

Walkability and Placemaking in Utica

This report summarizes Utica's 2014 Riverwalk walkability survey and outlines recommendations to improve placemaking and connectivity in the city's downtown.



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Introduction

PlacePlans is a joint effort between Michigan State University and the Michigan Municipal League (the League), funded by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) through the MIPlace initiative, to help communities design and plan for transformative placemaking projects.

The PlacePlans process is customized to each project and community, but each involves an intensive community engagement strategy, including a public visioning session, several public meetings to provide specific input and feedback on plans and designs, and direct work with key community stakeholders along the way.

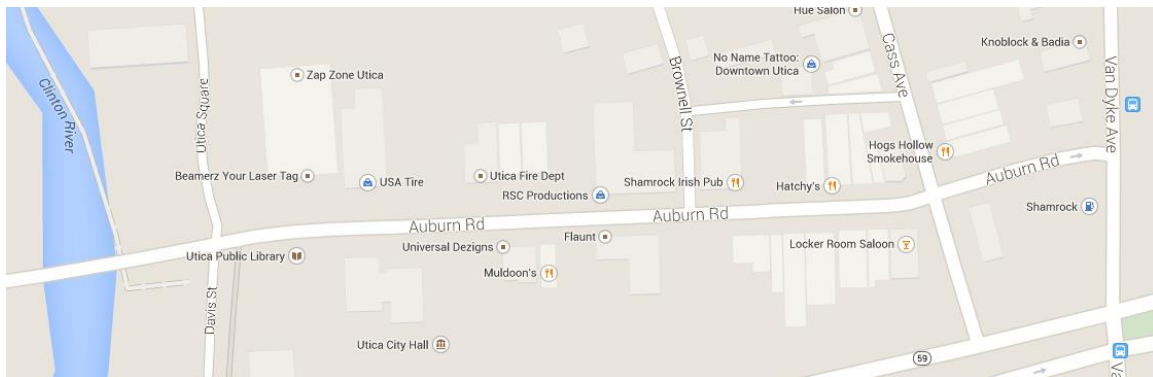
To expand on the PlacePlans major projects, the League determined to undertake additional civic engagement pilot projects in two communities in the Spring of 2014. Through this civic engagement pilot, the League provided a facilitator to the City of Utica to guide a short-term planning process and the implementation of a placemaking demonstration project.

In Utica, the mayor and stakeholders expressed a desire to find ways to enhance the city's overall walkability and to increase connectivity between the city's different assets—for instance, between the “river trail” access point on the Clinton River to the heart of the historic downtown. A first step in this process was proposed to be a survey, to be administered during the popular Riverwalk event, asking for people's feedback about what could make Utica more pedestrian-friendly.

Placemaking is all about people—about building public spaces and programming those spaces so that they are welcoming to pedestrians. The results of the Utica Walkability Survey show that the city already has a very safe feeling to pedestrians. Now it is time to build on that feeling of safety with programming and small improvements in aesthetics that help people navigate to Utica's diverse assets.

Summary & Analysis of the Utica Walkability Survey

A total of 59 surveys were returned. While not all were complete, all had a response to at least one question. The survey attempted to gauge responses to two primary points in Utica's downtown. A map on the survey—which corresponded to signs posted on poles on-site—labeled **Location A** and **Location B**. **Location A** is a main access point for the city, especially as city leaders hope to draw users of the river into the downtown, and is just east of the Clinton River on Auburn Road (at the intersection with Davis Street/Utica Square), and near the library and city hall. **Location B** is the heart of the historic downtown at the intersection of Auburn and Cass.



Location A

The overwhelming majority (86%) of respondents found the built environment at Location A to be inviting and comfortable or very inviting and comfortable (4 or 5) to pedestrians. Similarly, 88% of respondents said the built environment made them feel safe or very safe (4 or 5). Note that none of the respondents who gave comfort or safety ratings lower than 4 provided comments about why.

A number of people offered comments about what could increase either the feeling of comfort or safety. These suggestions—which were recommended by one person each—are below:

- More seating options;
- Better downtown lighting, including decorative lighting such as holiday string lights;
- Crosswalk lights;
- More consistent pedestrian traffic;
- More business locations; and
- Close Cass to traffic altogether.

