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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRIDGMAN FOR THE WIN!

BRIDGMAN, MI — Oct. 30, 2023 — The City of Bridgman proudly announces its win of the coveted Michigan Municipal League's Community Excellence Award for the collaborative Bridgman Courtyard Project. The prestigious accolade was presented at the recent MML Convention in Traverse City, attended by city managers, mayors, and city council members from across Michigan.

The first day of the convention saw all four finalist communities present their respective projects including Bridgman, Port Huron, Westland and Coldwater. Attendees had the unique opportunity to engage with each team at their booths and were invited to vote for their favorite project. Bridgman's presentation, themed "Bridging our Community with the Bridgman Courtyard," stood out for its dynamic and interactive approach.

The presentation was led by Tara Heiser, CGA board member, who was joined on stage by key contributors including Juan Ganum, Bridgman City Manager; Julie Strating, CGA board member and CIA member; Georgia Gipson, CGA board member and Bridgman City Council member; Bob Clark, CGA board member; Barb Clark, Lake Township resident; Joan Hurray, Bridgman Planning Commissioner; and Sarah Spoonholtz, Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber director.

A poignant video produced by Bridgman resident and film producer, Bryan Fellows, added a heartfelt layer to the presentation, capturing the hearts of all attendees.

Bridgman's booth featured a 6-foot bridge that attendees were encouraged to graffiti, or "tag your town," creating what may very well be the first statewide piece of art. The bridge is now displayed in Bridgman City Hall along with the Community Excellence Award trophy.

"Winning the Community Excellence Award is a landmark achievement for Bridgman," said Juan Ganum, Bridgman City Manager. "It highlights our commitment to nurturing imaginative, sustainable solutions that make life better for our residents."

The MML presentation was a collaborative effort between the City of Bridgman and the Greater Bridgman Area Council for Growth & Advancement (CGA). Bridgman City Council Member and CGA President John Bonkoske stated, "Not only is this state award an extraordinary honor for us, the distinction will bring growth and economic development to our city, further spotlighting the Greater Bridgman Area as an excellent place to live, work and play."

Julie Strating, CGA Vice President and project visionary, added, "This award is a big heartfelt shout-out to all of the folks who poured their hearts into making the Bridgman Courtyard happen. It's like a high five to community spirit and teamwork, demonstrating what's possible when we unite our efforts."

A video of the complete presentation can be viewed on the CGA Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/bridgmanarea. Please join Bridgman in celebrating this win for the community and shining a light on beautiful southwest Michigan!

About the Greater Bridgman Area Council for Growth & Advancement
The Greater Bridgman Area Council for Growth & Advancement is a 501c3 organization with a mission to promote and grow the community through economic development in the City of Bridgman and Lake Charter Township. To learn more about the CGA, visit facebook.com/bridgmanarea.

Photos with Captions:

Tara Heiser presenting the Bridgman Courtyard Project at the Michigan Municipal League Convention.

Bridgman booth and hype team, Georgia Gipson, Julie Strating, Tara Heiser, Juan Ganum and Joan Hurray.

The MML Community Excellence Award goes to the Bridgman Courtyard!

Julie Strating gives a heartfelt acceptance speech.

Bridgman hype team Bob Clark, Georgia Gipson, Julie Strating, Joan Hurray, Juan Ganum, Tara Heiser & Barb Clark.

Bridgman hype team Georgia Gipson, Tara Heiser, Barb Clark, Joan Hurray, Juan Ganum, Bob Clark & Julie Strating.

MML Community Excellence Award trophy at the Bridgman Courtyard.

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