

Program Highlights for:**Northeast Michigan
Council of Governments****January – June 2020****Agency Operations**

1. NEMCOG's consolidated Accounting with NE MI Consortium continues to provide efficiencies for both entities. Meetings are held to define processes and procedures for efficient and timely submittal of financials. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Karen Cole, Edie Kerr*
2. Covid-19 required the office closure and staff to work remotely. Weekly staff meetings are held via videoconference to review programs, challenges and new funding opportunities. *Staff: Diane Rekowski*
3. Attend and represent Northeast Michigan at the Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) bimonthly videoconference meetings. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Robert Heilman, President*
4. Continue to determine staff capacity needs and fill vacancies. Due to the stop-work order from DNR on grant contracts: Iron Belle Trail project, Trail Signage and Video project, replacements for the Community Development Planner position has been put on hold. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Denise Cline*
5. Developed and disseminated contracts for subcontract work due to staff (Steve Schnell) departure. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Theresa Huff*
6. Monitored 2020 Budget. Communicated with funders on projects with insufficient funds for project work. Met with Finance

Committee for review of agency financial statements. *Staff: Karen Cole, Diane Rekowski*

7. Contracted with the accounting firm, Straley Lamp & Kraenzlein P.C. for NEMCOG's FY 2019 Audit. *Staff: Karen Cole, Diane Rekowski*
8. Fiscal Year 2019 audit was completed. *Staff: Karen Cole, Theresa Huff, Diane Rekowski*
9. Oversee Finance /Accounting Assistant. *Staff: Karen Cole, Theresa Huff*
10. Grants: Continued to work with the Office of Economic Adjustment, Department of Defense and received the JLUS Implementation grant. Submitted an EDA-Covid Response Grant Application for \$400,000 over two years. *Staff: Diane Rekowski*

Agency Marketing

1. Continued weekly updates of new information on the NEMCOG website. *Staff: Denise Cline and Theresa Huff*
2. Continued to distribute marketing packets for promotion of NEMCOG, when appropriate. *Staff: Theresa Huff, staff*
3. Consolidated **Website:** discovernortheastmichigan.org continues to be updated with news and event listings. New plans, project information, resources and ordinances are continuously being



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added. Recycling pages updated. *Staff: Denise Cline*

4. **Continue to respond to Community requests for technical services to complete plans, grants, and zoning ordinances.** *Staff: Denise Cline, Diane Rekowski, Nico Tucker*

Planning & Zoning



1. **Presque Isle Township Zoning Ordinance:** Staff has completed draft Articles 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 and reviewed them with the Planning Commission. Staff has drafted Article 3. *Staff: Denise Cline*
2. **Clement Township Zoning Ordinance (Gladwin County):** Staff has completed draft Articles 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 and reviewed them with the Planning Commission. Staff has drafted Article 4. *Staff: Denise Cline*
3. **Beaver Creek Township Zoning Ordinance:** Staff is assisting with a zoning ordinance rewrite. All draft chapters and new zoning map are complete. A public hearing is scheduled for the end of July. *Staff: Denise Cline*
4. **Hawes Township Zoning Ordinance:** Staff is assisting with a zoning ordinance rewrite. All draft chapters are complete. *Staff: Denise Cline*
5. **Alpena Township Zoning Ordinance:** The Zoning Ordinance was adopted and the interactive version created. *Staff: Denise Cline*
6. **South Branch Township:** Staff is assisting South Branch Township with a Master Plan update. *Staff: Christina McEmber, Denise Cline*
7. **Krakov Township Zoning Ordinance:** Staff has completed full draft of the Zoning Ordinance rewrite. *Staff: Denise Cline*
8. **City of West Branch Master Plan & Zoning Ordinance:** RRC-compliant Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance have been completed. *Staff: Denise Cline*
9. **Village of Roscommon Master Plan & Zoning Ordinance:** RRC-compliant Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance have been completed. *Staff: Denise Cline*
10. **Village of Pellston Zoning Ordinance:** Staff has completed the draft Zoning Ordinance. Staff is currently reviewed the draft with the Planning Commission. *Staff: Denise Cline*
11. **Alpena Communities Joint Master Planning:** Staff is assisting Alpena County, Green Township, Ossineke Township, and Wilson Township in completing a joint Master Planning effort. This included significant cost savings while introducing new collaborations to the planning process. *Staff: Christina McEmber, Denise Cline*
12. **Hazard Mitigation Plans:** NEMCOG applied for and received a Hazard Mitigation Grant to update Alcona, Alpena, Crawford, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego and Presque Isle Counties. Staff is working on the plan updates. Plans for Alpena, Otsego, and Oscoda Counties have been submitted to the State and FEMA for approval pending county and local jurisdiction adoption. The plans for Alcona, Crawford, Montmorency, and Presque Isle Counties are currently being updated and



