisheries Service - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 5128
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Dr. Hare,

Please accept this letter of support from the Northwest Michigan Community Development Coalition. Thank you for your consideration of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians' proposal to the Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians is leading efforts to collaboratively improve freshwater habitat in northern Michigan. They will use this funding to replace undersized infrastructure at road-stream crossings to reconnect 49 miles of stream. Funding also will enhance the capacity of the Tribe and its northern Michigan partners to advance future fish passage projects.

These combined efforts will improve habitat for native brook trout and other Great Lakes fish species that utilize river and stream habitat for a portion of their life cycle in the Black River, Thunder Bay River, Jordan River, Pere Marquette River, Lake Leelanau, Glen Lake-Crystal River, and Manistee River watersheds. This effort builds on a similar collaborative initiative led by the Tribe through the USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program to restore Tribal fisheries by replacing undersized road-stream crossings and protecting high-quality farmland from development. These efforts, including the proposed project, have had broad ranging benefits to habitat which benefits the local Tribal community as well as the broader northern Michigan community.

Improving freshwater resources is a shared strategic priority for this Coalition, therefore we are in support of the Tribe's pursuit of this impactful funding opportunity. We look forward to supporting them in the implementation of this meaningful work, and we thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

David Mengebier, President and CEO of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation
Matt McDonough, Executive Director, Discovery Center and Pier
Dan Buron, Executive Director, Goodwill Northern Michigan
Warren Call, President and CEO, Traverse Connect
Dr. Nick Ceglarek, Superintendent, Northwest Education Services
Wendy Hirschenberger, Director, Grand Traverse County Health Department

Marty Colburn, City Manager, City of Traverse City
Trey Devey, President, Interlochen Center for the Arts
Dr. Nick Nissley, President, Northwestern Michigan College
Jean Derenzy, CEO, Traverse City Downtown Development Authority
Elizabeth Kirkwood, Executive Director, For Love of Water
Christine Crissman, Executive Director, The Watershed Center
Sarna Salzman, Executive Director, SEEDS Ecology and Education Centers
Christina Schuett, Co-Founder Pour for More
Ginger Kadlec, Executive Director, Traverse Bay Children's Advocacy Center
Drew Poppleton, Faith Reformed Church
Jennifer Berkey, District 3 Director, MSU Extension