

# the review

November/December 2015

the official magazine of the  michigan municipal league

## Are You a Welcoming Community?

Diversity Vital to 21st Century Communities

- Building Immigrant-Friendly Communities
- Lakeshore Diversity Alliance
- One Dearborn
- Housing Equity

+2015  
Convention  
Highlights



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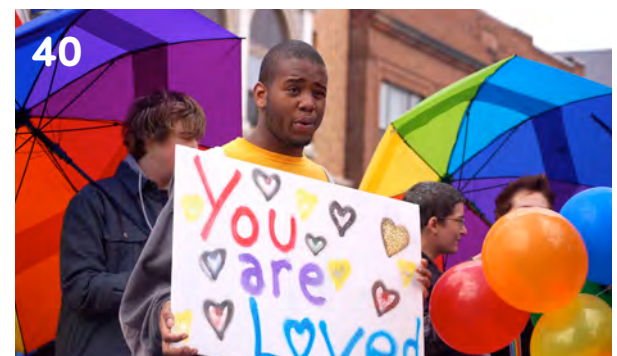
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michigan municipal league

# the review

The official magazine of the Michigan Municipal League

Volume 88, Number 6

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## Creating a Culture of Inclusion

Although an Italian by the name of Christopher Columbus “discovered” America, the core of American culture and political belief originated from the landing of the English puritans in the early 1600s. Early America was a mishmash of Native Americans, the Spanish and French, African Americans (forced and free), and others. These diverse groups fought wars, endured disease and persecution, and experienced famine. Along the way they also managed to build a nation that would bring unmatched heights of freedom, optimism, and wealth to its inhabitants.

Fast forward to current times, and people from all over the world continue to immigrate to this country. Every era throughout American history has seen migration movements from around the world, but today, America’s demographics are changing at an accelerated pace. The U.S. Census Bureau has projected that five years from now, in 2020, white children will be in the minority—and by 2044 whites will be outnumbered by nonwhites.

We all need to think about how this will impact our communities in how they deliver services and challenge their strategic thinking in preparing for a future that is now. Like it or not, we’re competing in a global economy, and if our communities are successful, Michigan will be better positioned to compete as a state throughout the world. Our economic growth and sustainability are linked to our willingness to include diverse groups of people. Today, 10.4 percent of all business owners in Michigan are foreign born, bringing in \$1.8 billion in total net business income. (American Immigration Council)

Over the past decade, one of Michigan’s biggest challenges has been the huge brain drain, that helped accelerate the state’s economic decline. According to the Center for Michigan, we lose almost 19,000 college graduates a year to other states. However, we would be losing thousands more college-educated residents annually if it weren’t for more than half of the 14,000 immigrants over the age of 25 who arrive in Michigan from the Far East and Europe who have college degrees.

(“Immigrants are already saving Michigan,” *Bridge Magazine*, February 2014.) Inviting and welcoming diverse groups into civic and political life can energize a community with a broader vision, as well as help address its challenges and needs.

Communities that welcome, foster trust, and proactively integrate everyone into the fabric of everyday life, are at a distinct advantage over those who do not. We know that diverse beliefs, experiences, and perspectives can lead to new ideas and ways of thinking. The members of the Millennial generation, the largest and most diverse of the U.S. population, are driving seismic change by challenging all sectors of life and demanding different approaches to how and why we build communities. Inclusivity is a value, not an option, for a majority of them. We would all be wise to embrace their vision.

In this issue, we illustrate a wide breadth of initiatives going on around the state, with highlights of many of the innovative programs, resources, and lessons learned: Why it is important to embrace diversity, how to build diversity in the planning/design stages, and resources that communities can look to such as the Welcoming Michigan organization. Dearborn, home to the largest Arab American population in this country, will share its story on how it responds to such a large diverse group. These inspiring stories will show that Michigan communities are already actively creating a culture of inclusion to meet the challenges of a changing world.



Daniel P. Gilmartin  
League executive director and CEO  
734-669-6302; dpg@mml.org





Detroit SOUP is a potluck and community crowdfunding event that gives people from all walks of life the opportunity to come together, have a conversation, share a meal, and raise money for a grassroots project that benefits Detroit.

# MICHIGAN'S WELCOME MAT:

## ARE WE AS INCLUSIVE AS WE THINK?

By Sarah Craft

Without conscious effort, most people spend their days only interacting with people who share similar values, have had comparable life experiences, and perceive the world in a similar way. If you went to college, most of your family probably went to college. If you make more than \$50,000 a year, most of your friends probably make more than \$50,000 a year. If you're white, most of your neighbors are probably white.

America is becoming more diverse, but cultures and social circles rarely overlap. If we continue to live in these silos, our communities will suffer as inequality grows. This issue of *The Review* examines diversity and inclusion from many angles. Here, we hope to set the stage by exploring the importance of inclusion and how local leaders have an imperative to build stronger, more collaborative, and more equitable communities.

### The Importance of Equity

Diversity has long been a priority for the League and, as one of the eight assets of placemaking, we highlight its impor-

tance in making great places. We have case studies that illustrate how a welcoming community impacts peoples' connection to where they live; places are more economically vital when residents know their neighbors, participate in cultural events, and feel others are being treated fairly.<sup>1</sup>

Detroit SOUP illustrates this well. SOUP is a potluck and community crowdfunding event that gives people from Detroit neighborhoods and the surrounding suburbs an opportunity to interact. People from all walks of life come together, have a conversation, share a meal, and raise money for a grassroots project that benefits Detroit. By giving attendees the opportunity to gather, SOUP promotes a more vital local economy—to date, SOUP has raised more than \$100,000 for over 120 projects. Through these events, participants have launched new businesses, started nonprofits, acquired employment, made new friends, and learned from someone who is different from them. Learn more about Detroit SOUP and similar efforts at [Placemaking.mml.org/How-To](http://Placemaking.mml.org/How-To).

The alternative is also true: places with stark inequalities and few opportunities for diverse interactions are strug-



gling financially. Unfortunately, Michigan is one example. Our economy is finally improving but low-income residents and people of color are far from economic recovery. Since 1979, our poorest workers' income dropped by more than 23 percent—so the poor are getting poorer. In contrast, Michigan's richest workers' income dropped only 2 percent. This income inequality prevents low-income workers and people of color from ever realizing their full economic potential.<sup>2</sup> Reports estimate that Michigan's economy would have been \$28.9 billion larger if there hadn't been such dramatic gaps in income.<sup>3</sup> We are all impacted by inequality and local leaders have the obligation to expand opportunities for all residents.

## Seeing Michigan's Inequality

From 1980–2010, the state's population of people of color increased from 16 to 23 percent. Within the last decade, the Latino population has had Michigan's highest growth rate of nearly 35 percent. Alternatively, the white population decreased by 3 percent.<sup>4</sup> The entire country is becoming more of a melting pot, and whites are expected to be the racial minority by 2045.<sup>5</sup>

As we become more diverse, existing inequalities become more apparent. The gap between Michigan's richest and poorest residents is getting wider<sup>6</sup> and communities are experiencing stark examples of racial segregation.<sup>7</sup> Michigan is being featured on the top of the inequality 'worst lists' when compared to other states in the nation: we have the country's second highest hate crimes rates,<sup>8</sup> we're the fifth worst state for LGBT people,<sup>9</sup> the sixth worst for black Americans,<sup>10</sup> and we're among the worst places for women.<sup>11</sup> We have a lot of work to do. Municipalities large and small need to examine these injustices and prioritize inclusion.

## Building a More Equitable Michigan

This issue offers readers a number of resources, programs, policies, and interventions that can foster a more inclusive community. There are many municipalities that are already making a conscious effort to do better, and local leaders should look to their neighbors for inspiration.

For example, state legislators have failed to take action on more encompassing anti-discrimination laws, but communities are creating their own. In fact, in 1972 East Lansing became the first municipality in the nation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in hiring practices. Since then, nearly 40 Michigan communities have followed suit. The Farmington Hills city council unanimously adopted a human rights ordinance this April, protecting people from discrimination based on a range of qualifiers including race, religion, weight, source of income, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

"Farmington Hills is a very diverse community and we want to stay a diverse community" said Barry Brickner, mayor of

Farmington Hills. "Through meetings at the Michigan Municipal League, we learned that other municipalities were passing local ordinances since the state wasn't acting. We needed to make sure our citizens were protected so we looked at what others had done and passed our own human rights ordinance. We encourage other communities to adopt similar policies and hopefully that will encourage legislators to adopt statewide legislation to protect all of Michigan's citizens."

Other communities are prioritizing diversity by becoming more welcoming to an international audience. Battle Creek has recognized the importance of a global economy and successfully attracted foreign investment from Japan. The entire community collaborated to welcome their new residents. "In partnership with the local school system, the community established a Japanese 'school' within the existing curriculum to help transition students," said Ted Dearing, Battle Creek assistant city manager community and economic development. "[The city also] facilitated the development of a Japanese restaurant, established a local chapter of the Japan America Society, and actively engaged with executives socially. The now annual International Summer Fest was initiated to help international residents celebrate and share their culture with the community."

Benton Harbor, on the other hand, is focused on equity by strengthening diverse relationships within their own community. Recent efforts in city hall are making the city more inclusive for residents and visitors. "Many citizens and stakeholders felt disenfranchised and disconnected during the tenure of emergency management," said Marja Winters Farrow, Benton Harbor assistant city manager and economic development director. "We have worked to improve transparency, responsiveness, and otherwise improve relationships and perception of city hall. We are not targeting any specific segments of the community, but rather encouraging all segments of the community to come together and help shape the future of our city."