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holding public hearings. *Staff: Christina McEmber*

13. Sanborn Township Brownfield Grant

Administration: Staff is assisting Sanborn Township with the Administration of a \$220,000 Brownfield Development grant. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Christina McEmber*

14. Onaway Master Plan: Staff is assisting the City of Onaway through the RRC program with the writing of a new City Master Plan. *Staff: Christina McEmber*

15. Hillman Master Plan: Staff is assisting the Village of Hillman in a Master Plan update, economic development plan, and downtown marketing plan. An online survey has been created. *Staff: Denise Cline, Christina McEmber*

16. Otsego County Quality of Life Survey: NEMCOG has been assisting the County with developing an online Quality of Life Survey to gauge resident's opinions on the factors that make Otsego County a desirable place to live. A draft survey was completed and edits have been incorporated. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

17. Frederic Township Master Plan: Staff is assisting Frederic Township with the writing of a new Master Plan. *Staff: Christina McEmber*

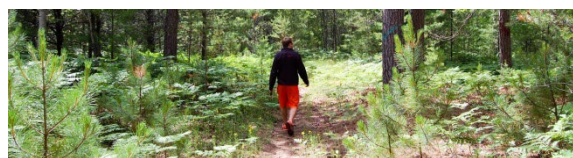
18. Planning Assistance: Staff provides planning and zoning assistance when needed to the following communities:

1. City of Alpena
2. City Rogers City
3. City Grayling
4. City of Tawas City
5. City of West Branch
6. City of Harrisville
7. Village of Lincoln
8. Village of Hillman

9. Green Township
10. Wilson Township
11. Ossineke Township
12. West Traverse Township
13. Long Rapids Township

Staff: Denise Cline

Recreation Planning



1. Up North Trails: Staff continues to provide updates to the Up North Trails website. An updated website was completed and is online. *Staff: Denise Cline, Diane Rekowski, Steve Schnell*

2. City of Harrisville: Staff has continued to help the City by developing required materials to administer their 2017 MNRTF Grant. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

3. Iron Belle Trail: Through March, 2020 staff participated in, presented at and/or facilitated many meetings with Iron Belle Trail (IBT) stakeholders in Crawford County, Roscommon County, Ogemaw County and Iosco County regarding IBT route planning, grant development, funding opportunities, general awareness of the IBT initiative, and local trail non-profit organizational development. This project was put on hold by the DNR due to Covid and its impact on the State budget. *Staff: Emily Meyerson (contractor)*

4. Rust Township: Staff has continued to help the Township by developing required materials to administer their 2017 Recreation Passport Grant. Staff also



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developed and submitted another recreation Passport grant application. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

- 5. Village of Hillman & Hillman Township Joint Recreation Plan:** Staff assisted the Village and Township in developing a joint recreation plan. The plan was completed and submitted to the MDNR for review and approval. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

- 6. Sunrise Coastal Trail Plan:** Staff assisted communities along the US 23 Lake Huron coast plan for a non-motorized trail connecting Oscoda with Alpena. Project is complete. *Staff: Steve Schnell, Emily Meyerson (Contractor), Denise Cline, Nico Tucker*

- 7. Grayling Township Recreation Planning:** Staff assisted Grayling Township in the creation of a Recreation Plan for 2020-2024. *Staff: Steve Schnell*

- 8. Frederic Township Recreation Planning:** Staff assisted the Township in the creation of a Recreation Plan for 2020-2024. *Staff: Steve Schnell*

- 9. Forest Township Recreation Plan:** Staff assisted the Township in developing a recreation plan. The plan was completed and submitted to the MDNR for review and approval. *Staff: Nico Tucker, Christina McEmber*

- 10. Village of Lincoln Recreation Plan:** Staff assisted the Village in developing a recreation plan. The plan was completed and submitted to the MDNR for review and approval. *Staff: Nico Tucker, Christina McEmber*

- 11. Albert Township Recreation Plan:** Staff assisted the Township in developing a recreation plan. The plan was completed and submitted to the MDNR for review and

approval. *Staff: Steve Schnell, Christina McEmber*

- 12. Sanborn Township Recreation Grant:** NEMCOG assisted the Township with a Recreation Passport grant application to develop a small park with fishing pier on the Devils River in Ossineke. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

