



Sense of Place Council

PLACE. BUSINESS. TALENT.



Placemaking for a Prosperous Michigan: A Campaign of Big Ideas

The multi-stakeholder Sense of Place Council has been working together since 2006 to advance placemaking and prosperity in Michigan. Visit www.miplace.org and watch our video on placemaking.

The Quick Skim...

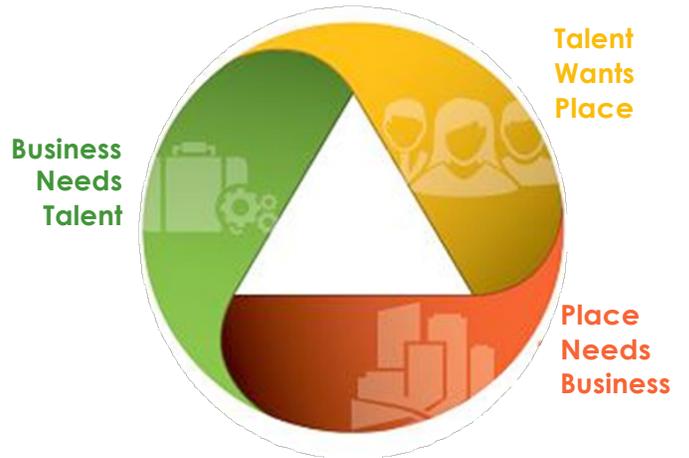
Michigan's economy is transitioning from industrial and manufacturing-based to one that is more diverse and knowledge-based. We need to think strategically to plan and adapt to this new reality.

If we want to be globally competitive, Michigan needs places that are vibrant, lively, culturally rich, and diverse. This is not "nice to do"—it's an economic imperative.

We must adopt and implement comprehensive placemaking strategies across the state through strong local and state partnerships.

The Sense of Place Council has helped catalyze the revitalization of many communities through placemaking programs and projects.

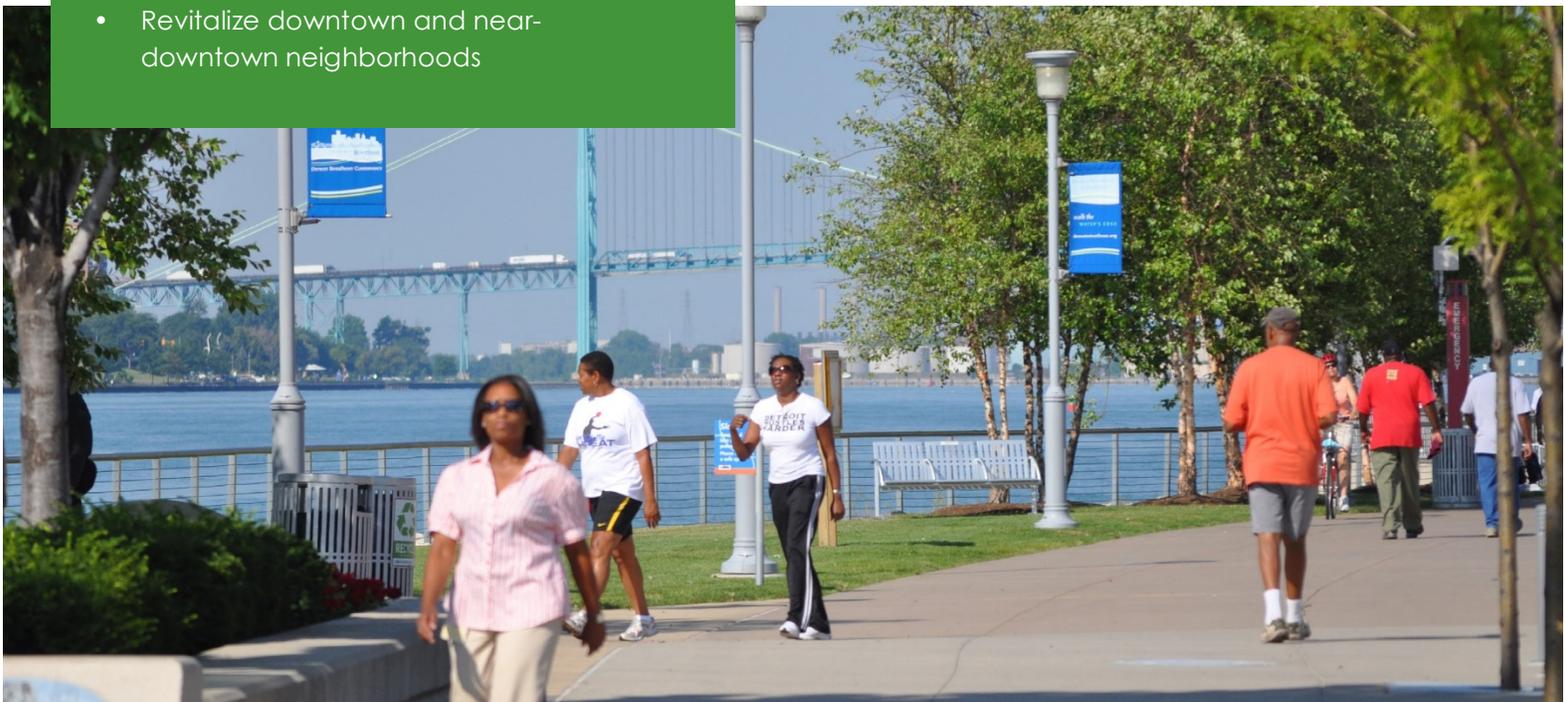
We are here to help!



