

Rules of the Game are Changing for Michigan

CLOSUP to Survey Local Government Leaders

For much of the 20th century, Michigan was an economic powerhouse fueled by a growing industrial economy. Times, of course, have changed.

Michigan's near decade-long economic decline, worsened recently by the national recession, has hit communities throughout the state with severe problems. And now, due to falling tax revenue and state cuts to general revenue sharing, Michigan's rising unemployment and social service needs are coupled with declining state and local government fiscal capacity.

As the demand for public services has increased, the ability to deliver them has fallen.

Complicating things further, the state is undergoing a large-scale economic transformation. Michigan's former industrial economy is giving way to what many hope will be a 21st century knowledge economy—so what worked in the past will not work in the future.

Whatever Michigan's future economy looks like, it is clear that the rules of the game are rapidly changing. New strategies for economic and workforce development are required to return prosperity to the state.


The Ford School's Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP) has launched an innovative program of survey research to help Michigan communities deal with these critical issues.

The Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS) is unique: it is the only ongoing survey research program in the country that targets every unit of general purpose local government across an entire state.

The intended respondents are the chief elected and appointed officials in every county, city, township, and village in Michigan. Twice per year, the surveys will gather factual data on local government operations, as well as opinion data on today's most pressing policy issues.

While the 2009 surveys will focus on economic and workforce development, the ultimate goal of the MPPS is to foster improved quality of life in Michigan communities through better policymaking.

CLOSUP planned and implemented the MPPS in partnership with the Michigan Association of Counties, Michigan Municipal League, and Michigan Townships Association. The launch of the MPPS and implementation of the first two survey waves will be funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

 [Learn more: www.closup.umich.edu](http://www.closup.umich.edu)

These Surveys Will:

- ▶ Provide local public officials with a better understanding of the views and priorities of their peers across the state, as well as of the programs similar communities are developing to meet today's challenges.
- ▶ Give state-level policymakers a clear and comprehensive view of the priorities and challenges of communities across Michigan, highlighting commonalities and differences across regions and community types.
- ▶ Identify best practices for fiscal management and for economic and workforce development, given the economic transformation underway.
- ▶ Make possible analyses of convergence and divergence in the attitudes and priorities of Michigan's local political leaders, citizens, and business leaders on issues of fiscal policy, service provision, and economic development in their communities.
- ▶ Enhance opportunities for intergovernmental/regional cooperation and coordination.

