

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Hadley Streng, President
Grand Haven Area Community Foundation
616-842-6378

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Community Foundation Grant Helps Pave Way for Housing for All

The Board of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (GHACF), together with the GHACF Youth Advisory Council (YAC), is pleased to announce five first-round grant awards, totaling \$262,500, in support of Northwest Ottawa County. This includes a \$12,500 grant to the City of Grand Haven for an updated zoning ordinance that would allow residential housing and mixed-use structures to be more easily developed within the Grand Haven community.

The City of Grand Haven currently has a partnership with Housing Next, whose mission is to “create and implement a cross sector, long-term, and regional strategy that influences leverage points in the system to ensure affordable, accessible, and safe housing is available to all.” A complete review and update of the city’s zoning ordinance will support the goals outlined in the city’s master plan and other strategic reports, while reflecting the community’s current priorities.

“The outcomes of this project have the potential to impact greater Northwest Ottawa County,” said Pat McGinnis, City of Grand Haven City Manager. “Once the updated ordinance is drafted, educational sessions for developers, realtors, and the general public will be held to allow for further conversation.”

The grant from the GHACF will allow the city to hire a consulting firm to assist with creating an updated zoning ordinance that supports the goals of the 2016 Resilient Grand Haven Master Plan, the 2018 Affordable Housing Task Force Final Report, and the 2018 Redevelopment Ready Communities Certification. The results from this update would also be shared with neighboring communities, including the Village of Spring Lake. In addition to the consultant’s general review and update of the city’s zoning ordinance, emphasis will be placed on the opportunity for community conversations regarding housing density in residential and mixed-use neighborhoods.

Other grants awarded:

- **Center for Women in Transition** – \$150,000 over three years (\$50,000 a year) for “Domestic and Sexual Violence Community Prevention” training expansion. This grant will allow CWIT to hire a full-time prevention specialist who will build the community's capacity to recognize and respond to domestic and sexual violence. The prevention specialist will be available to engage, train, and consult with local employers and faith organizations throughout Ottawa County.
- **Bethany Christian Services** – \$25,000 (including \$10,000 from YAC) for “Healthy Life Skills for Students and Families” programming with Grand Haven Area Public Schools. This program promotes positive mental health, resiliency measures, and strong relationships for children, teens, and guardians.
- **Bluebird Cancer Retreats** – \$25,000 for Bluebird Cancer Retreats to hire an additional staff member, which will allow for the creation and development of programming for families and children, further reaching all those impacted by the consequences of a cancer diagnosis. Bluebird Cancer Retreats is the only retreat opportunity for those with cancer in the West Michigan region, and one of only 32 retreat centers serving adults with cancer in the nation.
- **TCM Counseling** – \$50,000 for “Strong to Stronger: An Infrastructure Project”, which aims to research and implement strategic marketing campaigns, as well as a more secure, efficient, and cost-effective IT system. TCM Counseling is the only mental health service in the Tri-Cities that provides services to individuals regardless of ability to pay or access to insurance.

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation is a public, charitable organization serving the Northwest Ottawa County community since 1971. GHACF is regularly recognized as a top 100 Community Foundation in the nation and is the 8th largest community foundation in the State of Michigan. It encourages philanthropy by individuals, families, corporations, and organizations, and serves as a steward of their charitable funds and legacies. In addition to awarding grants, the Foundation offers technical support to nonprofits, convenes community leaders on issues of importance, and advocates for the nonprofit sector. For more information visit ghacf.org.

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