What Can State and Local Leaders Do?

Embrace, champion, and implement placemaking policies:

- Invest in modern infrastructure, including multi-modal transportation systems
- Foster the development of mixed-income and mixed-density housing that includes diverse options for all ages
- Revitalize downtown and near-downtown neighborhoods



What is placemaking?

Placemaking engages people and businesses to create communities where people want to live, work, play, learn, shop, and visit. Placemaking is equitable, competitive, sustainable, resilient, and incremental. It is a research-based economic development strategy built on unique local attributes and community collaboration.

Michigan cities are losing talent and businesses to competing places that have more to offer. Places like Chicago or Denver that have invested in transit, mixed-use developments, housing, and engaging public spaces. We have lost population and our economy has recovered from the Great Recession more slowly than other comparable states.

We have an opportunity to transform our economy by investing in communities to create special spaces, modern and resilient infrastructure, rich cultural and recreational offerings, diverse and inclusive communities, and an entrepreneurial business environment. Michigan must strategically plan for our new economic reality. A unique coalition of statewide public and private organizations—The Sense of Place Council—is working to help Michigan realize this opportunity. But we must act now to fully adopt placemaking approaches throughout the state. Decisions we make today directly affect the prosperity of future generations of our residents.

Downtown Traverse City.



ELEMENTS OF QUALITY PLACES

- Mixed-uses
- Public gathering places
- Dense and walkable design
- Strong technology and communication systems
- Multiple transportation options
- Historic structures and community heritage
- Mix of businesses
- Recreation spaces and natural areas
- Inclusive and welcoming to all
- Culturally and socio-economically diverse
- Safe and healthy
- Quality educational institutions
- Arts, cultural, and entertainment amenities
- Multiple and mixed-income housing options



Accessible, easy to implement public gathering space improvements in downtown Detroit.

Why placemaking?

Our increasingly mobile workforce has more choice about where to live. Strategic investment in vibrant communities is critical for attracting new business and talent to Michigan, and keeping existing business and residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Placemaking provides common ground and brings together people, organizations, and communities with many different backgrounds and ideals. The benefits of placemaking include:

- Making Michigan a more competitive business destination.
- Serving as a magnet for talent attraction and retention.
- Providing a wider range of housing, transportation, entertainment, recreation, and related options to existing and new residents and visitors.
- Empowering citizens to engage in the direction and prosperity of their communities.

How are quality places created?

From Marquette to Niles, Ferndale to Alpena, communities are recognizing and implementing placemaking tools and strategies to grow their local economies and improve the quality of life for all their residents. They do this by investing in public space improvements; targeting development that supports downtown retail, restaurants, and housing; supporting arts and recreation projects; and creating walkable, connected neighborhoods.

PLACEMAKING: A TOOL AGAINST BRAIN DRAIN

According to a 2013 study, only 63 percent of young mobile talent (unmarried graduates of Michigan universities who are under 28 years old and born in the U.S.) stayed in Michigan after graduation. This rate increased to 71 percent for people who are from Michigan (University of Michigan iLabs, 2013). But Michigan can do a better job of keeping our young talent here. The Michigan Colleges Foundation (MCF) looked at quality of life factors that affect students' decisions on where to locate after school. They identified seven factors of "Next Cities™"—places with the assets and amenities that attract and keep a young, educated workforce. "Think bustling downtowns, walkable neighborhoods, diverse career opportunities, and a vibrant art and music scene." MCF's survey found large gaps between the value respondents placed on each asset, and how well Michigan and its three major cities (Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Lansing) provided those assets (MCF and Next Generation Consulting, 2011).

The key is to build on community assets and take both short- and long-term actions to create authentic and unique places that people love. This doesn't happen by accident. It requires thoughtful policy and leadership.



A "PlacePop" short-term placemaking event in East Lansing.

What's Next? Policy Priorities that Support Placemaking

The Sense of Place Council, a coalition formed in 2006 of more than 40 public and private organizations, has led the charge in helping Michigan adopt place-led strategies for economic prosperity. The Council has advanced placemaking strategies through policy changes, training, grant-making, and local technical assistance.