We would note that the desire for more pedestrian traffic and more business locations are related. Both commenters would feel more comfortable if the building fabric was less interrupted at this end of town, which would increase the number of users.

The improvement suggested by the most respondents was more of a police presence (4). Two commenters simply offered their input that Utica is “fine” or “beautiful” as-is.

Additionally, one suggestion is not clear (“all updated with easy access”) and one took a different tack, which was to promote Utica through T-shirts advertising a Utica Pub Crawl and listing all bars on the back.

81% of participants said they feel safe as a pedestrian.

49 out of 50 respondents (98%) said that they did feel drawn down Auburn Road to explore Utica’s downtown, but added that some additional amenities or features could make them feel more inclined to explore. Half of respondents agreed that decorative lighting at the intersection of Auburn and Cass Avenue would create more of a draw, and one-third felt that a large banner or other signage either at Auburn and Cass Ave., or at location A, encouraging visitors to walk into downtown

could draw people more effectively. **Other ideas to draw people to downtown Utica were:**

- Decorations, such as lighting on buildings or flowers and plants
- Lively activities, such as street music or bands
- Water features for children, such as a park or splash pad

Additional suggestions:

- Full stores that cater to moms
- I like the park next to the library
- Music by the library

The respondents who rated Location A’s comfort and safety poorly all responded that they still felt inclined to explore downtown further, and agreed that signage and/or lighting would be effective.

Location B

84% of survey respondents said they feel the intersection of Auburn and Cass Avenue is inviting and comfortable or very comfortable, and 81% said they feel safe as a pedestrian. The most suggested improvement (10) was crosswalk signals for pedestrians.

Two respondents noted feeling uncomfortable because of the incomplete brownstone construction.

Overall Comments on Making Utica More Welcoming to Pedestrians

The final survey question asked people to give overall feedback about their experience in Utica as a pedestrian. Five people observed that Utica is a beautiful town and they enjoy it as-is.

Problems people noted:

- Uneven ground
- Garbage

- Vandalism of decorative plants
- Manage weeds near the brownstone construction site

Opportunities for improvement:

- Family friendly outdoor public activities, like concerts, car shows
 - Some smaller activities would be nice
- More public seating, like benches
- Drinking fountains
- Build condo type/style living places throughout the surrounding Utica City Area. Landscape to draw people in general.
- Bookstore
- Coffee shop

A few commenters noted desires for cyclists in particular:

- “Once you head west on Auburn Rd, past the library something needs to be done - sidewalks would be nice (we ride our bikes from Mount & W. Utica Rd.).”
- “Would like a bike path from Dodge Park to another park and Old Van Dyke.”
- A desire for two streetlights on bridge at each end. This commenter noted that the current position is “in the wrong spot for bike riders.”

Simple infrastructural improvements or decorations could go a long way in creating a more inviting and comfortable downtown.

In our analysis, some of the comments seemed directed more at the weekend’s events or the passport project than at downtown Utica in general. These are:

- More police on the streets during the event
- More media attention would do a lot to help the cause
- Next year, when you do this fair you should get more vendors. Not close off streets. Businesses suffered.
- If you want to be on the passport be open all day!
- Have smoking sections away from business doorways
- I am so happy to see that you are asking these questions

Overall, people think downtown Utica is inviting and safe, but that it could, as anything, be improved. Simple infrastructural improvements or decorations could go a long way in creating a more inviting and comfortable downtown.

The addition of some traffic or pedestrian signals at the intersection of Cass and Auburn was recommended by a large percentage of respondents (17%).

Reflections on Walkability Survey Process

The walkability survey is a simple, quick way to gather information from people about the built environment in a specific location. Questions should be direct, specific (about a particular location, for example), and relevant, and should reflect outcomes that are actually possible.

As a practical matter, users should be able to complete and turn in a survey at the same location where they filled it out. Incentives (such as entry in a raffle) seemed to be an effective tool to increase the number of responses.

The Utica Walkability Survey showed that safety is not a primary concern for Utica pedestrians. Therefore, the city can consider the next step—enhancement—in its placemaking work.

Placemaking is not just about design, but about activation of public space.