- 13. Otsego County Recreation Grant:** NEMCOG will be assisting the County with a Recreation Passport grant application to replace the playground equipment at Otsego Lake County Park... Staff has begun compiling required materials, and contacted engineering consultant to coordinate the format and content of plans and estimates. *Staff: Nico Tucker, Christina McEmber*

- 14. Hillman Township Recreation Grant:** NEMCOG assisted the Township with a Recreation Passport grant application to make improvements to their Tournament/Tiger Paw Park facility, including paved parking and pathway, nature trail, pavilion and press box for the ball fields. This was in partnership with Hillman Little League who NEMCOG assisted with applying for Little League grants to assist in funding the project. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

- 15. Alcona County Recreation Plan:** Staff will be assisting the County with updating their recreation plan. An online survey was developed and is available for residents to complete. *Staff: Nico Tucker, Christina McEmber*

Solid Waste

- 1. NEMCOG** continues to administer the Alpena Recycling Program. Exploring collaborative opportunities for processing and operation's enhancement. NEMCOG



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applied for and received a Scrap Tire Grant and a Recycling Partnership Grant to reduce the level of unwanted materials in Alpena County's recycling bins. Also received an e-waste grant to assist with holding events and purchase a permanent storage unit. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Karen Cole, Theresa Huff*

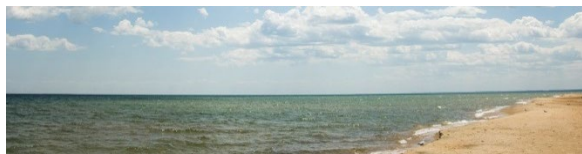
2. Continued to monitor solid waste planning at the state level. Legislation has been introduced (pre-Covid) to revise planning switches the emphasis from material disposal to material management. *Staff: Diane Rekowski*

3. Applied and received Scrap Tire grants for Alpena and Crawford County. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Theresa Huff*

4. Received Clean Sweep grant for FY 2020. Funds will pay for Pesticides brought into the Regional HHW Facility in Alpena. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Theresa Huff*

5. Applied for and received a Northeast MI e-Waste grant. Funding was received to purchase e-waste storage facilities throughout the region. Working with Oscoda County on an E-waste Event and storage unit; upgrading Cheboygan County's e-waste storage area and looking for possible other permanent sites in Rogers City, Harrisville and at the MOASWMA landfill. *Staff: Diane Rekowski*

Environmental & Water Resources



1. **Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative:** NEMCOG serves on

the Leadership Team of the NE Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative, a place-based educational program aimed at connecting schools and community partners through Great Lakes stewardship projects. NEMCOG assists with establishing the school-local government connection, website development, reviewing school grant funding requests, and the development of a database of projects based on community needs. *Staff: Nico Tucker, Denise Cline*

2. Explored opportunities with the 2020 DEQ Nonpoint Source Grants and other state and federal grants. *Staff: Diane Rekowski, Nico Tucker*

3. **Upper Black River Council:** NEMCOG assists the council by developing DEQ permit applications, performing stream surveys, and assisting in the oversight of the contracted work crew. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

Economic & Community Development



1. **NE MI Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI)/MEDC Region 3 CDC:** Facilitate regular meetings of Collaborative. Video-conference meetings are held monthly with Region 3 EDC Directors and community partners for information sharing amongst partners.

RPI funding was not allocated in the State's budget for FY 2020. The program has been extremely successful for NE MI. Many local and regional initiatives were funded through the program such as Vertical Asset



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Inventories for Broadband expansion; Mini-grants for Community & Economic Development; College Student Attraction Promotion; Support for Career Quest and Talent Tours for students in region; Regional Marketing Mini-grants; Thunder Bay River Watershed Blue Water Trail Assistance, creating a Talent Hub, and a Trail Town Economic Development Plan.

In addition, \$70,000 of the overall grant award was for initiating an Integrated Asset Management Inventory throughout the region. Two workshops were held in the region to outline the inventory and needs from local communities. *Staff: Denise Cline, Nico Tucker, Diane Rekowski, Consultants: Strategic Policy Consultants*

2. MEDC Funding:

Received funding from MEDC to conduct a NE MI Local Foods Supply Chain Logistics Study. Contracted with Explorer Solutions to complete the analysis.

Staff attends weekly MEDC-CDC Covid-related videoconference meetings with Lansing MEDC staff. In addition, staff organizes and holds monthly Region 3: CDC Videoconference meetings with Economic and Community Development organizations in the region.

