



City of Grayling Northern Market Project Awarded MDARD Food and Agriculture Investment Fund Grant

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LANSING, Mich. – During its regularly scheduled meeting today, the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development voted to approve a Food and Agriculture Investment Fund grant for the City of Grayling Northern Market project in Grayling, Michigan. The grant funding will accelerate the development of this unique project, which will create a new economic engine in Grayling and provide a farmers market space and food hub that will link Northern and Southern Michigan.

“What makes these kinds of projects so special is that not only do they create a number of new jobs and boost local economies, but they also provide a way for communities to come together for wonderful, shared experiences,” said MDARD Director Gordon Wenk. “Spending an afternoon with your friends or family exploring the market is a perfect way to discover and enjoy Michigan’s amazing foods.”

The City of Grayling will receive a \$250,000 performance-based grant toward detailed engineering and development plans, as well as bidding and construction documents for the design and development of the 53,500 square foot Northern Market. Completion of these documents is critical to move the development and investment forward. Once final funding is secured, the total project investment is expected to be \$9.1 million, and the project is expected to create at least 14 new jobs.

The planned year-around, seven-days-a-week Northern Market will be a new economic engine creating an experiential agricultural shopping tourism destination. Located on the I-75 Business Loop, which feeds into M-72, the major east/west route that connects Traverse City to the west and Alpena to the east. This geographic location is strategic in that it has potential for freight logistics between the northern regions (the Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Peninsula) with more populated markets in the Southern Lower Peninsula.

“The funding from the MDARD grant is fundamental to the commencement of the Northern Market/Food Hub project,” said Grayling City Manager Doug Baum. “The foundation of the entire project, one that will encourage growth and sustainability for years to come, begins with having a solid infrastructure. With the fresh, functional design of the Northern Market, it will be able to accommodate and fulfill the needs of an ever-changing food industry. Not only will the Northern

Market/Food Hub promote Grayling as a community, it will also assist the local food producers of Northern Michigan to expand beyond their current markets.”

The Food and Agriculture Investment Program provides financial support for food and agriculture projects that help expand food and agriculture processing to enable growth in the industry and Michigan’s economy. Projects are selected based on their impact to the overall agriculture industry and their impact to food and agriculture growth and investment in Michigan.

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