If the city wants to build on the walkability survey, a subsequent survey tool might ask questions with greater specificity based on the input provided to this one. An effective strategy may be doing walkability survey focus groups with different constituencies. For instance, cyclists who want to bike along the Clinton River, parents who want to walk with children in a stroller, seniors who may use assistive

walking devices. Take a stroll through town with different constituencies and see what they notice.

Ultimately, a survey is best at gathering people's impressions of *what is*—but is a less effective tool for imaging *what could be*. An additional step for Utica would be to explore exciting placemaking options and find a way to, perhaps through a demonstration event, engage the public in enjoying and shaping them.

Recommendations for Utica

Utica is ready to engage in additional placemaking. While wholesale infrastructure changes don't seem called for, the city can do a lot to help people use and enjoy the historic downtown more fully—including frequenting downtown businesses. The city may want to find a way to make placemaking a priority and to identify some leadership willing to take it on (while Mayor Noonan is clearly interested, it probably needs to be a burden shared more broadly). The city could establish a committee on the city council, or a volunteer stakeholder committee that will meet on (for instance) a monthly basis. This committee can consider a range of activities that fit under a wide goal: making Utica more attractive to businesses and residents through placemaking.

What's most important to remember is that placemaking is not just about design, but about activation of public space. What follows is a set of recommendations that such a body should consider under its purview. For instance, placemaking for Utica can involve improved way finding, aesthetics, signage, lighting, and, perhaps most importantly, programming and events.

Mindset Moving Forward: Find a Way to “Yes”

Placemaking should be a fun and creative process. Too often communities say “no” to ideas that on the surface seem complicated, expensive, or are outside of the norm. It’s important that residents, businesses, and civic leaders are open minded, creative, and make an effort to find a way to “yes.”

In many situations, great placemaking projects and activities are led by non-government entities and the city takes more of a facilitator’s role. For example, if a business wants to put out tables and chairs on the sidewalk to make their space more welcoming, the city should make the permit process transparent and low-cost (or even free!). Similarly, if a resident wants to organize a book club meeting in a public space, business owners should partner with the resident to figure out how to capitalize on the additional people nearby. Being flexible and empowering everyone to take ownership of public spaces is an effective way to strengthen community partnerships and improve the city.

Immediate and Short-Term Recommendations

1. Ensure continuous stakeholder engagement

Building a strong team of stakeholders to lead the placemaking project is a great way to implement effective placemaking. The committee should gather a diverse group of Utica leaders who are affected by any changes to the intersection, bring an interesting or creative perspective, and anyone who may object to change. Stakeholders may include: residents, business owners, nonprofits, artists, school leaders, students, seniors, disabled residents, city officials, DDA representatives, and others. These partners should develop guiding principles, gain consensus on the committee's responsibilities, establish a shared vision for the intersection, and determine a facilitator to lead the group throughout the process. The stakeholder group should challenge mindsets, ask hard questions, and seek additional research on placemaking.

Although building and maintaining a strong stakeholder group is sometimes challenging and time consuming, the benefits of the collaboration certainly pay off. Projects that have a large and involved stakeholder group typically have more ideas, better engagement, and smoother implementation.

The most important next-step will be to convene this group of stakeholders and determine how the project can move forward; identifying a chair/lead facilitator should be the first action item. The chair could be anyone in the community who has the time and capabilities to do the work but is also open-minded, confident running meetings, and a good leader. Potential facilitators are a councilperson, a member of the planning commission, an active resident, or business owner.

2. Make low-cost changes to improve connectivity

Creating a visual and physical connection between two of Utica’s strongest physical assets is important to improve walkability, increase business, and allow residents to create a stronger sense of community. Below are a few examples of simple, low-cost ways to improve connectivity:

- String lights or flags people can see from each endpoint
- Put up way-finders directing pedestrians to each area
 - o Have a local artist make artistic signs throughout the downtown
 - o Have children enter their drawings and sign designs in a competition. Residents can vote online or in person for way finding signs the city will fund.
- Use landscaping or potted plants to guide the way
- Draw hop-scotch during downtown events to draw people between the two spaces

Even simple, low-cost improvements can have a positive impact on the city's downtown. Promoting walkability is a great way to increase business and promote community!

