



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 19, 2012**

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## **LEAP Awards \$20,000 to Two Communities for the Placement of Public Art**

*New program awards DeWitt Township and the City of Mason funds for creation of public art program*

**LANSING, MI** – Public art arrives! LEAP is the only economic development agency in the state to award economic development monies for the placement of art. Two local municipalities will receive \$10,000 each tomorrow from LEAP at the announcement of the Public Art for Communities grant program. DeWitt Township and the City of Mason will be awarded the funds to commission a sculpture to be placed in the public right-of-way within their communities to enhance a sense of place as well as business development.

Five communities submitted proposals to this pilot program to LEAP's Placemaking workgroup earlier this fall. Each community was required to put a public art policy in place before submitting their applications. The goal of the policy would be to help the community identify things to consider when investing in public art, maintenance, installation costs, insurance, etc.

Under LEAP, the Placemaking workgroup was responsible for creating and evaluating this program. Co-Chaired by Steve Curran, President and Creative Director for Harvest Creative Services and Julie Pingston, Senior Vice President for the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau, the committee was made up of community members and business leaders with experience in arts and culture. They designed the program before asking for proposals and reviewed each of the five applications before identifying DeWitt Township and the City of Mason as the grantees for this first round of funding.

"The Lansing region understands that innovation and 21<sup>st</sup> century economic development is greatly about placemaking and talent development. I am proud that LEAP is leading the state in this kind of economic development thinking," said Placemaking workgroup Co-Chair, Steve Curran. "In 2013, LEAP's Public Art for Communities program will return with even more funds available for this program, giving all of our local municipalities the opportunity to state their case for a grant.

"It was extremely important to me and to LEAP to create this program," said LEAP President and CEO, Bob Trezise. "Art matters to economic development. Art and culture represent the wealth and sophistication of a place and community, which translates to job opportunities which helps us retain and attract high end talent."

The Public Art for Communities press conference will take place tomorrow, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:30a.m. at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum.

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*The Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) is a coalition of area leaders committed to building a prosperous and vibrant region where business can thrive. To do this, we help entrepreneurs start new businesses, help existing businesses grow, and attract new businesses to the region. For more information about LEAP, please visit [www.purelansing.com](http://www.purelansing.com).*