### MUNICIPALITIES WITH A NON-DISCRIMINATION ORDINANCE:

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Grand Ledge  
Grand Rapids  
Huntington Woods  
Kalamazoo  
Lansing  
Lathrup Village  
Linden  
Mt. Pleasant  
Muskegon  
Pleasant Ridge  
Royal Oak  
Saginaw  
Saugatuck  
Southfield  
Traverse City  
Trenton  
Wayland  
Ypsilanti

With so many impactful efforts already underway, Michigan can continue to improve. Take lessons from this issue and get the conversation started in your own community—and try to talk to someone who’s a little different than you, they’ll probably have a lot to say.

*Sarah Craft is a program coordinator for the League. You may reach her at 734-669-6328 or [scraft@mml.org](mailto:scraft@mml.org).*

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# WELCOMING MICHIGAN.

By Christine Sauvé



## Michigan's Welcoming Story

Michigan owes much to the brave souls who made their home here, contributing their labor and talent to make our state flourish. Our culture and economy has benefitted from Finnish miners, Syrian peddlers, German farmers, and Italian grocers. Whether you emigrated from Mexico, your grandparents moved north during the Great Migration from southern states, your great grandparents journeyed from Poland, or your Anishinaabe ancestors traveled here from Canada, every Michigander has a migration story to tell. Welcoming Michigan wants to change the negative conversation around immigration by showing we all have a connection to migration. Just as former generations have done, people today are moving for better opportunities. Through dialogue, shared meals, and opportunities for cross-cultural learning, the project aims to foster mutual respect and understanding

among U.S.-born and foreign-born residents.

Welcoming Michigan is a statewide, grassroots immigrant integration initiative launched by the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center in 2012. We provide education and training for communities that want to improve their welcoming climate, and assist local governments in implementing immigrant-friendly policies and practices.

## The Changing Face of Our Communities

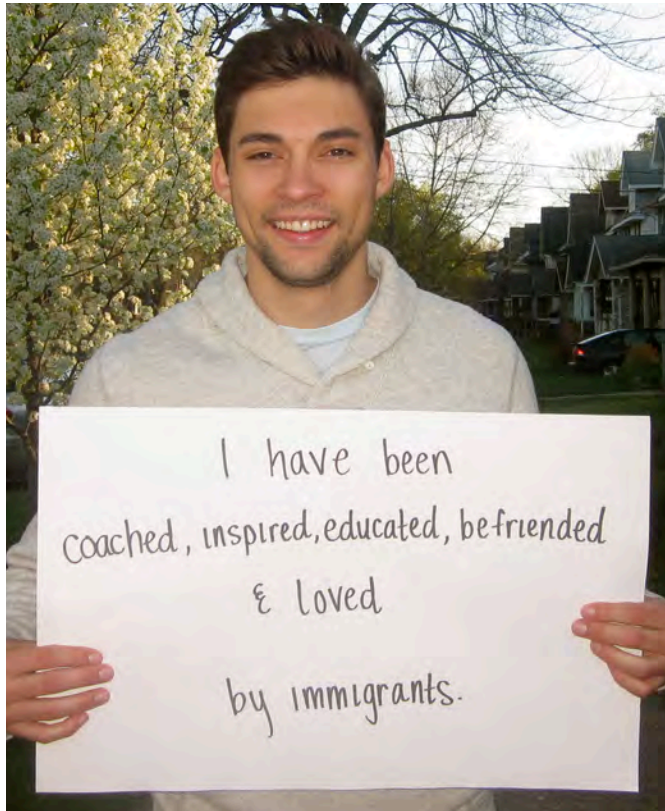
Michigan was the only state to lose population between 2000 and 2010, yet the number of foreign-born residents increased by about 67,000. In fact, the state's foreign-born population has risen steadily from 3.8 percent of the total population in 1990 to 6.1 percent in 2013<sup>1</sup>. This is still below the national average of 12.9 percent, but signals a welcome change. A growing population means an increased revenue



# Building Immigrant-Friendly Communities

*“Detroit’s immigrants historically played a key role in making the city one of the greatest in the world, and immigrants continue to play a key role in supporting the city through this difficult transition. It is important to do what we can within local government to support current and future immigrants to foster the growth of a diverse, inclusive, global Detroit.”*

—Detroit Councilmember Raquel Castañeda-López



base for state and local governments, greater local markets for products, and, in the case of immigrant and refugee residents, a younger workforce. Michigan is third in the country for number of refugee arrivals, and fifth for number of migrant and seasonal farmworkers. These newcomers bring skills and experience to contribute to all levels of our economy, from those who make sure the harvest comes in to the engineers in automotive and advanced manufacturing. A greater, more diverse population base means a stronger and more competitive Michigan.

Many communities around the state have seen foreign-born populations reach 10 to 20 percent of their total number of residents. These demographic shifts may cause anxiety or tension on the part of longtime residents, but this is not intractable. With committed leadership, communities can move along a path from un-welcoming or passively tolerant,

to actively welcoming. There are many strategies communities can pursue to achieve a positive, welcoming, and economically vibrant climate.

## Engaging Receiving Communities

Welcoming Michigan works to support Michigan’s “receiving community” members—U.S.-born Americans who live in communities where immigrants settle—in creating welcoming environments where immigrants can fully integrate into their adopted hometowns. We encourage local communities to ensure everyone feels welcome, often by bridging the gap between longtime residents and newcomers. At the heart of welcoming is community-building: fostering trust, respect, and reciprocal relationships among residents.

We recommend a three-prong approach to improve the welcoming climate: leadership development, community

*A welcoming community is one where newcomers are able to fully integrate, participate, and contribute to the social, cultural, civic, and economic fabric of the community.*

### MICHIGAN'S WELCOMING CITIES, COUNTIES & TOWNSHIPS

Detroit  
Grand Rapids  
Sterling Heights  
East Lansing  
Hamtramck  
Clinton Township  
West Bloomfield Township  
Meridian Township  
Macomb County  
Kalamazoo County

Resources: [WelcomingMichigan.org](http://WelcomingMichigan.org)  
[WelcomingCities.org](http://WelcomingCities.org) & [CitiesofMigration.ca](http://CitiesofMigration.ca)

engagement, and strategic communications. Local leaders from community organizations, faith groups, schools, businesses, law enforcement, and municipal government set a positive tone by promoting and modeling inclusivity. They plan activities that bring residents together to get to know each other and work towards shared goals. Research indicates racial anxiety may be reduced through intergroup contact<sup>2</sup>. There are many creative ways to foster contact, including service days, cooking classes, or painting a mural. Welcoming Michigan offers support arranging film screenings and community dialogues, and provides education and training around immigration issues. Since 2012 we have hosted more than 150 events and engaged over 8,000 attendees. Participants typically report a significant increase in knowledge and welcoming attitudes.

## Welcoming Cities & Counties

In 2013, Welcoming America launched the national Welcoming Cities & Counties program, an exciting platform for local governments to support immigrant integration and position their communities as globally competitive, 21st century leaders. The program now boasts over 50 members from small towns to large cities, including New York and Chicago. Michigan is home to ten Welcoming Cities & Counties, the most of any state in the country. Welcoming Michigan supports these forward-thinking leaders as they work to create immigrant-friendly environments.

Welcoming cities and counties start by declaring their locality to be a welcoming one, and then institutionalize integration efforts through the adoption of policies and practices promoting access and inclusion within local government and

the broader community. This may involve cross-sector planning, engaging immigrants and receiving community members in civic life, recruiting ethnic leaders to serve on boards and commissions, promoting messages of unity, supporting naturalization efforts, or enacting policies to ensure language access. Through webinars, conference calls, and in-person meetings, local governments share tools, resources, and promising practices with their peers across the country.

Michigan's Welcoming Cities & Counties aim to improve quality of life and economic potential for immigrants and non-immigrants alike. For example, Macomb County is investing in cultural competency training for staff and improving hiring practices for multilingual applicants and people of color. In Detroit, Mayor Duggan and city council are working to support immigrant and African American entrepreneurs, connecting foreign-born residents to Land Bank properties, and creating a municipal ID card to assist multiple marginalized populations. East Lansing is leading the way in welcoming international students and scholars, and has invested in language tools to enhance public safety and access to city services. This year we welcome Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo County, and Meridian Township to the cohort and look forward to sharing their successes in the coming months.

## Join the Welcoming Movement

Michigan is increasingly seen as a hub for welcoming activity. Last year, Welcoming Michigan and its partners were invited by the White House to contribute to the nation's first immigrant integration plan. We are excited to see the Welcoming Movement spread across the state, as we hear from elected officials, city administrators, and community members who want to get involved. It is heartening to hear so many voices from our Great Lakes state join in a chorus of "Welcome," "Marhaba," and "Bienvenidos"!

National Welcoming Week, September 12-20, is a time for immigrant and U.S.-born community members to come together in a spirit of unity. If you are new to the movement, this is a great opportunity to meet your immigrant neighbors and learn more about how immigration impacts your local community. Visit [www.tinyurl.com/miwelcomingweek](http://www.tinyurl.com/miwelcomingweek) to find an event or activity near you.

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*Christine Sauvé, LLMSW coordinates activities for the Welcoming Michigan project. You may contact her at [csauve@michiganimmigrant.org](mailto:csauve@michiganimmigrant.org).*

1 U.S. Census Bureau

2 Godsil et al. 2014. *Perceptions Institute. The Science of Equality. Volume 1: Addressing Implicit Bias, Racial Anxiety, and Stereotype Threat in Education and Health Care.*





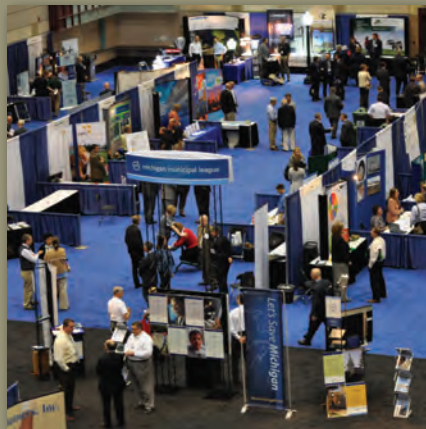
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It's just one more way the League is here to help our members serve their communities even better than before!

