Perceptions of Planning: Insights from Local Leaders

Findings from the Fall 2017 Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS)

September 21, 2018
Michigan Association of Planning 2018 Annual Conference
Presentation Outline

• **Brief overview** of the Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS) and the Fall 2017 wave on Planning and Zoning

• **Findings** from the Fall 2017 wave:
  - ✓ Who has a Master Plan and how do they use it?
  - ✓ Zoning and CIPs
  - ✓ Planning staff
  - ✓ Who does not have a Master Plan and why?
  - ✓ Overall satisfaction with planning and zoning in Michigan
Background: The MPPS

• **A census survey** – all 1,856 Michigan counties, cities, villages, and townships

• **Respondents** – chief elected and appointed officials

• **Administered** – online and via hardcopy

• **Topics** – wide range, such as fiscal health, budget priorities, roads, local poverty, public safety, economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, service privatization, employee policies, labor unions, housing, environmental sustainability, Great Lakes, citizen engagement, much more.
MPPS is not a typical opinion poll

- 70+% regular response rates
- **Transparency**
  -- Questionnaires online
  -- Pre-run data tables online
  -- Sharing of (anonymized) datasets with other researchers
- **Expert advisors on questionnaire content**
- **Research partnership with Michigan local government associations**
  -- MAC, MML, & MTA
- **Borrowing from other proven sources such as NLC and ICMA**
What does the MPPS aim to do?

- **Improve understanding** of local government to help improve policymaking and quality of life
- **Inform local leaders** about peers across the state: challenges and responses
- **Inform state practitioners** and other stakeholders with data about local level challenges and responses not available from any other source
- **Build a longitudinal data archive** to allow tracking of fundamental changes (such as the economic transition, aging population, etc.)
- Foster **academic research and teaching** on state and local government issues
• **Brief overview** of the Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS) and the Fall 2017 wave on Planning and Zoning

• **Findings** from the Fall 2017 wave:
  - Who has a Master Plan and how do they use it?
  - Zoning and CIPs
  - Planning staff
  - Who does not have a Master Plan and why?
  - Overall satisfaction with planning and zoning in Michigan
Most MI jurisdictions have their own land use master plan

Does your jurisdiction currently have a Master Plan that addresses land use? (among cities, villages, and townships)

- 70% Has its own Master Plan
- 12% Joint Master Plan with other jurisdictions
- 8% Relies on the county’s Master Plan
- 6% No Master Plan
- 5% Don't know

CLOSUP Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy
GERALD R. FORD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY
Most MI jurisdictions have their own land use master plan

Does your jurisdiction currently have a Master Plan that addresses land use? (among cities, villages, and townships)

- Has its own Master Plan: 70%
- Joint Master Plan with other jurisdictions: 12%
- Relies on the county’s Master Plan: 8%
- No Master Plan: 5%
- Don’t know: 6%

Bar chart showing:
- Cities: 91% Has its own Master Plan, 4% Joint Master Plan, 4% No Master Plan, 4% Don’t know
- Villages: 64% Has its own Master Plan, 7% Joint Master Plan, 15% No Master Plan, 10% Don’t know
- Townships: 67% Has its own Master Plan, 4% Joint Master Plan, 13% No Master Plan, 6% Don’t know
Most MI jurisdictions have their own land use master plan

Does your jurisdiction currently have a Master Plan that addresses land use? (among cities, villages, and townships)
Most MI jurisdictions have their own land use master plan

Does your jurisdiction currently have a Master Plan that addresses land use? (among cities, villages, and townships)
Most MI jurisdictions have their own land use master plan

Does your jurisdiction currently have a Master Plan that addresses land use? (among counties)

- 37% Has its own plan and county-zoned townships
- 33% Has its own plan but no county-zoned townships
- 26% No Master Plan
- 4% Don't know
Most MI jurisdictions have their own land use master plan

Does your jurisdiction **currently have a Master Plan** that addresses land use? (among counties)

- Has its own plan and county-zoned townships: 37%
- Has its own plan but no county-zoned townships: 26%
- No Master Plan: 33%
- Don't know: 4%

![Bar chart showing distribution by population]

- Population 5,001-10,000: 32% with plan, 35% with plan but no county-zoned townships, 32% no plan, 11% don't know.
- Population 10,001-30,000: 52% with plan, 37% with plan but no county-zoned townships, 32% no plan, 7% don't know.
- Population >30,000: 31% with plan, 31% with plan but no county-zoned townships, 31% no plan, 7% don't know.
28% of MPs have been updated within past year

Master Plans must be reviewed every five years, and updates to the Plan are required when the review deems it necessary. To the best of your knowledge, approximately when was the last time the Master Plan for your jurisdiction was updated?

