



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Suburbs Seek Certification as Redevelopment Ready**

Ferndale, MI – The Michigan Suburbs Alliance today announced that they will work with six suburban Detroit communities to improve community-developer relations and foster increased interest in redevelopment of the region’s built-out suburbs. The six cities will work to achieve “Redevelopment Ready” certification through a first-in-the-nation program established by the Suburbs Alliance. In return they will each receive in excess of \$30,000 worth of technical assistance to help them meet their goals.

The first six pilot communities for Redevelopment Ready Certification are the cities of **Eastpointe, Hazel Park, River Rouge, Southfield, Taylor and Ypsilanti**. Working with the city managers, economic development directors and planners from each of these communities, the Suburbs Alliance will test a program for reform and economic growth that they expect will have statewide significance.

“We think these communities represent a true cross-section of southeast Michigan, big and small, rich and poor, growing and shrinking” said Conan Smith, Executive Director of the Suburbs Alliance. “We hope that Redevelopment Ready certification will show developers that there is opportunity for investment and profit throughout the region.”

The Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program encourages cities to evaluate and reform their redevelopment processes in three areas:

**Learning and Communicating About Redevelopment** – cities are encouraged to adopt proactive and aggressive public participation strategies focusing on early visioning and engagement in determining the need for redevelopment; continuing education for municipal staff about best practices and new trends for redevelopment;

**Reviewing and Approving Redevelopment Plans** – building from the maxim “time is money,” cities are urged to make their site-plan review processes more efficient; through fewer public hearings (mitigated by early public participation) and concurrent departmental review, communities can speed up the redevelopment process without compromising community values;

**Planning for Redevelopment** – updated master plans are key to engaging developers who clamor for consistency and clarity in the process, as well as helping citizens feel secure that the character of their community will be protected.

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The best practice and standards for RRC certification were developed by committee that balances private and public sector interests, including representation from developers, architects, planners, Governor Jennifer Granholm’s office, municipal leaders and university professors. Communities measure their progress against a scorecard developed by the committee with the assistance of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. The pilot communities will work with the Suburbs Alliance through October to meet the requirements, after which the program will be opened up to additional southeast Michigan cities.

In congratulating the pilot communities on their selection, Governor Granholm noted the important social and economic results of cities engaging the private sector in cooperative efforts for redevelopment: “This is a fabulous example of collaboration between cities, planners, universities, developers and others in the business community who understand that our older brownfield communities have tremendous potential for economic development and are certainly worth fighting for.”

**Additional information, including the scorecard and best practices is available at [www.RedevlopmentReady.com](http://www.RedevlopmentReady.com).**

### **Redevlopment Ready Communities Committee Roster**

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