3. Make day-to-day enhancements to the comfort and aesthetics of downtown public spaces

Creating more aesthetically pleasing outdoor spaces can promote walkability, enhance business, and create a stronger sense of place. Make incremental, small-scale changes – it's not all or nothing! Some examples of these types of improvements are below:

Moveable furniture

- Encourage nearby businesses to put out fun patio furniture outside their doors
- The city can accept donations for and purchase patio furniture to put in the street during events when the street is already closed (more on funding later!)
- Residents, business groups, or a nonprofit can sponsor and build and maintain a parklet, a small park taking up a parking space or two. Learn from Grand Rapid's parklet program [here](#)¹.

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Landscaping

- Offer incentives to nearby business owners to purchase and maintain plants outside their doors. The best way to find out a great incentive is to ask! Maybe it's a gift card to a landscaping store to purchase pots and plants, or maybe it's free advertising on the city's website.
- Get the community involved by having local nonprofits, homeowner associations, religious institutions, or youth groups purchase and maintain pieces of the landscape. Have the sponsor put out a small sign promoting their organization.

Lighting and décor

Making the "look and feel" of the downtown unique is a great way to draw people in. Easy ways to draw attention and improve connectivity include:

- Using lights, flags, or other decorations to direct paths
- Giving the river area a name and have a local artist make a welcoming sign
- Featuring local artists by rotating art throughout the downtown
- Painting a blank wall with blackboard paint and encouraging residents to use chalk to draw, promote events, share ideas, answer a question, and give feedback on changes

Keep kids in mind

Utica is a family-friendly community and kid-centered improvements can help enhance walkability of the entire downtown. For example:

- Make sure seating accommodates children by also putting out child-sized tables and chairs or furniture kids will find interesting. Kids love to play on stumps and benches!
- Find a handy resident to build a small house or fort for kids to play in near the water while parents can chat nearby.
- Put in a sand box so kids can play near the water

4. Use community events to test new ideas

The Utica Riverwalk event was a great way to collect feedback from residents on the walkability of the community. Capitalizing on community events is an effective way to get data, test ideas, and build excitement for projects and potential changes to the downtown.

The stakeholder group should use other Utica events to test additional ideas and gain more feedback before making any expensive, long-term changes. According to Utica's community

calendar, there are a few events taking place throughout the rest of the year – these events should be full of placemaking experiments! When thinking of ideas to test, consider what can benefit children, adults, and businesses.

Capitalizing on community events is an effective way to get data, test ideas, and build excitement for projects and potential changes to the downtown.

For example, at Utica's Cruisin' with the Oldie's Car Show, consider having a small business sponsor a remote control car race for kids. Adults might want a more comfortable place to sit so put out colorful furniture throughout the downtown and at the riverfront areas. Businesses will want to capitalize on foot traffic so invite them to sell items at a "merchant's row" near the water.

Whatever the experiment, be sure to track usage, record feedback, and ask for new ideas from attendees. This input is

what should guide longer-term decisions for changes to the intersection and improvements to the downtown area.

5. Keep the downtown activated through additional programming

Placemaking is less about a physical space and more about *people* inside the space. There are already many Utica-sponsored events throughout the year but encouraging additional programming and activities are great ways to keep people coming to the area! Finding a way to "yes" is particularly important here – the city doesn't need to lead all of the activities, but rather, they should facilitate the process and empower stakeholders to lead.

Build on what's in the area and encourage local leaders to host an activity:

- Will a restaurant sponsor an outdoor movie night near the water? The restaurant can offer deals and specials to go along with the movie's theme and sell snacks on-site during the event.
- Will a yoga studio offer weekly outdoor classes?
- Will a dance studio do swing-dance lessons or a performance at the waterfront space?

- Can a video game store host an outdoor tournament?
- Will a private day care center host a Saturday kids' craft activity or playgroup?
- Can a bar host a beer garden in the space?

There are endless opportunities for nearby places to host events at the intersection. Allow for creativity and be sure to find a way to "yes." Be sure to take advantage of each event by continuing resident engagement, feedback, and testing new ideas.

