

--Advertisement--



# The Cutting Edge

Wednesday December 15 2010

reaching 1.4 million monthly

--Advertisement--



<a href="#">Page One</a>	<a href="#">Features</a>	<a href="#">News</a>	<a href="#">Investigation</a>	<a href="#">Slices</a>	<a href="#">Energy</a>	<a href="#">Security</a>	<a href="#">Analysis</a>	<a href="#">Arts</a>
<a href="#">Travel</a>	<a href="#">Resources</a>	<a href="#">Opinion</a>	<a href="#">Letters</a>	<a href="#">Society</a>	<a href="#">Sci-Tech</a>	<a href="#">Action Line</a>	<a href="#">Editorial</a>	<a href="#">Support Us</a>

Continuing Economic Crisis

[Back to News](#)

## Michigan's Local Governments Ponder Regionalization to Address Cost-Cutting

Jared Wadley

December 6th 2010



Government leaders in struggling communities across the state of Michigan tend to be open to combining services with other towns, a new University of Michigan study finds.

However, government officials who favor expanding regional planning are less supportive of working through existing regional institutions—they want to create new entities to pursue cooperation, said Elisabeth Gerber, a professor at the university's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy.

"Regional planning offers local governments an opportunity to combine resources and make land use and development decisions that take into

account the impacts on the region as a whole," said Gerber, who co-authored the study with Carolyn Loh, a graduate of Michigan's urban planning doctoral program and now an assistant professor in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at Wayne State University. "With shrinking city budgets, local leaders are eager to find more efficient and effective ways of providing vital government services."

The researchers used data from the Michigan Public Policy Survey, which involved responses from government officials in spring 2009. MPPS is conducted by the Center for Local, State and Urban Policy at the Ford School and is partially funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

Leaders must weigh the political ramifications and loss of economic autonomy when factoring regional partnerships, which allow governments to combine resources and to make decisions about land use and other projects affecting a specific area. Despite growing interest in regional planning, some officials question whether regionalism is a desirable goal, Gerber said.

Officials were asked about their jurisdiction's involvement in regional planning efforts and if their role is too much, just right or not enough. Cities and villages report more support for regional planning compared to townships. Jurisdictions with higher median income are less supportive, while those with more part-time employees are more supportive.

Regarding the level of interest, officials in jurisdictions that are already heavily involved in regional planning are less likely to report their involvement as "not enough" and are more likely to say "just right" or "too much."

"It appears that once local governments become active participants in regional planning efforts, they are less likely to see the need for still more such regional planning," she said. "Local units that are not currently involved are the ones who welcome more regional planning."

The researchers noted that officials in communities that are experiencing fiscal stress tend to be more supportive of participation in regional land use planning.

"As many local governments find themselves under strain due to eroding tax-base, opportunities may arise for co-operation that would not have been possible in better economic times," Gerber said.

Officials in communities that are already participating in regional planning efforts tend to be satisfied both with their involvement and with the institutions leading the process. In other words, there may be a 'if you try it, you like it' effect going on, she said.

These results suggest that, if local government officials are enticed into regional planning efforts by economic circumstances, those regional relationships and structures may endure after the crisis has passed, changing institutional norms for the long term.

*Jared Wadley writes for the University of Michigan.*

[Back to News](#)

Search Article...

### [Top 2010 Online Grants](#)

You May Qualify For a Grant to Go Back To College!  
[www.ClassesUSA.com](http://www.ClassesUSA.com)

### [Eligible for Grants?](#)

"You may be eligible for Grants, Scholarships, and Student Loans."  
[EducationConnection.com/Grants](http://EducationConnection.com/Grants)

Ads by Google

[Subscribe to News](#)
[RSS Feed](#)
[Archives](#)

### Recent Articles

[Former Clinton Aide Hired by Honduran Government](#)

[Beyond the Freeze Deal: A New Agenda for U.S. Efforts on the Peace Process](#)

[Sweden Reels Following Nearly Disastrous Terror Bombing in Stockholm](#)

[Wall Street Quietly Creates a New Way to Profit from Homeowner Distress](#)

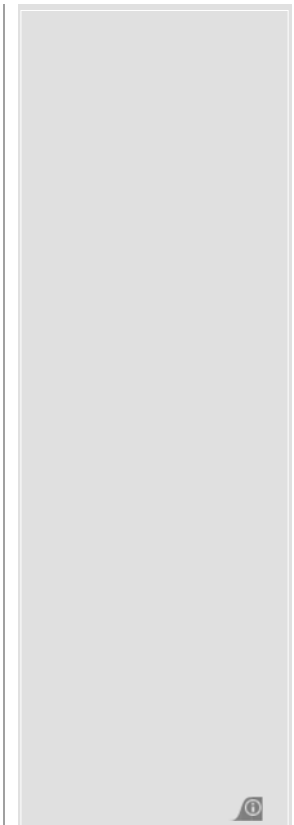
[The Tobacco Lobby and the Case of Corporate Genocide](#)

### Polls

#### Do You Think Barack Obama's Economic Policies Will Succeed?

- Yes  
 No  
 Unsure

[Vote](#)[Results](#)



Ads by Google



**[Don't Consolidate Debt](#)**

Reduce Debt & Save More. Apply for Credit Debt Relief

[FreedomFinancialNetwork.com](http://FreedomFinancialNetwork.com)

**[Masters in Public Policy](#)**

Earn a Master's Degree in Public Policy Online at NEC. Free Brochure

[PublicPolicy.NEC.edu](http://PublicPolicy.NEC.edu)

**[CFO Research](#)**

Get the Inside Edge on Expense Management from American Express®.

[corp.americanexpress.com/m](http://corp.americanexpress.com/m)

**[Public service careers](#)**

Give 2 years to earn your MPA. Careers in govt, nonprofits, NGOs.

[www.tamu.edu](http://www.tamu.edu)

**[Free Stimulus Grant Guide](#)**

Want Uncle Sam Pay For College? Get Your Federal Grants & School Guide!

[Edu.SearchByDegree.com/Gra](http://Edu.SearchByDegree.com/Gra)

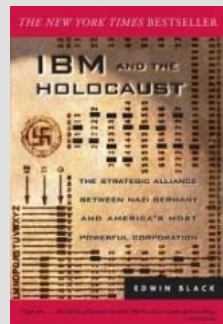
--Advertisement--





# WORLD JEWISH DAILY™

Breaking Jewish News Updated Throughout the Day



**STEPPING STONES**  
*Healing Homelessness, Step by Step*

**JN**online  
Detroit  
Jewish  
News





Copyright © 2007-2010 The Cutting Edge News [About Us](#)