# WHEN GOOD INTENTIONS FALL SHORT

By Alfredo Hernandez Corsen

There was a time in our distant past when exclusion and discrimination were socially accepted. A time when certain groups were perceived as inferior, primitive, not even fully human. On the other hand, today our society perceives the unfair treatment of people as immoral and our shared disgust rooted on past injustices and embedded in prejudice and social neglect guides us to embrace principles of equality and fairness that honor the worth and dignity of all human beings. Yet, although egalitarian principles shape our good intentions and collective consciousness, inequalities in gender, race, sexual orientation, and more continue to thrive throughout our communities. Furthermore, in our efforts to understand the root causes of social injustice, we often become misguided by unconscious ideals—embedded in cultural perspectives—that move us farther away from the truth and unintentionally continue to sustain social inequities.

Cognitive and social scientific research suggests that the exploration of our conscious and unconscious values can help us understand the dissonance that exists between our good intentions and their unintentional negative impact in society. This article explores the source of social inequities through a racial equity framework that reviews how our unconscious values sustain systemic inequities despite our good intentions. In addition, this analysis presents practical ways to reduce implicit bias while outlining particular consulting strategies that create and sustain diversity and inclusion at the organizational level.

John Dovidio, Professor of Psychology at Yale, studies the conscious and unconscious stimulus that shapes how we perceive, behave, and think about others based on group membership. As he combines the realities of internalized social messages with the human tendency to form in-and-out groups, he explains, “because of a range of normal cognitive, motivational and sociocultural processes that promote inter-group biases most whites develop some feelings towards or beliefs about blacks, of which they are unaware or which they try to dissociate from their non-prejudiced self-image.” The impact of implicit bias in our communities and our collective unawareness of in-and-out group tendencies has motivated the work of the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance.

“...the work of inclusion requires that we become comfortable with being uncomfortable, since it can lead us to a transformative space that moves us from perceiving ourselves as welcoming people to intentionally and proactively establishing inclusion.”



## The Work of the Diversity Alliance

Since its beginnings 19 years ago, Gail Harrison—executive director of the Diversity Alliance—has worked to dismantle barriers to ensure people of all ethnic backgrounds have equal access and opportunity to participate in the life of the community. The Diversity Alliance’s customized workshops, annual summits, diversity initiatives, consulting work, language courses, and youth programs (e.g., Calling All Colors, Talking to Kids About Race, Migrant Reading and Mentoring) explore the complexities of our social reality and promote intercultural opportunities in efforts to raise social consciousness, build the capacity to relate to other groups, and increases the possibilities for meaningful multicultural relations across all sectors. Our work describes the processes that shape unconscious racialized bias and behavior while moving us away from shared guilt. We recognize that implicit bias is not rooted on our conscious desire for justice and fairness, but rather on the fact that as human beings we have a natural tendency to form “us and them,” and to follow cognitive scripts rather mindlessly. These traits, when combined with a lifetime of multiple repetitive messages and limited opportunities for meaningful multicultural interaction—in some measure sustained through segregation and residential isolation—impact us in undesirable ways.

## Debiasing by Acknowledging Bias

A key factor for reducing implicit bias is to acknowledge that implicit bias is real. Yet, such a simple step presents us with complex challenges as the Kirwin Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity reminds us: “Debiasing is far from a simple task, as it involves the construction of new mental associations.” The given fact of how rooted implicit biases tend to be makes the task of debiasing as difficult as the breaking of learned habits. The Institute suggests that “instead of repressing one’s own prejudices, if one openly acknowledges one’s biases, and directly challenges or refutes them, one can overcome them.” Other debiasing mechanisms include counter-stereotypic training (e.g., verbally responding “no” when presented with a stereotypic trait that matched a category representation and “yes” when viewing non-stereotypic associations), exposure to debiasing agents (e.g., male nurses, elderly athletes, female scientists), the Implicit Association Test, and implicit bias education.

Raising awareness of implicit bias can lead us to the re-shaping of our institutions in ways that intentionally match with the outcomes we believe in. Yet, creating a diverse and inclusive environment demands attention and intentionality. In other words, the work of inclusion requires that we become comfortable with being uncomfortable, since it can lead us to a transformative space that moves us from perceiving our-



Lakeshore Diversity Alliance’s Summit on Race and Inclusion examines racial inequities and explores strategies for their elimination.



The Diversity Alliance offers customized training solutions on Racial Equity Diversity & Inclusion (R.E.D.I.).



Talking to Kids about Race empowers parents, childcare providers, and educators with an understanding of racial attitudes in early childhood development and provides tools for creating change.

## THE IMPLICIT ASSOCIATION TEST (IAT)

*Measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling, or unable, to report.*

selves as welcoming people to intentionally and proactively establishing inclusion. As a result, organizations embracing an atmosphere of inclusion quickly recognize that exclusion flows in a more organic fashion.

Brian J. Weiner, author of "A Theory of Organizational Readiness for Change," suggests that strategies to implement desired organizational change require the "unfreezing of existing mindsets and creating motivation for change." He explains that "because implementation is often a 'team sport,' problems arise when some feel committed and others do not."

## Help for Local Government

The Diversity Alliance's consulting strategies prepare and guide organizations through the challenges of creating a culture of inclusion, hiring and recruiting diversity, advancing and growing talent, and measuring, monitoring, and evaluating progress. Some of these strategies can be as simple as reevaluating the job description and requirements in efforts to widen the applicants' pool.

Today, rapidly changing demographics and an expanding global market demand that we intentionally embrace a diverse and inclusive workforce with the hopes to increase employment opportunities, supportive work environments, and integrated communities. The work that lies ahead must be intentional and deeply rooted on the recognition that although our past shapes us, it does not need to define us.

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*Alfredo Hernandez Corsen is the associate program director for the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance. You may contact him at 616-846-9074 or [diversity@ethnicdiversity.org](mailto:diversity@ethnicdiversity.org).*

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# PLACEMAKING

## Placemaking Is about People: Using Placemaking to Support Community Innovation and Character

By Sarida Scott

**P**lacemaking is about people, people living and working in a community, creating and activating public spaces to improve their quality of life. While the term may be unfamiliar to some, the concept is not. For decades, placemaking has been interpreted and implemented in design, planning, and management of neighborhoods and cities to enliven communities.

For those of us working in community development, placemaking sounds a lot like our work. For years, community groups like CDAD (Community Development Advocates of Detroit)—a membership organization of community development and neighborhood improvement groups—and residents have worked to create great places in neighborhoods. From this realization, CDAD developed its Neighborhood Placemaking Project with a generous grant from the Kresge Foundation, to provide placemaking training for CDAD members and award seven \$7,000 grants to support the creation placemaking projects in each of Detroit's seven city council districts.

### Neighborhood Placemaking

In Detroit, placemaking has focused on great spaces recently developed downtown, like the beach at Campus Martius or the volleyball court at the Riverwalk. But there are great placemaking initiatives happening in neighborhoods, like Central Detroit Christian's Peaches & Greens produce market and its Faith, Hope and Love Productions' gardens, which grow and distribute fresh fruits and vegetables to the community. Through the project, CDAD sought to bring more attention to neighborhood placemaking and support the creation of new placemaking projects.

To be clear, highlighting placemaking in no way minimizes the significant challenges Detroit faces in equity, education, transportation, and a lack of jobs. Through placemaking, we can recognize that as we work to address these challenges,



we also deserve to enjoy our neighborhoods. We deserve great places. We cannot overlook the implicit and explicit benefits of fun and great public spaces. Placemaking fosters better resident relationships and encourages safety with increased activity and use of public spaces.

### A Community-Focused Process

The CDAD Neighborhood Placemaking Project was designed to be Detroit-centric and community-focused. The placemaking training CDAD provided was focused on designing projects that represent the unique interests and makeup of Detroit. The application guidelines required demonstrated community support for the project, use of a public space located within the respective district, and ongoing community programming.

The process began with a review committee of residents and CDO (community development organization) staffers who scored project proposals in an initial review. Ties between project proposals were broken by a community vote at district caucus meetings where groups presented their project ideas and residents selected the winner.

As a result, the winning projects reflect the creativity and unique character of Detroit's neighborhoods. Here are a few of the projects:

## DISTRICT 1

Population: 105,185  
Hispanic: 975  
White: 5,615  
African American: 96,177  
Other: 2,418

Percentage of  
households in poverty = 26%

Per capita income = \$17,606

## DISTRICT 2

Population: 105,931  
Hispanic: 927  
White: 2,675  
African American: 99,935  
Other: 2,394

Percentage of  
households in poverty = 25%

Per capita income = \$18,292

## DISTRICT 6

Population: 106,407  
Hispanic: 41,328  
White: 19,369  
African American: 41,580  
Other: 4,130

Percentage of  
households in poverty = 38%

Per capita income = \$13,114

### DISTRICT 1

Voices for Earth Justice, Hope House  
Nature and Agro-Ecology Center



Summer event in District 1.

Grant funds were used to create an outdoor and indoor space designed to provide a gathering place for the community and a place to learn to be good stewards of the land—people, plants, and animals. The space includes a native plant rain garden, organic vegetable garden, outdoor gathering space, and an indoor space. The outdoor space has a seating area and gathering area. Two teens were provided with a stipend for helping with the project. They learned about planting and community engagement. Several events have happened in the space: hosting a church youth group, volunteer appreciation, and an open house. Many people have stopped by to sit in the space and spend quiet time. Future plans include additional programming, indoor and outdoor screenings, and more open houses.