(among those that have their own or other master plan)
Whether or not the Master Plan for your jurisdiction has been updated recently, which of the following problems, if any, has your jurisdiction experienced — or would you expect it to experience — when updating its Master Plan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No problems experienced or expected with updating the Master Plan</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient staff time</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient expertise among staff or planning commissioners</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of funds</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict within the community</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict among members of jurisdiction’s government</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(among those that have their own or other master plan)
Whether or not the Master Plan for your jurisdiction has been updated recently, which of the following problems, if any, has your jurisdiction experienced — or would you expect it to experience — when updating its Master Plan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No problems experienced or expected with updating the Master Plan</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among counties</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among cities</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among villages</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among townships</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those who have own Master Plan</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those who have joint plan</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those who are county-zoned</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(among those that have their own or other master plan)

15
Whether or not the Master Plan for your jurisdiction has been updated recently, which of the following problems, if any, has your jurisdiction experienced — or would you expect it to experience — when updating its Master Plan?

- Insufficient staff time: 31% among cities, 24% among villages
- Lack of funds: 29% among cities, 24% among villages
- Insufficient expertise among staff or planning commissioners: 15% among cities, 21% among villages
- Conflict within the community: 4% among cities, 5% among villages
- Conflict among members of jurisdiction’s government (Planning Commission, Board/Council, etc.): 8% among cities, 7% among villages

(among those that have their own or other master plan)
Many officials say their Master Plan has a “champion”

Does your jurisdiction have particular staff members or elected officials who regularly “champion” or advocate for implementing the current Master Plan or updating the Master Plan?

Here are the percentages among those that have their own or other master plan:

- Total:
  - Has official or staff who advocates for implementing the Master Plan: 55%
  - Has official or staff who advocates for updating the Master Plan: 59%

- Among those who have own Master Plan:
  - Has official or staff who advocates for implementing the Master Plan: 60%
  - Has official or staff who advocates for updating the Master Plan: 63%

- Among those who have joint plan:
  - Has official or staff who advocates for implementing the Master Plan: 58%
  - Has official or staff who advocates for updating the Master Plan: 62%

- Among those who are county-zoned:
  - Has official or staff who advocates for implementing the Master Plan: 9%
  - Has official or staff who advocates for updating the Master Plan: 15%
For some local governments, the Master Plan aims to **preserve the current character of the community** into the future. In other jurisdictions, the Master Plan **envisions a future significantly different than the status quo**. Thinking about the Master Plan for your jurisdiction, would you say it aims to...

(among those that have their own or other master plan)

- **26%** Significantly preserve the current character of the jurisdiction
- **63%** Mostly preserve the current character of the jurisdiction (but still promote some change)
- **6%** Mostly transform the jurisdiction (but preserve some of the current character)
- **4%** Significantly transform the jurisdiction
- **1%** Don't know
For some local governments, the Master Plan aims to **preserve the current character of the community** into the future. In other jurisdictions, the Master Plan **envisions a future significantly different than the status quo**. Thinking about the Master Plan for your jurisdiction, would you say it aims to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Significantly preserve the current character of the jurisdiction</th>
<th>Mostly preserve</th>
<th>Mostly transform</th>
<th>Significantly transform the jurisdiction</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1,500</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,501-5,000</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,001-10,000</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,001-30,000</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;30,000</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*among those that have their own or other master plan*)
Now we’re interested in the **potential benefits of land use planning**. To what extent do you agree or disagree that having a Master Plan...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helps the jurisdiction to make wise decisions</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protects or enhances the value of individuals’ property investments</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aids the jurisdiction’s economic growth</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps build community enthusiasm or a sense of place</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides the jurisdiction legal protection against zoning or development lawsuits</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides officials with political protection against complaints about zoning decisions</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Presentation Outline

• **Brief overview** of the Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS) and the Fall 2017 wave on Planning and Zoning

• **Findings** from the Fall 2017 wave:
  ✓ Who has a Master Plan and how do they use it?
  ✓ **Zoning and CIPs**
  ✓ Planning staff
  ✓ Who does not have a Master Plan and why?
  ✓ Overall satisfaction with planning and zoning in Michigan
Thinking about the way your jurisdiction usually uses its Master Plan in rezoning decisions, which of the following best describes your approach?

