



michigan municipal league

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Design Plans for Transformative Projects Now Available Online

Four Community Project Plans Highlighted at Placemaking.mml.org

Conceptual plans and visual designs outlining four possible future developments in Allegan, Alpena, Dearborn, and Sault Ste. Marie are now available on the web at placemaking.mml.org.

The Michigan Municipal League has posted the four PlacePlans projects at <http://placemaking.mml.org/place-plans/>. The final presentations also can be downloaded for free. PlacePlans is a joint effort between the Michigan Municipal League and Michigan State University supported by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and Governor Snyder's MIplace Partnership. It is hoped that the implementation of these conceptual plans will help the community leverage place as an economic driver, creating vibrant, attractive and successful public spaces that add value to the community and local economy.

“These PlacePlans represent months of work by League, MSU and MSHDA staff, but more importantly they attempt to reflect the needs and wants of the local community members,” said League CEO and Executive Director Dan Gilmartin. “Each PlacePlans project went through an extensive community input and information gathering phase. Then MSU, League and MSHDA staff members took the vision of each community and turned them into visual illustrations and explanations of what can become reality.”

The PlacePlans work began in the fall of 2012 when the Michigan Municipal League put out a call for interest. With advisory input from MSHDA staff, projects were selected based on a number of criteria including potential for implementation and potential to support private sector investment in housing redevelopment. Four cities were chosen to serve as the pilot PlacePlans communities: Allegan, Alpena, Dearborn, and Sault Sainte Marie.

The PlacePlans work was well received by the participating communities leading to a second phase and a new call for community applications will soon be announced, Gilmartin said.

Here is a brief description of the four PlacePlans projects:

Allegan: The “Downtown Allegan Riverfront Development” plan includes a pedestrian-friendly area for year-round events, including a splash pad in the summer and ice-skating in the winter. The plan is designed to create better access to the water, wider walkways for pedestrians, and an indoor/outdoor shopping experience along the existing buildings.

Alpena: The vision for “Downtown Alpena Plaza Palooza” is to create a multi-use public plaza in the middle of downtown. The plaza would serve as a focal point in the community to accommodate events and public gatherings. This would strengthen the downtown district by having a positive impact on retail activity, creating an outdoor eating space and public art space, and hosting an array of attractions honoring the community’s heritage.

Dearborn: The community is currently building an intermodal rail station along the Detroit-Chicago corridor, and the multi-faceted Dearborn PlacePlans vision would enhance that work. The “Dearborn Transit-Oriented Development” plan focuses on the eastern edge of downtown Dearborn along Michigan Avenue. The site would serve as a focal point in the community, supporting local and regional commuter needs, and also connect attractions and locations of interest within Dearborn.

Sault Ste. Marie: The “Sault Ste. Marie Moloney’s Alley Project” would turn the under-utilized Moloney’s Alley into a community asset. The site would serve as a bridge between the Soo Locks tourist attractions and the commercial downtown area, and farmers market. The plan calls for creating a year-round public gathering space that would generate interest and activity in the downtown core, and strengthen the local economy. In the winter, the plaza would house a skating rink with warming fires and covered arcades, and in the summer it could be the site of a splash park surrounded by vendors and concerts.

Michigan Municipal League advocates on behalf of its member communities in Lansing, Washington, D.C., and the courts; provides educational opportunities for elected and appointed municipal officials; and assists municipal leaders in administering services to their communities through League programs and services.

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