### DISTRICT 2

People for Palmer Park,  
Magic of Art in Palmer Park



District 2 tent event.

Funds were used to host several events and to purchase a blue 'teepee' style tent that will be used to host arts related activities throughout the year. Events hosted so far include: an eco-dyeing workshop, bonnet making workshop at Log Cabin Day, veggie printing workshops and Aviva door painting, and 'paint the tent' contest. In September, the winning design will be chosen and painted onto the outside of the tent. Future plans include additional arts-related activities under the tent and several improvements to the park, including, but not limited to, benches and other types of seating, picnic tables, canopies, water fountains, bike racks, drinking fountains, and public restroom repairs.



## DISTRICT 6

### Garage Cultural, Plaza Cultural



District 6's Cultural Garage

The space will be used as a mini-skateboard park and cultural arts space that will host an outdoor classroom for the arts, an outdoor pop-up gallery, art exhibits, movies, live theatre, mural exhibits, market space, and women's Mercado. Funds will be used to clean up the space, host community dialogues, mural design process, mural installation, leveling and cement laying for the skate park, and a kick-off ceremony.

For CDAD leadership and members, the Neighborhood Placemaking Project has exceeded expectations. The concept resonated with members and residents, and generated support for other projects. Our organization, which supports our members through public policy advocacy, technical assistance, capacity building, information sharing, community engagement, and facilitating common action, has also attracted additional support through a University of Michigan Urban & Regional Planning Program capstone project where U-M students produced a comprehensive resource for CDAD members to support future placemaking.

This is a tremendous opportunity to connect the increased visibility of placemaking to the existing good work happening in neighborhoods that benefits us all. It is a reminder that our work is related and we should all seek to achieve a shared goal of creating a better Detroit for everyone.

---

*Sarida Scott is executive director of Community Development Advocates of Detroit. You may reach her at 313-832-4620 or [saridascott@cdad-online.org](mailto:saridascott@cdad-online.org).*

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“When people do not see their values and preferences reflected in a place, they feel unwelcome.”

# LESSONS

## TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY IN PUBLIC PLACES

By Courtney Knapp

The following lessons represent the findings of a major Project for Public Spaces (PPS) research initiative, “Placemaking in a Pluralistic World: Using Public Spaces to Encourage and Celebrate Social Diversity,” which was carried out during the summer of 2007. These key ideas can be used as practical steps for civic institutions as they begin thinking about engaging a wide range of cultural and socioeconomic groups through their public spaces and programming.

### LESSON 1

**Diverse social interaction is a goal of Placemaking, but so is creating safe spaces where groups can celebrate and seek out their cultural peers.**

Although some people argue that a “melting pot” is the highest form of multiculturalism, others maintain that fostering “safe” spaces where particular communities can come together and celebrate their unique culture is equally important in achieving diversity. Studies conclude that the most successful multicultural spaces are those that combine both elements: “The social interaction of diverse groups [in urban parks] can be maintained and enhanced by providing safe, spatially adequate territories for everyone within the larger space of the overall site,” write Setha Low and co-authors in *Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity*.

### LESSON 2

**People must be represented through familiar cultural symbols in public spaces.**

When people do not see their values and preferences reflected in a place, they feel unwelcome. Placemaking puts a particular emphasis on engaging many different stakeholders, listening to their stories, and making recommendations reflective of their specific concerns and desires. No community group’s history should be erased from the physical and cultural reality of a public space.

### LESSON 3

**Extensive and ongoing community participation is critical to the success of a multicultural place.**

Community-based planning is one method for tackling issues of underrepresentation of subcultural groups. On the one hand, it seeks to redress the monolithic and often top-down approach to politics and planning by bringing those historically excluded voices into the decision-making process. On the other hand, participatory planning is crucial because it is a mechanism for empowering communities to make planning and development decisions for themselves rather than deferring to professional planners. The potential for the development of social capital through this process should not be underestimated. Placemakers know well that outreach requires more than simply advertising workshops and meetings. More proactive and context-specific strategies must be developed to gain resident input, especially when working with communities who have been historically excluded from the public process.





Photo courtesy of Project for Public Spaces.

## LESSON 4

### **Discrimination is real, and needs to be tackled by public space managers.**

We would like to believe that public spaces in our community are free from inter-cultural hostility and discrimination, yet studies reveal that many people do experience overt discrimination in public spaces, which discourages them from using parks, business districts, civic centers, and other places. Creating a positive, welcoming space through design and programming should be a top priority of planners and managers.

## LESSON 5

### **Integrate many different types of uses—as well as elements that bring people together—into plans and designs.**

The most meaningful public space plans and programs strike a balance between official and vernacular uses, incorporating many different kinds of activities while simultaneously remaining flexible enough to accommodate values and preferences of different cultural groupings as they evolve over time.

## LESSON 6

### **Locate public spaces in areas where they can serve multiple communities.**

Markets, playgrounds, and parks on sites where they will border different communities is a proven way to increase the social diversity of public places. But, as Setha Low and others maintain, good access and linkages are about much more than simply physical proximity. Addressing social issues such as affordability, cultural representation, safety, and understanding all play into whether or not people will choose to use the public space.

## LESSON 7

### **Focus on neighborhoods.**

As a unit of planning, the neighborhood is the most important in terms of promoting social diversity and increasing social capital. It is conceptually broad enough to get individuals to think beyond themselves and their streets, but of a small enough scale to still support the notion of “neighborliness”

and encourage collaboration between community planners and stakeholders.

## LESSON 8

### **Program public spaces with educational and cultural activities that celebrate diverse cultures.**

Programs that offer educational experiences related to the history or the environment of a particular place have been shown to be effective in bringing people together. People want to learn, and when they come together to share the experience of knowledge, social divisions often dissolve. When spaces are programmed to celebrate diverse cultures and histories, there is an even greater impact. The power of learning and exploring should not be underemphasized.

*Reprinted with permission from Project for Public Spaces. For more information on PPS, visit [pps.org](http://pps.org).*

*Courtney Knapp was a Project for Public Spaces intern. She completed masters degrees in gender/cultural studies and urban and environmental policy and planning.*



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# one dearborn

By John B. O'Reilly, Jr.



Dearborn  
pop. 98,153

"The Warren Avenue success story is in sharp contrast to a common perception that immigrants have the potential to strain municipal finances. Our history has shown us that being open to immigrants can lead to a new type of prosperity."

Photo Caption: Mayor O'Reilly (center) at the Morningside Playground dedication in southeast Dearborn with residents, city commissioners and employees, and Severstal representatives (Severstal North America donated \$15,000 for equipment).

I can say that our community has always been enriched by residents who choose our city for their new life in the U.S. Since our beginnings in the late 1700s, when we were founded by French settlers who established ribbon farms along the Rouge River, we've been the destination for people with ties to countries from around the world—especially Germany, Ireland, Poland, and Italy. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, after canal boats brought settlers from the East Coast to Lake Erie and Detroit, we were one day's journey on the Chicago Pike Road (now U.S. 12). In more recent times, Middle Eastern, Hispanic, and African American populations have joined us.

Since the early years of the 20th Century, Dearborn has attracted people seeking employment, first because of the Ford Motor Co.'s massive Rouge Manufacturing complex, and then later in research and engineering fields; health care; higher education; and in entrepreneurial pursuits, including restaurants, retail, and professional services.

Despite being home to people from more than 80 countries and nationalities, it's true that Dearborn is most characterized today for our residents whose families come from Lebanon and Yemen, and to a lesser extent, Iraq. Although often lumped together under the title of Middle Eastern, these countries are as distinct as individual European nations,



with their own traditions and language variations, as well as religious practices. And it is important to note that the many Arab Americans who live in Dearborn are from long established families, with many being second- or third-generation. In fact, U.S. Census data from 2010 show two-thirds of all immigrants (born in any other country) living in Dearborn had been in the U.S. for more than a decade.

## Reaching Non-Native English Speaking Residents

Even as we honor and respect heritages of all of our residents, we are equally interested in helping them identify as “Dearbornites,” making sure they have the information and resources to fully participate in all activities and services our community has to offer. It is just as important for us to ensure that all of our residents understand their responsibilities to our community, as well. Among the most critical responsibilities are property maintenance and following trash and recycling rules. To help us convey those important messages, in the past we partnered with the social service agency ACCESS, which assisted us with reaching residents whose primary language is not English, or who were unfamiliar with our city ordinances. ACCESS even accompanied city employees in door-to-door educational campaigns. This is a practice we may re-activate, especially as we re-emphasize the ways in which our residents can partner with us to take care of our attractive neighborhoods. We believe in education first for all of our residents, and are happy to engage in outreach in any form to achieve what we call “One Dearborn.”

## Community Building

Besides ACCESS, we employ other very active community organizations, service clubs, neighborhood associations, sports teams, and faith groups to boost connections between residents and focus on goals that are universally desirable. We have 15 neighborhood associations that address pressing issues for residents regarding zoning, property maintenance, crime prevention, traffic and development, as well as plan social activities to encourage interaction. We support more than 90 block parties a year. Our interfaith community, most notably led by the Dearborn Area Interfaith Network (DAIN), builds understanding and finds common ground between members of different religions in a supportive, respectful environment. They have been tremendously effective within our community and as a positive counterpoint to negative perceptions generated from outside of our city.

Our public schools also play an essential role in uniting our residents in common goals. While separate in operation, we are closely tied in supporting each other and in sharing resources. We all want excellent education for our children and for them to get as much out of the academic and extracurricular experience as they can. So, groups like parent-teacher organizations and athletic associations help to instill healthy school pride, as well as strengthen community bonds around universal values.