- **38%** Try to strictly adhere to the Master Plan when rezoning properties
- **50%** Generally follow the spirit but not necessarily the letter of the Master Plan when rezoning properties
- **8%** Rarely consider the Master Plan when rezoning properties
- **4%** Don't know

(among those that zone themselves)
Thinking about the way your jurisdiction usually uses its Master Plan in rezoning decisions, which of the following best describes your approach?

- **Try to strictly adhere to MP in rezoning**
  - Counties: 37%
  - Cities: 35%
  - Villages: 31%
  - Townships: 40%

- **Generally follow the spirit but not necessarily the letter**
  - Counties: 39%
  - Cities: 54%
  - Villages: 50%
  - Townships: 49%

- **Rarely consider the MP in rezoning**
  - Counties: 4%
  - Cities: 7%
  - Villages: 12%
  - Townships: 2%

- **Don’t know**
  - Counties: 4%
  - Cities: 4%
  - Villages: 7%
  - Townships: 8%

(among those that zone themselves)
In zoning, most localities follow spirit but not letter of MP

Thinking about the way your jurisdiction usually uses its Master Plan in rezoning decisions, which of the following best describes your approach?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Try to strictly adhere</th>
<th>Generally follow the spirit but not necessarily letter</th>
<th>Rarely consider the MP</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Peninsula</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Lower Peninsula</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Central</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Central</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(among those that zone themselves)
Public hearings on zoning issues vary by pop. size

How often would you say… public hearings for zoning actions (rezoning requests, site plan review, special use permits, etc.) …occur?

(among those that conduct their own zoning or are zoned either by the county or a joint authority )
Controversies about zoning decisions less common

How often would you say… controversies related to zoning actions… occur?

(among those that conduct their own zoning or are zoned either by the county or a joint authority)
CIPs are relatively common

Does your jurisdiction currently have a formal Capital Improvements Plan/Program (CIP) for infrastructure, facilities, equipment, etc.? (among those that have their own or other master plan)

- Yes, currently have a CIP: 41%
- No, but had one in the recent past (within the last 10 years): 15%
- No, and have not had a CIP in the last 10 years (if ever): 38%
- Don't know: 7%
CIPs are relatively common

Does your jurisdiction currently have a formal Capital Improvements Plan/Program (CIP) for infrastructure, facilities, equipment, etc.? (among those that have their own or other master plan)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Yes, currently have a CIP</th>
<th>No, but had one in the recent past</th>
<th>No, and have not had a CIP in the last 10 years (if ever)</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population &lt;1,500</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 1,501-5,000</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population 5,001-10,000</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 10,001-30,000</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population &gt;30,000</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(CLOSUP, Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy)
To what extent does your jurisdiction’s Capital Improvements Plan prioritize projects based on whether they support the Master Plan for your jurisdiction?

- A great deal: 35%
- Somewhat: 53%
- Not at all: 7%
- Don’t know: 5%

(among those that currently have a CIP)
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  - Zoning and CIPs
  - Planning staff
  - Who does not have a Master Plan and why?
  - Overall satisfaction with planning and zoning in Michigan
Half of those with their own MPs have no planning staff

Are there any full- or part-time planning employees on your jurisdiction’s own staff?

- 50% No planning staff
- 30% Only part-time planning staff (less than 1 FTE)
- 10% One full-time planning staff member (1 FTE)
- 8% More than one full-time planning staff (more than 1 FTE)
- 1% Don’t know

(among those that have a master plan that covers only their own jurisdiction)
Half of those with their own MPs have no planning staff

Are there any full- or part-time planning employees on your jurisdiction’s own staff?

(among those that have a master plan that covers only their own jurisdiction)
Nearly 1/3rd of those with own MPs use no consultants

If your jurisdiction makes **any use of external planners** (i.e., contracted consultants and/or personnel from other jurisdictions), what is the nature of the relationship?