5. Constantly engage business owners

Ensuring local businesses are benefitting from and involved in each activity is an important way to boost the city's local economy. The city should ensure any requirements for businesses to use public spaces (i.e. putting out patio chairs or sidewalk signs and selling merchandise on the street) are transparent, easy to use, and affordable (or free!).

Small businesses have a large stake in the quality and success of the city's downtown. Business owners should be open-minded to ideas, be actively engaged in placemaking experiments, and do their part to improve the aesthetics and comfort. For example:

- Stores and restaurants in the area should make their storefront more welcoming by putting out chairs, tables, and benches open to the public.
- Potted plants, flowers, and fun décor like lights and flags can improve the aesthetics of the storefront and nearby space.
- Attractive sidewalk signs and creative way finders (like giving "clues" to direct pedestrians to the business: follow the chalk foot prints to the shoe repair store!) will not only draw attention to the store but offer fun things for pedestrians to look at.
- Host a contest for the best outdoor space: Business owners can improve their outdoor environment and residents can "adopt" part of the nearby area. Participants can have a week to prepare their site, and over a few weeks or a month, people can vote for their favorite spaces by dropping a marble in a jar outside the venue, making a hash mark, or putting a sticker on a nearby wall. Prizes like a gift card to a hardware or landscaping store can encourage winners to keep the space maintained. And don't worry about "cheating. Talk about the competition as a fun, community-building event. Residents should be encouraged to trust their neighbors and low-stakes competitions like this can be an easy way to build community.

Find a way to make it easy for business leaders to take ownership of public spaces.

The city should support these types of activities and find a way to make it easy for business leaders to take ownership of public spaces and encourage activity.

Medium to Long-Term Recommendations

Based off of what works of the immediate and short-term recommendations, continue momentum and make plans for the future. Don't be afraid of larger, more expensive projects

that improve walkability, retail, and aesthetics of downtown Utica. Below are a few options the city can explore.

1. Improve the streetscape to promote walkability

As sidewalks and roads need renovation, explore opportunities to create a street focused on the pedestrian, rather than the car. Projects could include the following:

- Add crosswalks to prioritize pedestrians: Use a different color or texture (brick pavers, for example) instead of traditional white lines to enhance aesthetics and signal caution to drivers.
- Make a textured/colored path to guide people between downtown and the riverfront. (Think about how Boston, MA's Freedom Trail guides tourists through America's early history on a discrete but notable path.)
- Build buffered bike lanes to narrow the road and increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety.
- Get creative with landscaping to shelter pedestrians from the road and create a more relaxing environment.

2. Focus on aesthetically pleasing developments

A [form-based zoning code](#)² can be used to improve the streetscape's comfort and aesthetics. For example, form-based code can determine locations of entrances, sizes of windows, and other design features that make buildings interesting to look at. Even without transitioning to form-based code, Utica's zoning ordinance can be amended to require or promote active uses of street level in certain districts.

Be sure to consider what people expect when they visit a downtown and build for that: Shops mixed with housing, offices, civic buildings, trees, and pedestrian activity. Buildings vary in height but have shallow or no setbacks from the street and buildings are oriented directly to pedestrians. Civic supported spaces, such as parks, plazas, and landscaping are prominent and should be present in Utica's downtown.

3. Promote Utica to downtown-appropriate businesses

A great downtown has great businesses that are focused on people and their activities. Promote Utica to companies where people can shop, stop for a drink, do an activity, or have a bite to eat. As mentioned, using pop-ups or other incubator spaces can be an effective way to get new businesses into the area. To develop the downtown more fully, encourage the following types of businesses:

- Diverse and delicious food options
- Coffee and tea
- Activities for kids
- Ice cream and dessert shops
- Retail stores for people and their hobbies

4. Consider building a sound barrier to protect the downtown and riverfront from highway noise and vehicle emissions

M-59 is just a few hundred feet away from downtown and is a deterrent to pedestrians. Constant cars make the area noisy, and the smell of gasoline and vehicle emissions can clog the air. A sound barrier would help to keep the downtown and river area calm and quiet.

Building a wall or planting trees can be an effective way to block sound and reduce emissions. Be sure the barrier is fitting to pedestrians and the community's downtown needs – even sound walls can be aesthetically pleasing and incorporate [natural elements or art](#)³. Utica should explore further opportunities to dramatically reduce traffic noise and calm the downtown for all.

