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UM-DEARBORN'S ILABS' ECITIES RESEARCH RECOGNIZES CITY OF MONROE FOR SUPPORTING BUSINESS IN THEIR COMMUNITY

Monroe, Michigan - The City of Monroe has been recognized for its successes and efforts in contributing to Michigan's entrepreneurial growth and economic development in the annual eCities study conducted by researchers at iLabs, University of Michigan-Dearborn's Center for Innovation Research. The City of Monroe is honored as a four star community along with 178 other communities across the state.

Mayor Robert Clark: "Increasing economic development and improving the quality of life is a priority for the City Council and city administration. By taking proactive measures like mitigating redevelopment challenges, streamlining development processes and laying out a clear vision for the future of our city, we continually strive to improve the relationship with and make the City more attractive to the business and development community. We are grateful and proud of this recognition of our efforts."

Mark Cochran, Assistant to the City Manager and Economic Development Coordinator: "This recognition the City has received for the second year in a row is a demonstration of the improving economic development environment the City of Monroe has been diligently working to cultivate. The leadership of City Council and cooperation of our private and public partners and the business community deserve credit for helping us improve our climate and make the City more attractive for entrepreneurs and developers alike."

Over the past several years, the City of Monroe, along with partners like the County of Monroe, SEMCOG and the Monroe County Business Development Corporation, has actively pursued and executed strategies to streamline and grow economic development across the City. Laying out clear visions through visionary and bold plans like the Telegraph Road Corridor Improvement Plan, subarea plan for the former La-Z-Boy headquarters site and the River Raisin Heritage Corridor Plan, help to remove roadblocks to site redevelopment and provide clear expectations to the development community.

The City also continuously reviews incentives and programs available at all levels, like brownfield assistance programs and downtown building rehabilitation grants, making projects more feasible and profitable in a way that achieves key redevelopment objectives and highest economic value for the City.

Last year, the City sought and achieved the designation of two federal Opportunity Zones, a tool that attracts long term redevelopment, leading to a commitment to redevelop the former La-Z-Boy headquarters site. Finally, the City of Monroe has been proud to support the entrepreneurial educational programs at our

local school districts, like the GenE program at Monroe Public Schools, to help grow the next generation of business owners.

The eCities study analyzed publicly available data from 277 communities from 54 counties in Michigan. Researchers focused on the five-year changes in property values, community assets, and tax rates, which can demonstrate the growth, investments, and cost of doing business within the community. For example, over the five-year period of 2014–2018, these communities increased their capital assets by an average of 2.25 percent per year by investments such as road and parking structure improvements, water main and streetscape upgrades, as well as police, fire, and computer equipment, while property tax rates increased by less than 1 percent on average per year.

Tim Davis, the College of Business' Assistant Dean for Student Engagement and Success: "While accounting for only about 15 percent of the cities and townships in Michigan, the 277 communities analyzed are home to 70 percent of the population and 85 percent of the state's commercial property. By analyzing these high-performing communities, our goal is to showcase what cities and townships are doing to spur growth and how we can continue to support their efforts in developing business and encouraging entrepreneurs."

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About University of Michigan-Dearborn

Founded in 1959 with a gift of just over 200 acres of land and \$6.5 million from the Ford Motor Company, University of Michigan-Dearborn is a metropolitan university serving southeastern Michigan, committed to excellence rooted in strong academics, innovative research and programming and civic engagement. The university has 9,400 students pursuing more than 100 bachelor's, master's, doctoral and professional degrees in liberal arts and sciences, engineering, business, education and health programs. A top-ranked university with faculty devoted to teaching and students committed to achievement, UM-Dearborn is shaped by its history of partnering with local leaders and communities, and is committed to finding solutions for the challenges that face the region.

LINKS:

eCities homepage:

<http://www.umdilabs.com/ecities>

List of all four-star communities:

<http://umdilabs.com/sites/default/files/2019%204-Star%20Communities.pdf>

List of all five-star communities:

<http://umdilabs.com/sites/default/files/2019%205-Star%20Communities.pdf>

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About the City of Monroe

Incorporated in 1817, the City of Monroe is a community that has a shared vision that seeks to balance the opportunities of economic development with the stewardship that is required for historic preservation. With a population of 20,733, Monroe is located about 17-miles north of Toledo, Ohio and about 35-miles south of Detroit. The City of Monroe is Michigan's third oldest community, and is also the county seat of Monroe County. Continually moving forward with innovative vision, the City of Monroe is Raisin' Expectations.

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