- Don’t use any external consultants for planning or zoning: 31%
- Use external planners for intermittent planning or zoning projects: 42%
- Keep external planners on long-term retainer: 20%
- Use external planners to review complex site plans: 18%
- Don’t know: 5%

(among those that have a master plan that covers only their own jurisdiction)
1/6th with own MPs have neither internal nor external planners

Are there any **full- or part-time planning employees** on your jurisdiction’s own staff?

+ Does your jurisdiction make any use of external planners (i.e., contracted consultants and/or personnel from other jurisdictions)?

| Population            | %
|-----------------------|---
| Total                 | 16%
| Population <1,500    | 27%
| Population 1,501-5,000| 17%
| Population 5,001-10,000| 5%
| Population 10,001-30,000| 4%
| Population >30,000   | 1%

(among those that have a master plan that covers only their own jurisdiction)
Slightly more have increased than decreased their staff capacity

How does your jurisdiction’s **current staff capacity** for planning and zoning (i.e., internal staff and/or external consultants) **compare to 10 years ago** (before the Great Recession)?

![Pie chart showing percentage of jurisdictions with increased, decreased, or unchanged staff capacity.]

(among those that have a master plan that covers only their own jurisdiction)
Slightly more have increased than decreased their staff capacity

How does your jurisdiction’s **current staff capacity** for planning and zoning (i.e., internal staff and/or external consultants) **compare to 10 years ago** (before the Great Recession)?

(among those that have a master plan that covers only their own jurisdiction)
However, 1/3rd currently have too little planning capacity

Thinking overall about your jurisdiction’s planning and zoning needs today, does your jurisdiction have too much, too little, or about the right amount of staff capacity (i.e., internal staff and/or external consultants)?

(among those that have a master plan that covers only their own jurisdiction)
However, 1/3rd currently have too little planning capacity

Thinking overall about your jurisdiction’s planning and zoning needs today, does your jurisdiction have too much, too little, or about the right amount of staff capacity (i.e., internal staff and/or external consultants)?

(among those that have a master plan that covers only their own jurisdiction)
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  ✓ Planning staff
  ✓ **Who does not have a Master Plan and why?**
  ✓ Overall satisfaction with planning and zoning in Michigan
Most MI jurisdictions have their own land use master plan

Does your jurisdiction **currently have a Master Plan** that addresses land use? (among cities, villages, and townships)
In your opinion, has your jurisdiction **experienced any significant problems** because it does not have a Master Plan?

+ Looking ahead, **how likely** is it that your jurisdiction **will adopt a Master Plan** that addresses land use in the next few years?

(Few without MPs see any problems, most unlikely to adopt)

(among those that do **not** have their own or other master plan)
Lack of board volunteers common in places without an MP

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your jurisdiction’s decision not to develop a Master Plan that addresses land use?

- Our jurisdiction lacks sufficient volunteers for a local planning commission.
- Our jurisdiction lacks the necessary expertise to develop a Master Plan.
- Developing a Master Plan is too expensive for our jurisdiction.
- Our governing board feels there is no need for land use planning in our jurisdiction.
- Our governing board believes it is not the government’s place to tell landowners how to use their property.
- Developing a Master Plan is too time-consuming for our jurisdiction.
- Our governing board feels it should be up to State or County to set land use policies.

(among cities, townships, and villages that do not have their own or other master plan)
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  ✓ Zoning and CIPs
  ✓ Planning staff
  ✓ Who does not have a Master Plan and why?
  ✓ **Overall satisfaction with planning and zoning in Michigan**
Local officials generally satisfied with their planning

Overall, how satisfied would you say you are (in your role as a local official) with your jurisdiction’s current approach to planning and zoning?
Overall, how satisfied would you say you are (in your role as a local official) with your jurisdiction’s current approach to planning and zoning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat satisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Among those who have own Master Plan</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those who have joint plan</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those who are county-zoned</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Among those with no Master Plan</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Satisfaction highest among those with their own MP
More from the MPPS

- Medical marijuana
- Housing issues
- Citizen engagement
- Infrastructure
  - Drinking water
  - Roads
  - Spending plans
- Placemaking
The Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS)

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