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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 15, 2004

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Fremont Celebrates Blueprint Designation

State Grants \$15,000 to Create Downtown Development Plan

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) representatives joined Fremont officials today to celebrate the city's designation as one of 11 communities to participate in the 2004 "Blueprint for Michigan's Downtowns" program. The program will help Fremont leaders formulate a comprehensive action plan to address economic development challenges and encourage growth. Fremont will receive \$15,000 from the MEDC and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), and provide an additional \$15,000 for its local match.

"The knowledge that Fremont will gain from working with one of the best downtown development consulting firms in the country will be extremely valuable to the community," said MEDC President and CEO Don Jakeway. "The city will come away with a customized plan for the future to make the most of its unique strengths and address its ongoing challenges."

As a Blueprint community, Fremont will work with the MEDC and the national firm of HyettPalma to develop an action plan. The process includes defining a long term economic development vision, conducting a market analysis to determine the potential of the downtown area, formulating a definitive course of action and encouraging the formation of a public/private management team to implement the plan. HyettPalma will make its initial visit to Fremont next April. Formulating the plan will take approximately five months, with implementation estimated to take five years.

"The City of Fremont has long had a successful partnership with our Downtown Development Authority and the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce," said Fremont City Manager Chris Yonker. "Our Downtown, like most others in this country, is transitioning away from a predominantly retail to a mixed-use district. The Blueprints program comes to us at a very opportune time so that we may create a new and exciting vision for our already successful Downtown. We look forward to working with HyettPalma as they help us develop a comprehensive, market-driven approach to adding even more energy to our never ending commitment to Downtown."



The MEDC and MSHDA have committed a total of \$200,000 to fund this year's Blueprint program.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation, a partnership between the state and local communities, promotes smart economic growth by developing strategies and providing services to create and retain good jobs and a high quality of life. For more information about the MEDC, visit the Web site at www.michigan.org.

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