Staff: Diane Rekowski, Erich Podjaske

3. **Regional Local Foods Project** was funded through RPI Funds and will continue with EDA-Covid Response funding. The work is contracted out to “Taste the Local Difference” (TLD). TLD staff, Molly Stepanski, from Hawks continues to increase demand and interest in producing, consuming and selling locally grown foods. *Contractor: Molly Stepanski*

4. **Joint Land Use Study:** Funding for implementation of the Joint Land Use Study was obtained. Staff is working with the

Camp Grayling Community Council on (1) Grayling Area Transportation Study (2) Education and Outreach (3) Community Council assistance (4) Master Plans/Overlay Zones. Staff is working with the Alpena CRTC Community Council on items 2, 3, and 4.

5. **Applied for and received an U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) three-year grant.** The grant will allow NEMCOG to continue its Community & Economic Development Technical Assistance to the region. *Staff: Diane Rekowski*

6. EDA –Covid Response Grant:

Applied for and received \$400,000 from EDA Cares Act funding for a two-year period to assist with Covid-related economic distress in the region. The funds will primarily go to provide technical assistance to local EDO’s/businesses and communities. *Staff: Diane Rekowski; Contractor: Sara McCauley, Strategic Policy Consultants*

7. **M-33 Dark Sky Byway:** Staff is working to form a committee to move the M-33 Byway forward and to look into Pure Michigan Byway Status. The website is being updated. *Staff: Erich Podjaske, Denise Cline.*

GIS Services



1. **Montmorency County GIS:** Staff has continued to work with county equalization staff to address issues related to parcel overlaps, gaps etc. Staff continues to perform parcel splits/combines, fix problem



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areas, and provide general GIS technical assistance to the county. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

2. **Alcona Township GIS:** Parcel mapping services are now provided through the County. Other GIS services are provided to the Township on an as needed basis. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

3. **Alcona County GIS:** Staff has continued to make corrections to parcel data, and perform all property splits and combinations. Staff also worked with County officials to develop GIS agreements, cost structures and other materials *Staff: Nico Tucker*

4. **Alpena County GIS:** Staff has continued to make corrections to parcel data, and perform all property splits and combinations. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

5. **Alpena Township:** Parcel mapping services are now provided through the County. Other GIS services are provided to the Township on an as needed basis. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

6. **Montmorency 911 Technical Assistance:** Staff continues to work on the update to the County's 911 computer mapping system. Staff continues to correct any outstanding issues, assist the County in assigning new addresses, and update the various GIS layers. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

7. **Montmorency Township GIS:** Parcel mapping services are now provided through the County. Other GIS services are provided to the Township on an as needed basis. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

8. **Hillman Township GIS:** Parcel mapping services are now provided through the County. Other GIS services are provided to the Township on an as needed basis. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

9. **Vienna Township GIS:** Parcel mapping services are now provided through the County. Other GIS services are provided to the Township on an as needed basis. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

10. **NEMCOG:** Staff has had numerous discussions with Township Assessors, County Equalization staff, other Regional Planning Agencies to discuss mapping services NEMCOG could provide and the possibility of establishing a regional GIS program. A survey has been drafted for dissemination to each county to determine current status. NEMCOG provided mapping assistance to many township assessors. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

11. **Presque Isle County GIS:** Staff has continued to make corrections to parcel data layers, and develop a county-wide layer. Numerous problem areas have been redrawn. Work has continued on a platted subdivision layer with 232 subdivision completed to date. Accuracy issues remain that will take time to solve. Staff has begun developing parcel section maps for most areas of the County where accuracy issues have been corrected. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

12. **West Branch GIS:** Staff has provided one half day GIS training session to City staff. Training will continue to be provided as needed, up to 4 full-day or 8 half-day sessions. NEMCOG has also completed the development of updated parcel and subdivision platted lot layers. *Staff: Nico Tucker*



Transportation Program



1. **Asset Management:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all PASER rating activities are on hold. Staff has discussed alternate procedures for potentially collecting the data. Staff has also discussed assisting several road commissions with rating their local roads. Provided onsite assistance and training to several agencies on RoadSoft and the Laptop Data Collector. Staff queried traffic crash reports at the request of several local road agencies. Staff took part in several training webinars regarding local road agency requirements for transportation asset management plans. Staff has assisted road commission staff with exporting and analyzing data to be used in their Asset Management Plans. NEMCOG provided map and report templates, answered questions and provided training, and supplied other information to EMCOG and Networks Northwest staff. *Staff: Nico Tucker*
2. **Rural Task Force:** Staff responded to numerous phone calls and emails from local agencies with questions regarding task force procedures and target allocations. Responded to requests from several citizens of the region for information on the RTF process. Provided information to each regarding RTF procedures, funding sources, funding and project requirements, and provided the RTF 9 STIP and Illustrative list of projects. Public notices of the RTF meeting were prepared and posted. Updated balance sheet, an agenda, and other materials were prepared for the meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the March meeting was rescheduled to April as a virtual meeting.