## Entrepreneurship

The most dramatic impact of the contribution of entrepreneurship is demonstrated along Warren Avenue, which



Dearborn family with multiple City Beautiful Commission Awards.





The motto "One Dearborn" means the city welcomes anyone who wants to be part of its community and wants to support everyone in achieving their goals.

is one of our borders with Detroit and one of our historic neighborhoods. In the 1980s, this once-bustling commercial area was on the edge of collapse, with the potential to bring down values in adjoining neighborhoods in Dearborn. Instead, through private investment by largely Arab-American business owners, with compatible assistance from the city for public infrastructure, Warren Avenue thrives as a destination shopping district, with authentic character and identity. The property values of the neighborhoods abutting this corridor rose dramatically following the commercial recovery. The Warren Avenue success story is in sharp contrast to a common perception that immigrants have the potential to strain municipal finances. Our history has shown us that being open to immigrants can lead to a new type of prosperity.

Above all, we know that our primary responsibility as a city is to ensure basic services and public safety. Most of our

resources are put into those endeavors. But we also know any city that is going to be successful needs to encourage residents to be involved, and we devote considerable resources to building relationships with community leaders across a broad spectrum of our city. We pride ourselves on being respectful and responsive to all of our residents, and are grateful when people choose to live here—and choose to partner with us to keep our community strong and moving forward. Our motto is "One Dearborn," and that means we welcome anyone who wants to be part of our community, and we want to support everyone in achieving their goals.

---

*John B. O'Reilly, Jr. is the mayor of Dearborn. You may reach him at 313-943-2300 or [mayor@ci.dearborn.mi.us](mailto:mayor@ci.dearborn.mi.us).*

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# FAIR & EQUITABLE HOUSING

By Jennifer Hall

As director of the Ann Arbor Housing Commission (AAHC), I have seen human misery. Ann Arbor's public housing includes several families who are war refugees from Sudan. They fled from violence, watched their families die in capsized boats, and after moving from one refugee camp to another, finally made it to America through a lottery system or sponsorship by a church. These families are black and Muslim. They risked their lives fleeing their homes rather than fighting in the war, yet they are often looked upon by Americans as terrorists and criminals.

America is truly the land of opportunity for them, and though they live in public housing—which is often perceived as a crime-infested drug den for hookers and pimps—they live in public housing in Ann Arbor, one of the wealthiest, most progressive cities in the state. Yet even here, they face

The Housing and Urban Development Department's 2015 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulation “directs HUD’s program participants to take significant actions to overcome historic patterns of segregation, achieve truly balanced and integrated living patterns, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination.

prejudices that are no different than in any other community.

Studies have found that when humans think about risk, it induces anxiety. So when we think about where to live, there is anxiety about who our neighbors will be, what the schools will be like, how good the drinking water is, or how far the job commute will be. Rich or poor, black, white, Hispanic, or other, it is normal for humans to want to live in the best situation for themselves



Ann Arbor  
pop. 113, 934





This public housing home on the left is located on the same street as the single family homes in the Oakwood neighborhood of Ann Arbor, pictured on the right.

and their families. People tend to move to the best place they can afford, the one they believe has the fewest risks. The logical conclusion to this human decision process is a segregated society. In the U.S., that also means that neighborhoods are segregated not only by income, but also by race.

## HUD Ruling on Fair Housing

In 2015, HUD issued a new rule regarding the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (Federal Register Vol. 80, No. 136). In addition to existing discrimination regulations, the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulation takes a step further and, “directs HUD’s program participants to take significant actions to overcome historic patterns of segregation, achieve truly balanced and integrated living patterns, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination.” Every public agency that administers HUD funds (CDBG, HOME, Public Housing, Section 8, etc.) must complete an analysis of impediments to fair housing and develop a plan to address them. HUD will be providing local data for the analysis. The penalty for not taking action on this directive is the potential loss of future HUD funding.

## Mixed-Income Housing Works

Seventy-one percent of the tenants in Ann Arbor’s public housing are black, and 28 percent are white—in a community where only 7 percent of the households are black and 73 percent are white. Despite complaints from residents who do not want the AAHC to build low-income housing in their neighborhoods, the low-income housing in Ann Arbor is integrated into higher income white neighborhoods, which meets the intent of HUD’s new regulation. And, Ann Arbor City Council has voted unanimously to approve AAHC site plans and to provide general fund financial support for our projects. Many studies of mixed-income neighborhoods have shown that low-income housing does not ruin neighborhoods. The Urban Land Institutes’ 2003 analysis of mixed-income housing, “Mixed-Income Housing: Myth and Fact,” provides examples of successful mixed-income housing.

My mother-in-law would sometimes refer to a cluster of mobile homes about a  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from her house in a rural Michigan township as, “the bad side of town.” “Those three trailers?” I would ask, in disbelief. In my hometown of Kalamazoo, a community of 74,262, the entire north side—about 30 city



Hikone, a public housing project in Ann Arbor, has a greenhouse, trails, and community garden.



Hikone has two, three, and four bedroom units, in five separate buildings and an active community center.



**“...low-income housing in Ann Arbor is integrated into higher income white neighborhoods, which meets the intent of HUD’s new regulation. And, Ann Arbor City Council has voted unanimously to approve AAHC site plans and to provide general fund financial support for our projects. Many studies of mixed-income neighborhoods have shown that low-income housing does not ruin neighborhoods.”**

blocks—was considered ‘the bad side of town.’ The south-eastern quadrant of Ann Arbor, where I live, is considered the ‘bad side’—even though you cannot buy a house there for under \$150,000.

Why do we perceive these communities as bad? All of these areas have poor people, and most of these areas have the highest number of minorities. Regardless of the size of the community, housing is segregated by income and, also usually, by race.

## Social Equity

Where you live impacts your access to jobs, schools, medical facilities, and recreation. Neighborhoods can also literally impact a family’s health. Poor families are more likely to suffer from asthma related to pollution in their home and in their neighborhood. Poor families are more likely to be victims of crime. Poor families are more likely to suffer from untreated depression, anxiety, and other health problems.

There is both a human and an economic cost to poverty and segregation. The National Bureau of Justice reported that the average annual cost to house a person in jail was \$28,323 in 2010. The AAHC paid an average of \$6,147 per year in 2014 to subsidize the rent of our low-income households. The AAHC is participating in a national study with the U-M Medical Center and many other partners, to house chronically homeless people who are high users of emergency services to evaluate the cost savings of housing those households while providing support services including primary health care. People who do not have health care coverage often use the emergency room as their primary care provider, and some of the participants in the study cost the hospital over \$1 million a year. Hospitals must absorb this cost by increasing the charges on paying patients.

It costs less to invest in programs that empower people to thrive than it does to finance jails for people to subsidize. Just as we nurture and provide for our children so that they can prosper, new groundbreaking studies on social equity shows that we need to address historical inequities, and prevent future ones, in order for our communities to thrive (Benner and

Pastor, *Journal of Urban Studies*, Feb 2015). Poor communities, like poor families, face many more barriers because they lack the resources to flourish. The International City Management Association’s white paper called “Local Government, Social Equity, and Sustainable Communities” (2013) provides an analysis and real world examples on how local governments can promote social equity in their communities.

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*Jennifer Hall is the executive director of the Ann Arbor Housing Commission. You may contact her at [JHall@a2gov.org](mailto:JHall@a2gov.org).*

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# Road Funding Package Not Enough to Fix Crumbling Infrastructure

By John LaMacchia II

A road funding package approved by the Michigan Legislature on November 3, 2015, fell well short of what it will take to fix our state's crumbling infrastructure.

After months of negotiations, and bills being lobbied between the House and Senate, lawmakers narrowly cobbled together the necessary votes to send a road funding package to Governor Snyder's desk for his signature. The governor said he will sign the bills, but had yet to do so at press time.

How narrowly did this funding package get approved? Both chambers passed the fuel tax-related bills by the closest of margins—20-18 in the Senate and 55-52 in the House. A bill calling for a hike in vehicle registration fees passed the House by 54-53. It doesn't get any closer than that.

Over the past two-plus years, the League has consistently called for a long-term, sustainable solution that relies heavily on a significant amount of dedicated funding for transportation and doesn't leave future state and local budgets hanging in the balance. This plan fell far short of that. It's a complicated package that could have long-term impacts on municipal budgets. The Legislature intends to use general fund money to fulfill half of its plan—the same source as local government revenue sharing. Since the state has a history of balancing its budget at the expense of local governments, this plan puts revenue sharing at risk.

It's an over-statement to say that a \$1.2 billion plan comprised of \$600 million in new revenue and \$600 million in General Fund dollars will fix Michigan's crumbling infrastructure. This is especially true given that two-thirds of the new revenue will simply replace General Fund money already budgeted for roads in the current fiscal year; and, the plan doesn't fully phase in for almost a decade. So, if we do the math, it goes something like this: The state will discontinue its \$400 million general fund contribution already in this year's road budget. As a result, the new constitutionally dedicated revenue from the package will be approximately \$280 million more than the amount spent this year, when fully implemented in 2023.

## Plan Framework

The basis of the plan includes a 7.3 cents gas tax increase and a 20-percent increase in vehicle registration fees. These increases go into effect January 1, 2017—meaning no new money will be infused into the system for 14 more months.

Gas and diesel taxes will be indexed to inflation, starting in 2022. Additionally, the \$600 million in General Fund revenue that this plan relies on will be phased-in over three years, beginning in FY 19, and relies on future Legislatures—some of whom aren't even elected yet—to appropriate these General Fund dollars to uphold the promises of the current Legislature. History has proven that earmarks of this nature have gone unfulfilled.

