SaveMICity roll-out talking points

1. The Michigan Municipal League – along with our partner organizations – believes there’s a fundamental disconnect with the way people think our cities and communities are funded.

2. Over the past decade, we’ve forgotten about cities. Communities all across Michigan struggle daily with their budgets, with most having to make difficult choices for funding fundamental public services. And businesses are noticing.

3. If we want to attract business to keep Michigan vibrant and stop sending our sons and daughters to Chicago and Austin to plant roots there, our leaders need to make our communities their priority here.

4. That’s why we’re launching a statewide campaign – called SaveMICity – to show the need for investing in thriving communities.
   
   a. With the SaveMICity campaign, we’re making the case that business needs talent, talent wants place, and place needs business.
   
   b. It’s a project generously supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and joined by members of business community, townships, counties, researchers and other philanthropic partners in a coalition that continues to grow.
   
   c. But perhaps most importantly, well wishes aren’t enough. We also are using the campaign to make the case that our cities and communities have struggled with their budgets long enough – and they need our help.

5. Unfortunately, Michigan is dead last right now in investing its cities. In fact, leaders – who have been limping along by doing more with less – now even struggle to provide basic services like adequate roads, police and fire protection, trash removal, and snow plowing – all because the state doesn’t properly invest in our communities.

6. The campaign concepts have strong support: 86 percent of residents asked in a March 2018 EPIC-MRA poll said they prefer their taxes be used to provide local services, with only 9 percent saying their taxes should go to Lansing to fund state departments and agencies. The local desire to fund communities is there – we need to convince leaders at all levels that funding our cities is a tantamount priority.

7. Our goal is to make this a major part of the conversation in the upcoming election and then to keep the conversation going. Michigan’s future depends on it.