The meeting opened at 11:30 a.m. with lunch and introductions.

**Website Update:**

Eric Wedesky provided an overview of current updates to the website ([http://eup-planning.org/elevating-the-eup](http://eup-planning.org/elevating-the-eup)). He indicated that the information regarding RPI and CEDS has been merged and is located in a link under current projects as well as a direct link on the main page. This section provides details of the CEDS and RPI including dashboard information. The mission and membership of the REDAC is also included and a proposed meeting schedule link is notated.

**2016 RPI Grant Application**

Jeff Hagan provided an update of the 2016 RPI Grant Application. The grant application was approved with a budget of $185,000. The approved funding was reduced and budget adjustments were made to all priorities in the grant application. The priorities of this grant were described and include: Community Development Mini-Grants, Pure Michigan UP National Campaign, Broadband Initiatives, Transportation...
Logistics, Shared Staffing, Water Trail Implementation Activities, Economic Development Assistance, UP Community Health Assessment, Chippewa & Mackinac County GIS Implementation, and Statewide RPI Plan Development.

Federal Agency Panel Discussion

Each panelist provided a brief summary of the agency and programs offered and answered questions from members.

**Josh Billington ~ Small Business Development Center:** The SBDC offers services to businesses with 500 employees or less. These services include but are not limited to consulting, business planning, marketing research, etc. The main goals of the SBDC are capital formation and job formation. At this time, in comparison of the entire State, this region rates at 35% for capital formation and 28% for job formation.

**Don Gerrie ~ USDA Rural Development:** USDA Rural Development provides technical and financial assistance to rural areas with a main focus of housing, community programs, and business programs. During 2015, funding for USDA Rural Development Programs totaled $1,070,224,795. Housing projects include funding for purchasing and repairs. Funding for community programs such as water and waste loans and grants and community facilities are provided to communities with a population of less than 20,000. Business programs include funding for guaranteed business loans, intermediary re-lending program loans, and rural business development grants.

**Robert West ~ United States Forest Service:** The Hiawatha National Forest in the Upper Peninsula maintains the ecosystem services to community through many factors including wildlife management, water systems, and timber sales. The Forest Service also manages the Raco Airbase as well as providing tourism options such as the Point Iroquois Lighthouse and campground management. The timber program was also described.


**Lee Shirey ~ Economic Development Administration (EDA):** The EDA focuses on job creation by providing planning assistance, technical assistance, public works programs, and economic adjustment assistance. Recent projects the EDA provided assistance includes the MTEC Smart Zone, Lakewood Wastewater Authority, and City of Sault Ste. Marie Smart Zone. Lee also described the EDA application requirements such as local share needs.
Upcoming REDAC Meeting Schedule

- March 17, 2016 – Review and Prioritize Project Applications
- April 14, 2016 – Draft Performance Report
- May 5, 2016 – State Agency Panel Discussion

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.