Entrepreneurship

In 2019, the Alliance worked to support entrepreneurs in Lake County with new program and resource offerings for area residents. In May, the Alliance co-hosted the first-ever Pitch North competition, which allowed residents from Oceana, Lake and Newaygo counties to submit innovative ideas for a chance to win $4,000, $2,500 or $1,000 to bring their ideas to life. A list of resources for small businesses was also compiled and made easily accessible online.

Lead Trails

After receiving a grant from the West Michigan Regional Prosperity Initiative, the Alliance partnered with surrounding counties to develop the Four-County Trails Initiative. The project will create a name and brand for the various outdoor recreational trails that exist in Oceana, Lake, Mason and Newaygo Counties. This will allow the trail system to be marketed as an outdoor destination and increase the economic impact of this regional asset. Currently, the Alliance is preparing an application for state approval of a county-wide Pure Michigan Trail Town designation, which will bring increased exposure and marketing tools to the county’s unique outdoor recreational assets.

Business

To support local businesses with growth, the Alliance has assisted with developing new hire information and marketing materials for available positions. Additionally, the Alliance works to tackle challenges with infrastructure, utilities, and capacity, and has provided referrals to grants and programs with the potential to fund growth. Currently, the Alliance is managing a grant to allow the redevelopment of a blighted site, and is also leading a strategic planning session for a local non-profit.

Community Planning and Infrastructure

The Alliance worked to connect Broadband provider, Casair, to local municipalities and businesses for input on installation routes. The Alliance also developed a proposal for local foundation support for additional small cell service to underserved areas in Lake County.

Additionally, the Alliance is currently applying for an Economic Development Administration grant to develop a county-wide inventory of infrastructure needs. This will allow for priorities to be established in regard to the development of industrial sites, aiding future business growth and attraction. The Alliance has also convened local stakeholders to begin assessing and addressing community housing needs.

Opportunity Zones

To increase awareness and understanding around Opportunity Zones, the Alliance built a prospectus for marketing the Lake County Opportunity Zone to potential developers and investors. The Alliance also promoted Lake County’s Opportunity Zones to regional investors with projects at an event coordinated by The Right Place.
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MISSION

The Economic Alliance shall create a unified vision promoting the unique Lake County resources including historical, natural and cultural amenities that enhance the capacity of the local economy.

2018-19 OCEANA COUNTY ECONOMIC ALLIANCE PARTNERS

Lake County | Fremont Area Community Foundation
Frey Foundation | Lake County Community Foundation
Lake-Osceola State Bank | Webber Township | DTE Energy

LAKE COUNTY ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

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