



## Michigan Report

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#### **NEW ECONOMY MAKES HISTORIC DISTRICTS QUICKER IN THE MAKING**

While it's critical to move quickly through the process of naming an area an historic district so that it can enjoy the benefits that much sooner, it may not be feasible to do so within the time constraints outlined in a bill approved by the House New Economy Committee on Thursday, said [Rep. Mark Meadows](#) (D-East Lansing).

The legislation, [HB 5952](#), would streamline the process of establishing a historic district in a local area by outlining timeframes that each player must work within.

For example, the local government board, such as the city council, must within 18 months submit its preliminary report to the state outlining how the proposed district meets historic guidelines and then must hold a public hearing on the report no later than 60 days from that date.

The local government board can't wait more than a year from the time of the final report to adopt or reject the proposed district.

Mr. Meadows said his experience tells him that the initial research process, for which locals are given 18 months in the bill, could take several years.

To address that concern, he asked if an extension option was possible.

[Rep. Joan Bauer](#) (D-Lansing), the bill's sponsor, said initially she only gave local governments one year, but in a compromise with the Michigan Municipal League, she extended the deadline by six months. "Eighteen months seems very reasonable," she said.

Other bills approved on Thursday by the committee would expand funding for downtown development and allow community development funding to go toward foreclosure prevention in low-income areas, proponents of the legislation said.

[HB 4657](#) would expand the State Housing and Community Development Authority Act, allowing eligible developers that want to rehabilitate downtown and downtown adjacent buildings to take advantage of funding in order to combat homelessness, foreclosure and other problems the areas experience. [HB 4658](#) would create an advisory committee to oversee the funding.