



## Challenge Grant Funding Request

**From:** Region 9 Economic Development Partners

**To:** Regional Prosperity Initiative Challenge Grant Committee

**Date:** August 21, 2015

### Project Summary:

The Economic Development Partners of Prosperity Region 9, also known as the “Greater Ann Arbor Region,” formally request that the available challenge grant funding be used to host a Familiarization Tour (“Fam” Tour) for site selectors in Michigan’s Prosperity Region 9. Site selectors are professionals that work with businesses on new location decisions. They produce roughly 30% of the leads for companies that are interested in relocating to or expanding in our region. While much of the site selection analysis comes from data, there are other factors that can influence the location decision process. Hosting a Fam Tour for the national site selector community provides us with the opportunity to highlight our region’s assets and unique features that are not always illuminated in the data.

### Project Goals & Objectives:

- Put the Greater Ann Arbor Region on the radar of the national site selector community
- Increase the odds that Region 9 communities will be considered during site searches
- Give site selectors the firsthand experience they need to effectively pitch our communities to companies that are looking for new places to open and expand operations

### Project Outline:

The Fam Tour would be a multi-day tour through Ann Arbor, where site selectors will be joined by local partners and businesses from throughout the region. The day will include meetings with CEOs of businesses that are central to the economic success of the region, Q & A sessions with regional stakeholders and site selectors, and meals including facilitated discussion. All meetings, transportation, meals, and lodging will be organized by Region 9 economic development partners.

### Proposed Tour Activities:

- Company tours with major employers near downtown Ann Arbor
- Tour of Mcity & discussion of Southeastern Michigan’s role in connected vehicle development
- Roundtable discussions with employers regarding the location decision process, and their talent acquisition process

## Marketing Materials Included in Site Selector Packets:

- Community profiles
- Employer and wage related data, including a recent “Labor Supply Certification” study that was completed for each county within Region 9
- Examples of best available sites for redevelopment in the region
- Marketing materials

## Project Costs:

- Transportation, marketing material development and expense

## Long Term Vision:

The long term vision of this tour is increasing economic prosperity in Region 9. Business owners are far more likely to consider Region 9 communities for their companies if site selectors are effectively pitching those communities. Bringing new companies to Region 9 would create more jobs and investment in the region, thus making our communities the best possible places to live, work, and play.

## Funding Request and Leveraged Dollars:

Fam Tours happen throughout the country and different regions compete for the time of the site consultant community. Site consultants expect that their travel, meals and lodging will be covered by their hosts.

**The Greater Ann Arbor Region Members request \$7,500 through the Challenge Grant to cover the costs of marketing materials, transportation and lodging for the tour.** All other dining and entertainment costs are to be paid through partner contributions. The funds will have a leverage ratio of 3.6-to-1, which includes funding from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Ann Arbor Convention & Visitors Bureau and in kind support from the Greater Ann Arbor Region members.

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