The Council wants state leaders to embrace and implement placemaking policies that result in an economically prosperous and competitive Michigan with growing incomes for all. The broad foundation for placemaking policy includes:

- Investing in modern infrastructure including basics such as water, roads, and lighting, as well as an accessible and connected multi-modal transportation system and public improvements that encourage higher density, mixed use development.
- Fostering the development of mixed-income and mixed-density housing that includes diverse options that meet the needs of young workers, students, families, professionals, and retirees.
- Revitalizing downtown and near-downtown neighborhoods by addressing blight, business development, historic preservation, and public space improvements.

The Sense of Place Council will work with local and state leaders in the coming years to ensure that these policies are a priority for our state. We cannot view them as "nice to do"—placemaking is imperative for Michigan's economic and social well-being.

WHERE DO PEOPLE WANT TO BE? IN PLACES WHERE THEY CAN LIVE, WORK AND PLAY!

National research and data continue to show increasing demand for downtown and city neighborhood living by Millennials, Boomers and the Greatest Generation. What do these places offer?

- Active/dynamic living environments with lots of fun, including recreation, cultural amenities, social interaction, and diverse entertainment choices.
- Amenities such as parks, outdoors, thriving farms, sports, hunting, fishing, waterways, and greenspace.
- Diverse lifestyle choices that include multi-modal transportation (especially transit), different types of housing, and a range of housing prices and density.
- An economy that supports entrepreneurial opportunities, innovation, creativity, risk-taking, and high wage jobs.

(Placemaking as an Economic Development Tool: A Placemaking Guidebook, Michigan State University, Land Policy Institute, 2015).



About the Sense of Place Council

Since its formation in 2006, the Sense of Place Council has been instrumental in ensuring that the concept of building quality, authentic places is woven into all aspects of state and community planning and economic development. Co-chaired by the Michigan Municipal League and Michigan State Housing Development Authority, the Council is made up of more than 40 public, private, and nonprofit partners who collectively work to promote policies and practices that make Michigan more vibrant and competitive.

Some of the Council's major accomplishments include:

- Developed the MIplace Partnership Initiative, which has provided education, outreach, technical assistance, and program support to practitioners and communities to understand and implement placemaking efforts throughout the state.
- Created an award-winning Michigan Placemaking Curriculum, which includes a guidebook, dozens of training exercises and modules for general use. More than 15,000 people throughout the state have participated in training using the curriculum.
- Provided one-on-one assistance to help more than 20 communities create local "place plans" focused on public engagement and development of a physical plan for a plaza, street, or other space in or adjacent to the community's downtown.
- Created a placemaking crowdfunding program through MEDC and Patronicity, which has funded 110 placemaking projects, crowdfunded \$4.2 million, and leveraged over \$26 million in Michigan.
- Convened work groups designed to address specific elements of placemaking policies, resulting in several valuable research projects and white papers, including research on developer practices, the business-place-talent connections, and the power of social networks.
- Partnered with state agencies to create and train outreach field teams aligned with the ten prosperity regions to disseminate placemaking tools

The Sense of Place Council brings together thought leaders, educators, and ambassadors from across the state to tackle challenges and provide the resources that create quality places. The examples above demonstrate our significant accomplishments, but there is still much to do. Policy-makers at all levels need to know about the benefits of placemaking, and help their communities make critical investments that create quality places. The Council will keep facilitating great placemaking throughout Michigan in the coming years. We invite you to join us.



Sense of Place Council
PLACE. BUSINESS. TALENT.

Sense of Place Council Partners

AARP Michigan

American Institute of Architects-Michigan

Cinnaire

Community Economic Development Association of Michigan

Creative Many Michigan

Development and Construction Resources, LLC

Habitat for Humanity

Issue Media Group

LOCUS Michigan/Smart Growth America

Michigan Association of Land Banks

Michigan Association of Planning

Michigan Association of State Universities

Michigan Bankers Association

Michigan Chapter of Congress for the New Urbanism

Michigan Community Development Association

Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Michigan Department of Talent & Economic Development

Michigan Department of Transportation

Michigan Economic Developers Association

Michigan Economic Development Corporation

Michigan Environmental Council

Michigan Future Inc.

Michigan Historic Preservation Network

Michigan Municipal League

Michigan Realtors®

Michigan Recreation and Park Association

Michigan State Housing Development Authority

Michigan State Housing Development Authority, State Historic Preservation Office

Michigan Talent Investment Agency

Michigan Townships Association

Michigan Works! Association

North Coast Community Consultants

Office of Outreach and Engagement, Michigan State University

Planning & Zoning Center at Michigan State University

Small Business Association of Michigan



Sense of Place Council

PLACE. BUSINESS. TALENT.



Sense of Place Council

PLACE. BUSINESS. TALENT.