A $1 million grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) funded the renovations of the Powerhouse building located near the Portage Lake Lift Bridge in downtown Houghton. WUPPDR is administering the grant for the applicants, MTEC Smartzone and the City of Houghton. Two floors were added to the building tripling the usable space to 15,000 square feet.

GE Aviation, the Evandale, Ohio-based aircraft engine producer has moved into the newly renovated Powerhouse Building in Houghton and celebrated with a grand opening on January 28, 2008. The expanded facility is expected to employ 50 people, of which 40 are expected to be Michigan Tech engineering students who would work under senior technical specialists and junior graduate engineers.

Job creation is the result of the expansion which provides the opportunity for engineering students to remain in the area to work instead of feeling the push to leave. Carlton Crothers, MTEC Smartzone CEO, praised the commitment and participation of the state and local groups in realizing this project. “It takes people to make things like this happen...people who can come together for a common goal, and that goal is job creation.”

Carlton Crothers, MTEC Smartzone CEO

Powerhouse photos courtesy of Adam Johnson of Brockit Professional Photography

Did You Know?
WUPPDR will celebrate its 40th this year! Established in 1968, WUPPDR has spent 4 decades working with local government to promote regional cooperation.

WUPPDR Staff:
Kim Stoker Executive Director
Lori Hauswirth Associate Planner
Meg Pachmayr Assistant Planner
Jim LaMuth Assistant Planner/Transportation Coordinator
Courtney Archambeau Housing Specialist
Ken Marshall GIS Specialist
Steve Rouser GIS Technician
Mary Tedalcio Administrative Assistant
Sue Harter Financial Secretary
Amy Spahn Financial Aide

Sue Harter financial secretary

A Welcome to Our New Staff

Courtney Archambeau joined WUPPDR in June 2007 as an Intern working primarily on the Region 8 Critical Asset Inventory. Courtney proved to be a critical asset herself learning the Section 8 MSHDA voucher program from Jim LaMuth after the Region 8 project was completed. Courtney was promoted to full time status as Housing Specialist January 1, 2008. Courtney has a B.S. from Michigan Tech in Social Sciences and lives with her husband and three children in Houghton.

Amy Spahn started with WUPPDR as a part-time Financial Aide at the end of January, 2008. Amy holds a B.S. from Northern Michigan University in Finance and spent several years working as a Compliance Assistant and Paraplanner for Joe Evans, an Ameriprise Financial Advisor in Houghton. Amy lives with her husband and son in Chassell.
The Westerly View

Volume 1, Issue 1

New MDOT Projects

The region began work on two new projects with the Michigan Department of Transportation this past quarter.

WUPPDR is working with MDOT to conduct a study on the Portage Lake Lift Bridge connecting Houghton and Hancock. The study will identify and complement contingency planning needs and efforts in the event the bridge becomes inoperable. Please contact Meg Pachmayer at mpachmayer@wuppdr.org or call the office for more information.

WUPPDR is also working with MDOT to develop a comprehensive, regional Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and Investment Strategy for the Superior Region in conjunction with the Central and Eastern U.P. Regions. Community and user input will be compiled throughout the U.P. to create the guide that will help MDOT along with local officials prioritize projects, identify funding and guide non-motorized investments within our region and the U.P. A non-motorized ‘summit’ to gather stakeholder input is tentatively planned for August, 2008. For more information contact Lori Hauswirth at lhauswirth@wuppdr.org or by calling the office.

MDOT, Asset Management and WUPPDR

Asset Management as defined in Michigan is “an ongoing process of maintaining, upgrading, and operating physical assets cost-effectively, based on a continuous physical inventory and condition assessment.” In December, the Senate unanimously passed HB 4979 which requires that any road agency that has jurisdiction over a federal-aid eligible road must use a pavement management system in managing their federal-aid roads.

Since 2003, WUPPDR has assisted the State in facilitating the Asset Management program in our Region through coordinating the Road Condition Survey, the Annual Report, and the Multi-Year Program recommended by the State’s Asset Management Council. Additionally, WUPPDR has provided asset data collection and analysis to the Cities of Wakefield and Hancock and the Village of Ontonagon. WUPPDR also worked with the City of Wakefield to complete their Capital Improvement Plan, only the 2nd completed in the U.P and 16th in the State. For more information about Asset Management or Capital Improvement Plans contact Ken Marshall at kmmarsh@wuppdr.org or by calling the office.

WUPPDR Gets National Attention

An article featured in the First Edition of the Westerly View (Fall 2007) will be included in the national newsletter of the Federal Geographic Data Committee. The article gave background information on the National Map project and what WUPPDR is doing for the Region. WUPPDR was awarded grant monies in April, 2007 from the U.S. Geographical Survey to conduct work on the National Map.

For more information on the Federal Geographic Data Committee or to view their Newsletter please visit www.fgdc.gov. To view past Westerly View Newsletters please contact the WUPPDR office. For information on the National Map please visit www.wuppdr.org or http://nationalmap.gov or contact Ken Marshall by calling the office or at kmmarsh@wuppdr.org.

Copper Country Trail News

In December, 2007 the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced grant awards under the National Scenic Byway Program (NSBP) for the 2007 fiscal year. It was announced the Copper Country Trail will be awarded monies to create a Master Interpretation Plan of the Scenic Byway Corridor.

Monies from a 2006 fiscal year NSBP grant were awarded to WUPPDR to develop a comprehensive Regional Interpretation Plan for the Copper Country Trail region in conjunction with the Central and Eastern U.P. Regions. Community and user input will be compiled throughout the U.P. to create the guide that will help MDOT along with local officials prioritize projects, identify funding and guide non-motorized investments within our region and the U.P. A non-motorized ‘summit’ to gather stakeholder input is tentatively planned for August, 2008. For more information contact Lori Hauswirth at lhauswirth@wuppdr.org or by calling the office.

Homeless Assistance Recovery Program (HARP)

In October, 2007 WUPPDR started to issue vouchers for the Homeless Assistance Recovery Program (HARP), another program through the Michigan State Housing and Development Authority (MSHDA), which is funded through Housing & Urban Development (HUD). HARP vouchers are rental housing subsidies that gives preference to those who are homeless or have special needs. Although the process is similar to the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, also facilitated by WUPPDR, there is a special criterion that needs to be met in order to qualify for this program. WUPPDR became the MSHDA housing agent for the HCV program, also known as Section 8 in August, 2006.

For more information on either program please contact Courtney Archambeau at carchambeau@wuppdr.org or Jim LaMath at jlammath@wuppdr.org or by calling the office.

WUPPDR Commission Meeting Schedule

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<tr>
<th>THIRD MONDAY OF EACH MONTH</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 17 2008 Full Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 21 2008 Executive Committee</td>
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<td>May 19 2008 Executive Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 16 2008 Full Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 21 2008 Executive Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 18 2008 Executive Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 15 2008 Full Commission (Annual Meeting-Gogebic County)</td>
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<td>October 20 2008 Executive Committee</td>
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<td>November 17 2008 Executive Committee</td>
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<td>December 15 2008 Full Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 19 2009 Executive Committee</td>
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<td>February 16 2009 Executive Committee</td>
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All meetings will be held at Tulppo’s Restaurant in Bruce Crossing, MI except the September meeting. The Executive Committee and Full Commission meet at 5:00 PM (ET). Minutes & records are available for inspection at the WUPPDR office.