Local Government Officials’ Assessments of Placemaking as an Economic Development Strategy: A View from Michigan

Presented at the Midwest Public Affairs Conference
March 29, 2014
Presentation Outline

• Brief introduction to the Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS)

• Findings on local government placemaking from the Spring 2013 Wave of the MPPS
  ✓ who is engaged in placemaking
  ✓ what are current types of placemaking efforts
  ✓ beliefs about placemaking’s effectiveness
The Michigan Public Policy Survey

• **Census survey** – all counties, cities, villages, and townships

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

• **Administered** – online and via hardcopy

• **Timing** – Spring and Fall each year

• **Topics** – wide range, such as fiscal health, budget priorities, economic development, intergovernmental cooperation, employee policies, labor unions, state relations, environmental sustainability, citizen engagement, much more.
MPPS is not a typical opinion poll

• 70+% response rates

• Transparency
  -- Questionnaires online
  -- Pre-run data tables online
  -- Sharing of (anonymized) datasets with other researchers

• Expert advisors on questionnaire content

• Borrow from other proven sources such as NLC and ICMA

• Quality control such as double blind coding of open-end responses
Placemaking:

A community and economic development strategy that attempts to capitalize on existing local assets in order to create appealing and unique places where people want to live, work, and play.
Placemaking: Who does it?

% of Michigan jurisdictions that report engaging in placemaking

- Yes: 34%
- No: 60%
- Don't know: 6%

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Placemaking: Who does it?

% of Michigan jurisdictions that report engaging in placemaking

- **2009**
  - < 1500: 12%
  - 1500-5000: 21%
  - 5001-10000: 33%
  - 10001-30000: 40%
  - > 30000: 66%

- **2013**
  - < 1500: 20%
  - 1500-5000: 19%
  - 5001-10000: 43%
  - 10001-30000: 40%
  - > 30000: 68%

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Placemaking: Who does it?

% of Michigan jurisdictions that report engaging in placemaking

- **Townships**: 13% in 2009, 22% in 2013
- **Villages**: 25% in 2009, 42% in 2013
- **Counties**: 31% in 2013, 51% in 2013
- **Cities**: 48% in 2013, 77% in 2013
Placemaking: Who does it?

% of Michigan jurisdictions that report engaging in placemaking

- **Significantly Less Able To Meet Fiscal Needs**: 46%
- **Somewhat Less Able To Meet Fiscal Needs**: 37%
- **Neither**: 30%
- **Somewhat Better Able To Meet Fiscal Needs**: 39%
- **Significantly Better Able To Meet Fiscal Needs**: 30%
Placemaking: What are they doing?

% of Michigan jurisdictions that report pursuing specific practices

- Green/open spaces, trails, and bike paths: 73% among those pursuing placemaking, 38% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Bicycle friendly/walkability: 66% among those pursuing placemaking, 26% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Attractive city centers/ storefron/ public gathering spaces: 63% among those pursuing placemaking, 12% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Mixed-use developments: 58% among those pursuing placemaking, 15% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Local Food opportunities: 54% among those pursuing placemaking, 21% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Arts and cultural amenities/events: 47% among those pursuing placemaking, 11% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Historic preservation and adaptive re-use: 43% among those pursuing placemaking, 19% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Anchor businesses along corridors or in center districts: 35% among those pursuing placemaking, 5% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Assistance for entrepreneurs and/or small business: 33% among those pursuing placemaking, 9% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Public transit accessibility: 26% among those pursuing placemaking, 7% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Form-based codes: 23% among those pursuing placemaking, 4% among those not pursuing placemaking
- Environmentally-friendly construction: 21% among those pursuing placemaking, 6% among those not pursuing placemaking
Placemaking: What are they doing?

% of Michigan jurisdictions that report pursuing specific practices

Most frequently pursued, by jurisdiction type:

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<tr>
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<th>Cities</th>
<th>Counties</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Townships</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green/open spaces, trails, and bike paths</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bicycle friendly/walkability</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Food opportunities</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Attractive city centers/ storefronts/</td>
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<td>public gathering spaces</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed-use developments</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
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Beliefs about the effectiveness of placemaking as an economic development strategy
Placemaking: Who thinks it works?

% of local officials who believe placemaking can be effective as an economic development strategy in their jurisdictions

- Very effective: 14%
- Somewhat effective: 37%
- Neither effective nor ineffective: 24%
- Somewhat ineffective: 5%
- Very ineffective: 5%
- Don't know: 16%
Placemaking: Who thinks it works?

% of local officials who believe placemaking can be effective as an economic development strategy in their jurisdictions

![Bar chart showing the percentage of local officials who believe placemaking can be effective as an economic development strategy in their jurisdictions, by population size and year (2009 and 2013).](chart.png)
Placemaking: Who thinks it works?

% of local officials who believe placemaking can be effective as an economic development strategy in their jurisdictions

- Townships: 32% (2009), 40% (2013)
- Villages: 44% (2009), 63% (2013)
- Counties: 51% (2009), 67% (2013)
- Cities: 62% (2009), 80% (2013)
Placemaking: Who thinks it works?

% of local officials who believe placemaking can be effective as an economic development strategy in their jurisdictions

Among those pursing placemaking:
- Very effective: 52%
- Somewhat effective: 32%
- Neither effective nor ineffective: 1%
- Somewhat ineffective: 2%
- Very ineffective: 1%
- Don’t know: 2%

Among those not pursuing placemaking:
- Very effective: 5%
- Somewhat effective: 30%
- Neither effective nor ineffective: 6%
- Somewhat ineffective: 6%
- Very ineffective: 32%
- Don’t know: 30%
Placemaking: Who thinks it works?

% of local officials who believe specific practices can be effective as economic development strategies in their jurisdictions.

- Green/open spaces, trails, and bike paths: 54% (88% among those pursuing placemaking), 15% (42% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Bicycle friendly/walkability: 46% (86% among those pursuing placemaking), 30% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Attractive city centers/ storefronts/ public gathering spaces: 36% (81% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Local Food opportunities: 46% (80% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Arts and cultural amenities/events: 31% (75% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Anchor businesses along corridors or in center districts: 30% (75% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Mixed-use developments: 30% (74% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Assistance for entrepreneurs and/or small business: 41% (74% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Historic preservation and adaptive re-use: 30% (64% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Public transit accessibility: 27% (57% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Environmentally-friendly construction: 27% (51% among those pursuing placemaking), 27% (51% among those not pursuing placemaking)
- Form-based codes: 15% (42% among those pursuing placemaking), 15% (42% among those not pursuing placemaking)
Michigan Local Government Placemaking

key findings

• 34% report using placemaking in 2013, up from 21% in 2009.
  >> 68% of the state’s largest jurisdictions report using placemaking in 2013, but only 21% of the smallest jurisdictions.

• The most common types of placemaking efforts include creation of open spaces, trails, and bike paths, as well bicycle and pedestrian-friendliness, attractive city centers, and mixed-use development.

• Overall, 51% say placemaking can be effective in their jurisdictions in 2013, compared to 39% confidence in placemaking’s effectiveness in 2009.
  >> Even in jurisdictions not currently engaged in placemaking, 35% say it would be effective for their jurisdictions, and only 12% believe it would be ineffective.
The Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS)

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