

Date: November 13, 2006

To: Mayor and Council Members

From: John Archocosky

RE: Monthly Activity Report

Following last month's success in receiving our 4th MEDC Grant for \$532,000 to correct our sewer problems, I thought things would slow down to a more manageable pace. As you know things have been snowballing here in Iron River and this past month has been no exception to that trend.

About three weeks ago we received notice that MEDC has finally committed to funding the razing of the Cloverland Hotel and will be appropriating approximately \$250,000 to see that this building will no longer be blight to our downtown business district. That news by itself was enough to make our team feel like the efforts were well worth the time invested in the various projects we have planned. Much to our surprise and pleasure however the city was again contacted by the MEDC CAT team and advised that the application the City/DDA submitted for a downtown façade program had also been selected to be funded.

The façade grant application information was assembled by our development team member Julie Melchiori. After holding an introductory session with business owners, it was discovered that sufficient interest existed to file the application. The timeframe allotted to submit was very short and seemed impossible to meet. Julie immediately met with about 24 owners and developed project descriptions and cost estimates for each one. Pictures and supporting quotes from contractors were also required to be submitted with the Notice of Intent (NOI). Julie worked diligently to gather all of the required documentation. We met briefly with Jeff Ball, P.E. from STS so he could review and verify the information and provide the certification to MEDC that the estimates appeared to be accurate. At the last minute all the data that had to be submitted was assembled and forwarded to MEDC with the feeling that if we at least file this time we might have a good chance of being selected in a future round of requests.

Shortly after submitting the information we began receiving questions regarding the application and Julie had to make some changes in our application to meet the program guidelines. On November 3rd we were notified that Iron River was selected to receive a 50/50 matching Façade Improvement Grant for a total project of \$400,000 and were expected to attend a start-up program seminar in Lansing on November 10th in Lansing. Schedules were changed to accommodate to the mandatory meeting and the project is now underway.

The MEDC grant dollars will be used to financially assist the building owners improve the appearance and physical condition of their buildings. This program along with Rental Rehab project and the Streetscape projects in the downtown and hilltop locations will give a new look to our business community. These projects are all specific elements recommended in the HyettPalma Blueprint study for improving the City of Iron River.

As a result of these two MEDC grants, the city will likely see a total of \$650,000 worth of upgrades and improvements in our business districts.