## Plan Details

- HB 4736 increases passenger and commercial vehicle registrations fees by 20 percent per vehicle beginning January 1, 2017. The bill provides for additional increases for plug-in hybrid and electric vehicle registrations. These changes result in a \$200 million revenue increase for transportation.
- HB 4738, HB 4614, and HB 4616 provide for gas and diesel tax increases to 26.3 cents, an increase of 7.3 cents per gallon, beginning on January 1, 2017. The bills also implement diesel parity, institute a process for taxing alternative fuels, and tie the fuel tax rate to inflation beginning in 2022. These changes result in a \$400 million revenue increase for transportation initially.
- HB 4370 dedicates \$600 million of state income tax revenue to transportation phased in over three years—\$150 million in FY 19, \$325 million in FY 20, and \$600 million in FY 21. This bill also provides \$200 million in tax relief by expanding the Homestead Property Tax Credit. According to both the House and Senate Fiscal Agencies, when fully phased in, this will reduce the state General Fund by more than \$800 million, or roughly 7 percent.
- HB 4737 requires MDOT and local road agencies to secure warranties, where possible, for construction and preservation projects over \$2 million, and mandates new reporting requirements for MDOT and local road agencies on those warranties. Furthermore, the bill creates a "Roads Innovation Task Force" that will form no later than December 1, 2015 and prepare a report no later than March 1, 2016. The task force will: evaluate road and construction materials that will allow MDOT to build roads that could last at least 50 years; focus on materials and processes that may cost more upfront but produce life-cycle construction and maintenance savings;







The \$600 million in General Fund revenue that this plan relies on will be phased-in over three years, beginning in FY 19, and relies on future Legislatures—some of whom aren't even elected yet—to appropriate these General Fund dollars to uphold the promises of the current Legislature. History has proven that similar earmarks have gone unfulfilled.

and concentrate on longer-term time frames that seek to maximize value of the taxpayers of this state.

In addition, HB 4737 creates a Roads Innovation Fund that will collect the first \$100 million from fuel taxes each fiscal year starting in 2016-17. The funds can only be released once the House and Senate approve a one-time concurrent resolution approving the report by the Roads Innovation Task Force. Those funds shall be appropriated only for the use of specific higher quality, longer lifecycle road construction purposes. Once the concurrent resolution is approved, the fund shall no longer annually receive the allocation.

- HB 4610 allows townships contributing 50 percent or more to a road project to require an RFP for pavement projects over \$50,000 and gravel projects over \$25,000.

- HB 4611 requires an RFP process for all projects over \$100,000 for MDOT. Local road agencies must do RFPs for all projects, excluding routine maintenance, over \$100,000, unless the local road agency affirmatively finds that they can do it themselves for less.

- SB 414 creates an automatic rollback of the state income tax to occur if General Fund growth exceeds the rate of inflation plus 1.425 percent. The first rollback could not begin until January 1, 2023.

The League believes this plan is overly reliant on existing tax dollars and establishes a foundation for potential cuts to local police and fire protection, higher education, economic development, and Michigan's ability to attract and retain a talented workforce. It fails to address the key principles for which we have consistently advocated—a long-term sustainable solution that invests in our road network, protection of essential services, and fiscal responsibility in regards to future state and local government budgets. The League urges the governor and Legislature to focus spending of these limited resources on preserving existing infrastructure in our built environments. Let's begin the conversation on what a 21st century distribution of these funds looks like.

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*John LaMacchia II is a legislative associate for the League. You may reach him at 517-908-0303 or [jlamacchia@mml.org](mailto:jlamacchia@mml.org).*



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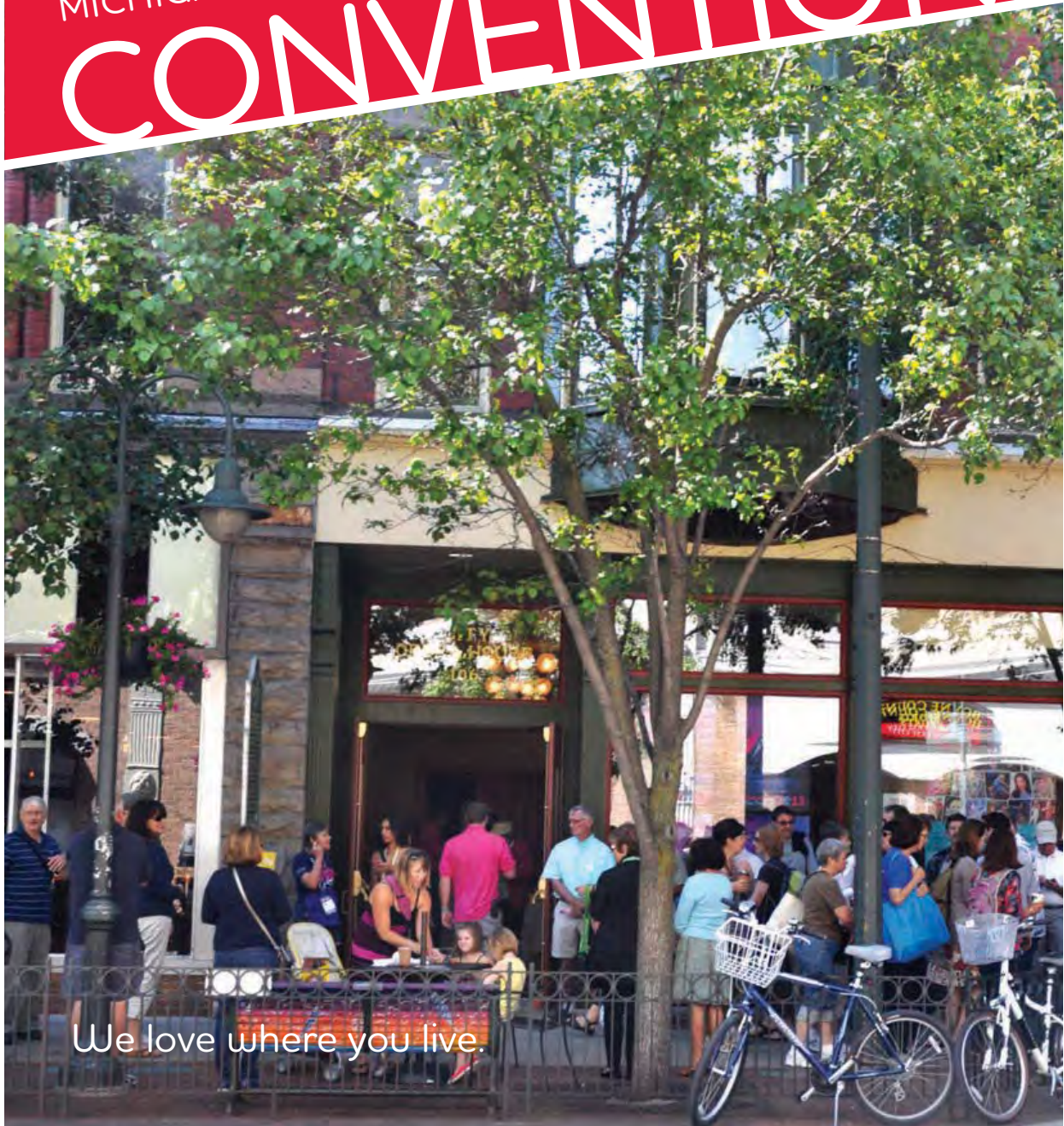
# CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Downtown Traverse City  
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# COMMUNITY Excellence Awards



1. Three Oaks Village Manager Adam Umbrasas emceeing the awards; 2. The city of Jackson's booth exhibit: Citizen Interaction Design 3. The exhibit for North Oakland County Water Authority (NOCWA) 4. The display booth for Transforming Woodward Together: The Journey for Better Transit 5. Westland's exhibit for City Hall Big Box Retrofit.

The 2015 CEA Cup winner was the City of Westland for its project: Westland City Hall Big Box Retrofit. Council President James Godbout, left, and Mayor William Wild, right.



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# 2015 ANNUAL CONVENTION

## Convention 2015 Recap

The lively chatter of more than 400 municipal officials filled the West Bay Dome of Traverse City's Park Place Hotel. This year's Convention was a little different as it was held in a downtown setting. Attendees had a chance to stretch their legs every day as they headed off to sessions in a variety of venues, like the 123-year-old City Opera House or the uber-cool Corner Loft. The topics covered were plentiful as well, ranging from technology to public safety to diversity.





# TRAVERSE CITY, SEPTEMBER 16-18



Joe Minicozzi spoke about the reevaluation of public policy and a broader understanding of market dynamics created by tax policy. Claire Nelson, founder of the Urban Consulate, discussed a new project to foster civic and cultural exchange between cities. Our closing session helped officials grapple with the question: How can local leaders adapt to preserve their community's unique character while embracing the changing needs of their residents?

# 2015-2016 NEW LEAGUE TRUSTEES

The Michigan Municipal League's Board of Trustees is responsible for developing and guiding the organization's strategic public policy initiatives, legislative agenda, and internal workings.