Staff attended the April 20 meeting and recorded meeting minutes, and documented project additions, deletions, and changes. Project data sheets were completed for all project additions and changes and sent to local road and transit agencies for approval and signature. All project changes were programmed into JobNet. The RTF9 meeting minutes and other supporting documents were submitted to MDOT Planning. Assisted local RTF agencies by submitting project change requests as received. Reviewed potential earmarks to be repurposed and assisted road commission in tracking the true status of the old earmarks. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

3. **Small Urban Area Program:** NEMCOG continues to work with the respective small urban area representatives and the Small Urban Program Coordinator to make corrections to the priority project lists. *Staff: Nico Tucker*
4. **Transportation Work Program:** Attended meetings and provided information on planning and/or funding options for non-motorized facilities to several local governments.

Staff provided Complete Streets information to local Townships upon request.

NEMCOG staff discussed the Alpena County Bagley Bridge replacement project with road commission staff. Staff offered potential funding sources for the inclusion of non-motorized facilities on the bridge replacement. Staff contacted various grant program coordinators to determine eligibility of the project.

NEMCOG has discussed the need to update the Grayling Area Transportation Study with various agency representatives in the Grayling area. Funding was applied for under the DOD JLUS Implementation



process. Staff began developing an RFP to contract a consultant to update the plan.

Staff reviewed and updated transportation language and traffic volume information for several township and county master plan updates.

Submitted geographic framework corrections on behalf of local road agencies.

NEMCOG staff has continued to be contacted by utility companies looking for ROW data to aid in broadband deployment efforts. Staff provided the appropriate MDOT ROW maps, or forwarded the appropriate road agency contact information to the companies.

NEMCOG staff discussed funding and engineering options with the Village of Lincoln regarding a stormwater and street maintenance issue at a primary intersection within the town.

Staff assisted MDOT TSC staff with identifying correct addresses along a stretch of M-32 where a construction project was about to begin.

Staff met with Briley Township officials regarding the need to replace a trail bridge over Haymeadow Creek in Atlanta. Staff prepared and submitted a USDA grant application to fund the engineering.

Several school districts requested assistance in mapping student addresses from survey results. NEMCOG staff geocoded all addresses provided. The GIS addresses will be used when planning for various remote learning scenarios and reviewing bus routes to potentially adapt to different learning environments caused by the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff continued to respond to numerous questions from local officials and residents of the region regarding transportation planning, funding, and project selection and implementation processes. Appropriate information or contacts were provided in all instances. *Staff: Nico Tucker*

5. US 23 Heritage Route: NEMCOG provides coordination and technical assistance to the Heritage Route teams in Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Iosco, Presque Isle, and Cheboygan Counties as well as the US 23 Management Council. Marketing: Staff has assisted in coordinating the website development and marketing efforts. Promotional materials were created as part of the National Scenic Byways grant including a map guide of Historic Sites, a map guide of trails, a waterproof flip guide book for the Huron Blueways, and a regional guidebook. In addition, a reprint of the Sunrise Coast Birding Trail was completed. *Staff: Denise Cline*

6. Received MDOT funding for updating the NE MI Non-Motorized Maps. Draft layout for the Northeast Michigan and Northwest Michigan Road and Trail Bicycling Guides are complete and in review. *Staff: Nico Tucker, Denise Cline*





Community Corrections

1. **Northeast Michigan Community Corrections** has been running programs in four counties within the region. Staff has been working remotely with the courts and jail systems during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure continuity of services. Thinking Matters has been suspended in the County Jails pending reopening to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Community Based Case Management is actively being utilized as a remote service to connect felony offenders to substance abuse treatment, employment and education assistance services. The

Pretrial Supervision Program remains successfully in operation in Otsego County. Supervision is provided by the Pretrial Supervision Case Manager remote while the participant out on bond and engaging with the public. Remote reporting provides defendants with additional means to navigate access to the court system as policies change to adhere to social distancing guidelines. We strive to provide best practice standards to promote pretrial justice and ensure court appearance and public safety.

Alternative programming is being explored in order to address the adapting needs of the offender population within the Northeast Region. *Staff: Nichole Scott*

Respectfully submitted by Diane Rekowski



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