



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **COMMUNITY FOUNDATION COMMITS \$1 MILLION TO RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT**

**LANSING, MICH.** – The Community Foundation announced it will provide up to \$1 million toward several new projects identified along the downtown Lansing riverfront. The funds will match private contributions currently being raised from individuals and corporations to support these projects. The foundation’s commitment to the riverfront and these projects are a result of community feedback from the “Penny for Your Thoughts” contest held earlier in 2017, which generated ideas for a vibrant urban core to attract and retain talent in our region.

The foundation is focusing on the riverfront from Cherry Hill boat launch near I-496 to the Brenke Fish Ladder near Old Town. Projects include new kayak launches, boat docking, an outdoor classroom, artwork and creative lighting, public seating areas with fireplaces, and four new or improved parks and fishing areas. The foundation is working with Friends of the Lansing River Trail on design elements, and with Old Town Commercial Association to incorporate their plans for a band shell near the fish ladder.

“The community recognizes the untapped value of our riverfront,” said Dennis Fliehm, president and CEO of the Community Foundation. “Funding for these projects will come from our Leadership Fund, not our regular grantmaking dollars.”

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The foundation’s riverfront master planning committee includes urban planners and placemaking experts from Michigan State University, and leaders from the City of Lansing, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP), Michigan Municipal League and Tri-County Regional Planning Commission. The committee vetted project ideas and made recommendations to the Community Foundation based on the feasibility, creativity and potential impact of the projects. The foundation also held listening sessions with potential donors to determine funding interest.

“Businesses throughout the region are struggling with workforce shortages and they need help to attract and retain talent,” said Laurie Baumer, executive vice president of the foundation and coordinator of the initiative. “Several area business leaders have shared their interest in our plans for riverfront development and they are willing to invest in it.”

“A revitalized urban core will enhance economic prosperity,” said Bob Trezise, president and CEO of LEAP. “LEAP is supportive of the foundation’s leadership role in this placemaking initiative. Ultimately, it will benefit everyone who lives and works throughout the tri-county region.”

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*The Community Foundation is passionate about creating vibrant, thriving communities throughout the Capital Region. The Foundation works with donors to meet their unique charitable goals, supports area nonprofits with grants and coaching, and leads innovative projects that drive community growth. The Community Foundation (also known as the Capital Region Community Foundation) is a tax-exempt public charity that serves the charitable needs and enhances the quality of life for people in Ingham, Clinton and Eaton counties.*