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Marcus Peccia, City Manager, Cadillac

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## **Completing our 18-member board, the following new members will serve three-year terms, effective September 2015**

Wendell Dompier, Village President, Baraga

Maureen Donker, Mayor, Midland

Jason Eppler, City Manager, Ionia

Rebecca Fleury, City Manager, Battle Creek

Melanie Piana, Councilmember, Ferndale

Rusty Showalter, Mayor Pro Tem, West Branch

*For more information on the League's Board of Trustees, visit [www.mml.org/about/mmlboard.htm](http://www.mml.org/about/mmlboard.htm)*

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MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

# CAPITAL CONFERENCE

March 22-23, 2016  
Lansing Center, Lansing



# *Guido and Sinclair* AWARDS

The Guido and Sinclair awards are two of the top honors given to individuals by the Michigan Municipal League. The 2016 deadline to submit nominees for the awards is **January 15, 2016** with the winners being recognized during the Michigan Municipal League's Capital Conference March 22-23, 2016 in Lansing. Award details:

## THE MICHAEL. A GUIDO LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD



WHAT: Created in memory of Dearborn Mayor Michael Guido to honor a chief elected official who personifies professionalism and leadership, and is dedicated to the citizens in their community and advocates on their behalf in Lansing and Washington, D.C.

ELIGIBILITY: To be considered, nominee must be a current chief elected official from a Michigan Municipal League member community who has demonstrated excellence in leadership and shown perseverance in making a difference in his/her community for a sustained period of time.

## THE JIM SINCLAIR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD



WHAT: Created in memory of Rogers City Councilmember Jim Sinclair to celebrate a person dedicated to public service who has shown a passion and commitment to the League, enthusiastically supporting its mission and promoting its purpose.

ELIGIBILITY: To be considered, nominees must be affiliated with the League in the capacity of a municipal official, municipal staff, a League staff member, or an active participant in the League's mission; and be active in furthering the cause of educating elected officials so that communities may benefit from the education and experience that their elected officials have gained.

Nominations must be received at League headquarters by **JANUARY 15, 2016**. To download a nomination form and related materials visit [www.mml.org/awards](http://www.mml.org/awards).

# ACT 51

By Rick Haglund

**B**eyond the need for more money, another issue has long dogged policymakers in the debate over how to fix Michigan's crumbling roads and bridges: a 64-year old formula that distributes transportation funds among 617 governmental units that many say fails to put resources where they're needed most.

## External Formula

Actually, there are several formulas used to distribute restricted state transportation funds among the various governmental units charged with maintaining the roads under Public Act 51 of 1951. An "external" formula divvies up road money among the Michigan Department of Transportation, county road commissions, cities, and villages.

Under that formula, MDOT and county road commissions each receive 39.1 percent of state motor fuel and vehicle registration taxes. Cities and villages get 21.8 percent of those funds, which total about \$1.9 billion in the current fiscal year.

## Internal Formula

An "internal" formula determines how much money goes to each county road commission, city, and village. The major factors in the formula for those 617 local units are population, which represents 60 percent of the distribution, and street miles, which account for 40 percent.

Those formulas tend to favor places that have a lot of road miles but less traffic than roads in urban areas. "As a result, the state has some roads in terrific condition that get very little traffic and some very horrible roads that receive a massive amount of traffic," the nonpartisan Citizens Research Council wrote in a 2011 report.

In order to provide more money for roads with the greatest repair needs, the funding distribution formulas require that more money also be sent to areas where roads are less traveled. The Citizen Research Council called that "a critical flaw of the system."

At press time, lawmakers had not reached agreement on a series of bills intended to raise about \$1.2 billion a year in new road money, although some close to the negotiations said they expected it to happen by the Thanksgiving break. But none of those bills addressed the funding formulas.

"The debate on transportation has been limited to raising revenue and how to do it," Craig Thiel, senior research associate at the Citizens Research Council, said in late September. "There has been no discussion in modifying the intricacies of the PA 51 distribution formulas."

## Governor Calls for Reform

Many say it would be too difficult for a Republican-controlled Legislature that hates tax increases to get a road funding deal and overhaul PA 51. But they say the formulas need to be modified in order for the most-traveled roads and bridges to get needed funding.

Among those who advocate reforming PA 51 is Gov. Rick Snyder, who has been pushing for more overall road funding since taking office in 2011. In a special transportation message to the Legislature that year in which he called for \$1.4 million a year in additional road money, Snyder proposed eliminating state road funds for some smaller cities and villages.

His plan called for ending the PA 51 distribution to cities and villages that receive less than \$50,000 a year in state road money. "Rather than go to jurisdictions, money will stay with the road so it can be distributed to whatever larger road agency maintains those roads and bridges," he said.

Snyder also called for the creation of a new funding formula that would distribute "new transportation funding based on road use and traffic volumes, with a seven- to ten-year transition period for full effect. This would include any new revenues beyond what is collected and spent today."

PA 51 "includes archaic formulas that sprinkle state transportation revenue across all 617 road agencies, many of them responsible for only a few miles of road," Snyder said. "The formulas are so outdated that two cities actually receive funds despite having no public roads or bridges in their jurisdiction." Lawmakers have not acted on the governor's proposals.

Making major changes in the distribution formulas is fraught with political peril. Some say the problem isn't so much the formulas, but the state's chronic underinvesting in transportation infrastructure.

"The larger counties are always going to be donor counties," said Craig Bryson, a spokesman for the Oakland County Road Commission. "The bottom line is that no county in Michigan is adequately funded. It's a crisis for every county. Last year there were rural counties in the Upper Peninsula that didn't have enough money to plow the roads on weekends."

Most agree with that sentiment. But many argue that the distribution formulas don't adequately take into account the higher cost of maintaining urban roads with multiple lanes and high traffic volumes.





In its 2013 policy statement, “Partnership for Place: An Agenda for a Competitive 21st Century Michigan,” the Michigan Municipal League called for PA 51 reforms that would direct new road funding to areas of greatest need. The act “ignores metropolitan needs and roadway characteristics, and fails to allow for project cost variability due to such factors as lane miles, age of infrastructure, and the presence of underground utilities,” it said.

Michigan’s needs in fixing its deplorable, dangerous roads are costly and widespread. But the state won’t have a competitive transportation system that its residents and businesses are demanding without reforming the funding distribution system.

“Michigan can no longer afford to spread limited funding so thinly across so many small agencies,” Gov. Snyder said. And that was four years ago. The problem has only become more urgent.

Rick Haglund is a freelance writer. You may contact him at 248-761-4594 or [haglund.rick@gmail.com](mailto:haglund.rick@gmail.com).

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# CELEBRATING A MULTICULTURAL HERITAGE WAY UP NORTH

By Jennifer Donovan

It seems like an unlikely place to hold a Parade of Nations and Multicultural Festival. Houghton/Hancock, Michigan—on the remote, vanilla Keweenaw Peninsula.

But the Parade of Nations is a fall tradition in the Keweenaw, one that brings out the entire community and visitors from miles around, enriching the local economy and raising public awareness of this out-of-way community. It's been going strong for 26 years. Over those years, there's been an elephant (live) and dragons (live? Sure, let's pretend). There have been horses, jugglers, and marching bands. On the 25th anniversary of the parade in 2014, Mahatma Gandhi's grandson showed up.

What's it like on Parade of Nations day? More than 3,000 people line the streets to watch the floats and flags of nearly 60 nations wend their way from Hancock, across the Portage Lift Bridge and through downtown Houghton. Then they crowd into Dee Stadium in Houghton to taste the home-cooked foods of nearly 20 nations, buy arts and crafts, and enjoy the music and dancing of local ethnic groups like the

Finnish Kivajat Dancers, the Native American Woodland Drum and Dancers, the Copper Country Cloggers, and a Bollywood performance by Michigan Technological University's Indian Student Association.

Parade of Nations is sponsored by Michigan Tech, Finlandia University, and community businesses and residents. It is a celebration of the international character of the community.

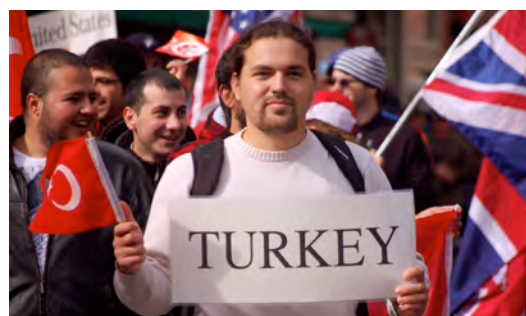
Keweenaw Peninsula



## International Students

One reason for that international character, of course, is Michigan Tech itself. With 1,165 of Tech's 7,200 students hailing from other countries, the community becomes a mini-United Nations when school starts each fall. Finlandia, too, is home to students from many lands.





Photos courtesy of Michigan Technological University.

International student organizations march, carrying their flags. And in a display of true brotherhood, many American students and community residents—children and adults—march right alongside them, carrying flags and signs for Turkey, Nigeria, South Korea, Colombia, and dozens of other nations around the world.

## Foods from Many Nations

The food at the Multicultural Festival is a big draw. This year, for example, visitors could taste the foods of 18 nations, including Moroccan, Indonesian, African, Indian, Iranian, Thai, Italian, Chinese, and the list goes on.

An international theme ties each year's Parade and Multicultural Festival together. This year it was The World of Lore and Legends. In 2014, the Parade's 25th anniversary year, the theme was, naturally, Around the World in 25 Years: A Silver Jubilee. In other years, the Parade has celebrated Weaving Cultural Harmony, Dancing with Diversity and Many Nations—One Heart. Each year, area elementary school children are invited to make posters reflecting the theme, which are displayed during the Multicultural Festival at the Dee Stadium in Houghton.

In recent years, the Parade of Nations has been expanding beyond parade day. The Portage Lake District Library and the Carnegie Museum host internationally themed programs during the week before the Saturday parade. Betty Chavis, founder of the Parade of Nations, shared her personal recollections at a free public program. This year, the Hancock Rotary Club sponsored an international wine and food tasting benefit during parade week, and the Houghton Area Writers Club held a free public story-telling program, based on this year's theme, The World of Lore and Legends.

So how did something like the Parade of Nations take root in someplace as remote as Houghton and Hancock?

