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UM-Dearborn's iLabs eCities Research Recognizes the City of Sturgis for its Positive Entrepreneurial Climate

STURGIS – For the third year in a row, the City of Sturgis has been recognized for its work to foster entrepreneurial growth and economic development. The annual honor was given following the 2012 annual eCities research project survey conducted by iLabs through the University of Michigan-Dearborn Center for Innovation Research. The City of Sturgis was honored as a Five-Star Community, joining 27 other five-star and 26 other four-star communities across the State.

“With this top-ranking designation for two years in a row, the City of Sturgis has outperformed last year’s measures,” said City Manager Mike Hughes. “Our ability to keep improving can be attributed to many things, including Sturgis 2022, the City Commission’s long-term planning effort, and Generate Sturgis, an organization of volunteer business leaders and community stakeholders who, in partnership with the City of Sturgis, focus on creating a community culture that embraces, supports, and nurtures entrepreneurs.” Both the Sturgis 2022 and Generate Sturgis initiatives have websites that provide additional information and Facebook pages to interact with interested community members and stakeholders.

The eCities research surveyed 114 communities in 40 counties representing almost half of Michigan’s college graduates and more than one third of Michigan’s total population. More than 125,000 entrepreneurs generating more than \$3 billion in self-employed income live in the

participating communities which have collectively enjoyed more than more than \$1.5 billion in 2011 commercial construction investment.

The eCities research project, started in 2007, focuses on entrepreneurship because of its importance to expansion and diversification of Michigan's regional economies and the impact small businesses have on job creation. "This project assists local communities by identifying best practices and methods that can be implemented to aid in job growth, economic diversification and development of entrepreneurs," says Tim Davis, Director of iLabs. Research is based on participant data and other public records to measure an index of entrepreneurial activity in the areas of clustering, incentives, growth, policies, community and education.

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