



## **Community Growth Grants to support the Grand Vision *Matching Service Grant Offer* August 1, 2012**

The *Land Information Access Association (LIAA)* has offered to **double down** on the *Community Growth Grants* provided by *Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG)*. Local governments that receive a *Community Growth Grant* in support of the Grand Vision are eligible for a matching service grant from LIAA. Five (5) or more local governments will be offered up to \$15,000 in additional funding to pay for services from LIAA on a one-to-one matching basis. For example, after winning a *Community Growth Grant*, a local government can engage LIAA to provide needed services, paying \$1 for every \$2 of services received.

### **Introduction**

The *Land Information Access Association (LIAA)* is a nonprofit organization with nearly 20 years of experience in helping people build more sustainable and resilient communities through cooperative planning and development, resource management and civic engagement. In addition to inter-jurisdictional planning, LIAA is a recognized leader in the application of information technologies for resource management and community development with an emphasis on citizen participation. The tools and technical skills offered by LIAA include:

- professional planning & process facilitation services;
- community asset mapping and geographic analyses;
- interactive & crowdsourcing websites (design, development and hosting); and
- multimedia & video production and editing.

### **Services & Support Available**

In partnership with NWMCOG and in support of the Grand Vision, LIAA is offering matching service grants to local governments that receive *Community Growth Grants*. LIAA is particularly interested in working with local governments to increase cooperative planning, improve natural resource preservation or support placemaking efforts. ***Local governments are encouraged to contact LIAA early in the grant writing process to identify the type, quantity and costs of services needed.*** As briefly described below, LIAA can provide a wide range of professional planning and technology support services.

**Community Asset Inventory and Mapping** – LIAA can provide *technology services* (website design, development and hosting) and *facilitation assistance* in setting up a community asset inventory process that involves citizens and community leaders in conducting a thorough inventory of physical and social assets across the region. This cooperative process of gathering a community asset database builds inter-personal and inter-organizational relationships, emphasizes community possibilities and connections, stimulates creative thinking and visioning, and builds linkages between resources of all types.

**Mapping & Geographic Information System (GIS) Development** – LIAA can assist local governments in the cooperative development of important GIS data sets and geographic analyses. For example, local governments may want to evaluate potential conservation areas or wildlife corridor connectivity. In another case, local governments may want to evaluate the impacts of impervious surfaces on storm water runoff and local stream quality. Still other governments may be interested in assessing the accessibility of key aesthetic and cultural resources.

**Customized Interactive Websites** – LIAA offers design and technology services to create and host unique websites that provide accessible and understandable information and resources that encourage an ongoing dialogue between the “team members,” all project partners, and the greater community. Based on a *content management* web application, these sites can include audio and video components, polls and surveys, and interactive discussions as well as the usual web pages, calendars, maps and the like.

**Community-wide Planning and Zoning Support** – LIAA offers professional planning services to help neighboring local governments find common ground for cooperative planning and management of shared resources. LIAA’s certified professionals have helped lower the barriers between jurisdictions through facilitated discussions and directed planning projects. For example, LIAA has helped over a dozen local governments cooperate on the development of shared recreation plans.

**Inter-Jurisdictional Cooperation/Collaboration** – Many local government officials are still learning about the options and opportunities for inter-jurisdictional cooperation in land use planning and resource management. LIAA can provide information and expertise as well as direct assistance in breaking down the common barriers to successful relationships between elected and appointed officials across municipal boundaries. LIAA can also assist in more substantial organizational efforts such as setting up inter-local agreements, recreation authorities and joint municipal planning commissions.

**Multimedia & Video Production Services** – LIAA operates the UpNorth Media Center, including northwest Lower Michigan’s only public and government access TV stations. Local governments and nonprofit organizations have used LIAA’s extensive professional video expertise to create educational products for re-play on cable television and as on-demand video over the web.

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