The seeds were planted by Michigan Tech in an effort to help its growing numbers of international students feel more at home by sharing the richness of their culture, dress, and traditions with residents of the community. But it soon grew bigger than that.

## A Community of Immigrants

As Mary Stevens, a member of the Parade of Nations planning committee, explains, "Our area saw waves of immigrants coming to work in the copper mines during the 19th century, and many of their descendants still live here. The different ethnic groups that settled here create a rich inheritance of food, art, music, and festivals. The international students at Michigan Tech and Finlandia, from more than 60 countries, just add to that richness, and so a groundswell of support for the Parade of Nations has sprung up. "Everyone loves sharing their love and pride in their own heritage," Stevens says.

Why should communities celebrate their ethnic diversity? "It helps people feel pride in their heritage," says Bob Wenc, a longtime Parade of Nations committee member. "We all came from somewhere else, and that helped define who we are. When we share our cultures and traditions, we create the culture of America."

And don't forget, we live in an ever-shrinking global village. "As the world gets smaller, it is critical that we all have opportunities to share our backgrounds," says Darnishia Slade, director of International Programs and Services at Michigan Tech.

And what about the future? Will the Parade of Nations survive and thrive?

Slade has no doubts. "If I could look ahead 24 years, to the Parade of Nations' 50th anniversary, I would expect it to be known as the largest celebration of culture and international food in the nation, based on the number of residents in the Houghton-Hancock area. It will still be a free event for all people, of all backgrounds and economic levels. The Parade of Nations will continue doing what it has always done, bridging the community and the world and providing priceless cultural experiences."

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*Jennifer Donovan is the director of news and media relations for Michigan Technological University. You may reach her at 906-487-4521 or jbdonova@mtu.edu*

Sue Jeffers is a legal consultant to the League. You may contact her at [sjeffers@mml.org](mailto:sjeffers@mml.org).

# Brief detention of person did not violate Fourth Amendment under circumstances

## FACTS:

Johann Deffert, in camouflage pants, was walking down a Grand Rapids sidewalk on a Sunday across from a church in service, openly carrying an FNP-45 tactical pistol which was strapped to his leg in a drop leg tactical leg holster with a TLR-2 rail mounted tactical light with a laser sight attached to the pistol. An observer called 911 regarding a suspicious person who subsequently notified Grand Rapids police. Police Officer Moe responded to the dispatch and noted that Deffert appeared to be “talking to nobody.” Deffert was actually singing “Hakuna Matata,” a song from the movie *The Lion King*. Officer Moe approached Deffert on foot with his service firearm drawn. He ordered Deffert to lie down on the ground, handcuffed him and removed Deffert’s pistol from the holster. Deffert was then seated in the cruiser while Officer Moe conducted a LEIN check. Subsequently, a supervisor was called to the scene, the handcuffs were removed, and the pistol was unloaded and returned. Deffert was not charged with any crime. The entire contact lasted approximately thirteen minutes.

Deffert sued Officer Moe and others including the City of Grand Rapids (defendants) in federal district court alleging a variety of claims, including that his constitutional right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizure under the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution had been violated. It was undisputed by the parties that openly carrying a pistol is lawful in Michigan so long as the person is carrying the firearm with lawful intent and the firearm is not concealed. Further, it was not disputed that Deffert had been “seized” within the meaning of the Fourth Amendment, i.e., that his freedom of movement had been restrained without a warrant having been issued. Rather, defendants argued that an exception to the Fourth Amendment proscription applied in that Officer Moe was justified in stopping and briefly detaining Deffert in the course of a community-caretaking function, or, alternatively, as a reasonable investigatory stop.

## QUESTION:

Did the actions of the police officers in restraining Deffert constitute an unreasonable seizure under the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution?

## ANSWER ACCORDING TO THE FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT: NO.

The Court reviewed two exceptions to the Fourth Amendment as adopted by the U.S. Supreme Court, i.e., the so-called exigent circumstances exception and the Terry stop exception. With respect to the exigent circumstances exception, the district court noted that one of the four situations that may give rise to application of the exception is the risk-of-danger exigency to police or others. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals has applied the risk-of-danger exigency in cases where police officers were performing “community-caretaker” functions rather than traditional law-enforcement functions. The Court agreed with defendants that the totality of the circumstances and the inherent necessities of the situation demonstrated that a true immediacy existed and that Officer Moe was absolved from the need to apply for a warrant. In addition, the Court found that under the criteria of *Terry v Ohio*, the police officers had reasonable suspicion to stop and briefly detain Deffert.

*Deffert v Moe*, Case No. 1:13-cv-1351 (United States District Court, Western District of Michigan, Southern Division) June 1, 2015.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** This case should be monitored for appeal to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

This column highlights a recent judicial decision or Michigan Municipal League Legal Defense Fund case that impacts municipalities. The information in this column should not be considered a legal opinion or to constitute legal advice.

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TRAINING

This newly elected officials training consists of core topics that will help educate first-time elected officials, as well as seasoned officials, on the basic functions they will need to know in their roles as public leaders. Topics include: introduction to League services; an overview of basic local government; roles and responsibilities of elected officials; Open Meetings Act (OMA); Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); lobbying 101; and a panel discussion with seasoned elected officials.

League member communities, \$90  
Nonmember communities, \$145

November 7	Wayne
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**Q:** Our city policy is that councilmembers receive \$30 for each meeting they attend. Do I have to accept the pay?

**A:** Yes—it is an official policy. Compensation is typically set by ordinance (a variation of this would be an ordinance that describes the method for compensation, i.e. quarterly or by meeting, and sets the specific dollar amount by resolution). Sometimes council compensation is in a city's charter. Whatever method was used to set the compensation, it is a local law.

**Q:** We are hiring a new manager and are interested in what other cities around us pay their manager. Does the League keep any data on salaries of municipal employees?

**A:** Yes. The League has a database of salaries for 143 different job titles. The data comes from our members, then we compile it. We will be sending an email on December 1 regarding participating in the survey; access to this database is given to municipalities that participate by filling out the survey with their positions and salaries. The database is searchable by position, population, location, and also allows users to perform side-by-side comparisons of results from selected municipalities. The expected time the compiled data will be ready for viewing/searching is mid-January. The survey is intended to be used by management employees, their designees, or elected officials working on behalf of member communities for official business.

**Q:** Are we OK with saying a prayer before our council meetings? I have heard conflicting views on this.

**A:** In 2014, the U.S. Supreme Court deemed prayer at town board meetings to be constitutional. *The Town of Greece v Galloway* verdict held that the Town of Greece's practice of opening board meetings with prayer, even though the prayers included overtly Christian terms and references, did not violate the First Amendment. The facts showed that the town had made reasonable efforts to identify all religious congregations within its borders and had indicated that it would welcome prayer by any minister or layperson. The ruling also determined that prayer does not have to be sectarian and as long as the local government maintains a policy of nondiscrimination, there is no requirement to achieve a balance in the types of religious prayer offered.

**Q:** Will GASB 68 rules affect my community's credit rating?

**A:** Potentially, but unlikely. The new GASB 68 rules require a change to the way pension liability is expressed in a municipal audit report. From now on, the net pension liability (total pension liability—plan net position) will be included in the overall net position. Although this change won't change the size of the liability, it may make outstanding pension debt more visible. If the liability is large enough, it could affect credit rating and financial position. However, most communities do not have a large enough net pension liability to make an impact on credit rating. Implementation guides for the new rules can be found at [www.gasb.org](http://www.gasb.org).

*The League's Information Service provides member officials with answers to questions on a vast array of municipal topics. Send your municipal inquiries to [info@mml.org](mailto:info@mml.org), or call 1-800-653-2483.*



### LEAGUE A WINNER AT MSAE DIAMOND AWARDS BANQUET

At the Michigan Society of Association Executives' (MSAE) 2015 Awards dinner, the League won the highest honor possible—a Diamond Award—for our PlacePlans work in the creative collaboration category, and a Silver Award for *The Review* magazine.

Front Row, left to right: Jessica Reed, program coordinator; Deborah Walton-Medley, director of financial operations; and Lisa Donovan, communications coordinator.

Back Row, left to right: Terri Murphy, vendor relations specialist; Matt Bach, director of media relations; Luke Forrest, program manager; and Kim Cekola, editor, *The Review*.





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## Metro Connection: A Shared Services Fire Initiative

“Metro Connection” is Greater Lansing’s collaborative answer to resource-constrained fire services. This innovative, multijurisdictional effort began with the fall 2010 announcement of the Michigan Municipal League’s Shared Services Initiative to provide support for communities seeking to collaborate. In 2012, six communities worked with Plante Moran to explore short- and long-term ways to contain the future costs of fire services and increase the efficiency of service delivery in the Greater Lansing Region. Participating communities included: the cities of Lansing and East Lansing, along with the townships of Delhi, Delta, Lansing, and Meridian. In total, a metro area of over 250,000 residents anchored by the State Capitol and Michigan State University.

Developing an unprecedented level of trust and understanding between the jurisdictions has been essential to Metro Connection’s success. As noted by one manager, “we’ve come further in the past year-and-a-half than we did in the previous ten.” In the words of Lansing Regional Chamber CEO Tim Daman, “The difference is trust. Through the process of having conversations, meetings, and strategizing, participants in the process began to build relationships where there were none before. The relationships grew stronger, allowing partners to have some of the necessary challenging conversations leading to understanding and, eventually, change. Out of those tough conversations emerged a growing commitment to work together and knock down barriers.”

Over the past four years, Metro Connection has achieved efficiencies in the areas of staffing, training, purchasing, obtaining grants, and more. The work has only just begun. Going forward, there will be harder choices that must be made, but all participating communities are committed to implementing a sustainable regional approach to fire service delivery that can be paid for today, without burdening the future.



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