Potential Funding Opportunities

Many placemaking activities and projects can be done for free or very low cost. Part of what makes placemaking so effective is community involvement, resident volunteers, business partnerships, and people making these spaces together. However, some longer-term projects will need additional funding sources. Attached is a list of statewide and national resources communities can explore while planning recommended initiatives.

Agency/Program	Summary	Additional information
Crowdfunding	The new Michigan Invests Locally Exemption, P.A. 264 of 2013, can help attract and support entrepreneurs and local businesses. There is also a special initiative for communities to raise money for projects through a Michigan-specific funding platform. There is also a granting opportunity through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to receive a matching grant for crowdfunded public projects.	http://www.crowdfundingmi.com/
Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs Grant Program	MCACA seeks to fund projects that encourage, develop, and facilitate an enriched environment of artistic, creative, and cultural activity in Michigan. There is also a minigrant program focused on increasing public access to arts and culture.	Grant deadline Oct 1. More info at: http://www.michiganbusiness.org/community/council-arts-cultural-affairs/
National Association of Realtors Placemaking Micro-Grant	This is a minigrant program encouraging Realtor Associations and their members to engage in community placemaking. Many projects do not require a lot of money to get off the ground, so this micro-grant can serve as a placemaking catalyst for communities.	Grants accepted on a rolling basis, \$500 - \$2,500 opportunities. More info at: http://www.realtoractioncenter.com/for-associations/smartgrowth/placemaking/placemaking-micro-grant.html
Kresge Arts & Culture Grants	The grant program seeks to build strong, healthy cities by promoting the integration of arts and culture in community revitalization.	Grant information available at: http://kresge.org/programs/arts-culture
National Endowment for the Arts OUR TOWN Grant Program	The National Endowment for the Arts will provide a limited number of grants for creative placemaking projects that contribute toward the livability of communities and to help transform them into lively, beautiful and sustainable places with arts at their core.	Grants range from \$25,000 - \$200,000, funding opportunities will likely be announced this fall for the 2014 funding cycle. Additional information at: http://arts.gov/grants/apply-

		grant/grants-organizations/our-town/our-town-grant-program-description
ArtPlace America	Innovation grants are designed to invest in creative placemaking projects that reach for new possibilities and involve a variety of partners on place-based strategies that can transform communities.	Grants range from \$20,000 - \$300,00 across the country. Learn more at: http://www.artplaceamerica.org/
Michigan Complete Streets Coalition	This coalition works to assist communities with technical assistance related to complete streets.	http://www.micompletestreets.org/
MEDC Downtown Façade Improvement	For communities that seek to target traditional downtowns for façade improvements, which may have a significant impact on the downtown community.	Full and matching grant opportunities. More information at: http://www.michiganbusiness.org/cm/files/fact-sheets/cdbg.pdf
USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program	This program offers grants to improve and expand farmers markets. Local governments, nonprofits, agriculture cooperatives, and others are eligible to apply.	\$15,000 - \$100,000 grants. Info at: http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/fmpp

Some Bonus Potential Uses of Utica's Public Space

If stakeholders hit a brainstorming block, here are just a few ideas (ok, 68 ideas) to get people thinking. Remember: Be open-minded and find a way to "yes!"

1. Sponsor "After 5" activities, happy hours, etc. to get people out after work
2. Hands-on science/environment classes at the river
3. Interactive fountain or splash pad kids can play in
4. Outdoor fire pit
5. Marshmallow roasting
6. Hot chocolate stand, best hot chocolate competition
7. Kayak/canoe rentals
8. Chili cook-off
9. Barbeque battles
10. Food truck rally
11. Top Chef Utica contest
12. Harvest fest
13. Outdoor cooking classes
14. Buy-and-decorate cupcakes, cookies
15. Library book club meetings
16. Kids story time
17. Author book signing event
18. Poetry slams
19. Book cart with magazines, books, puzzles for loan and/or for sale
20. Outdoor eating - formal cafes or informal picnic tables
21. Small musical performances
22. Small theatrical performances
23. Improv/comedy
24. Artists working
25. Art classes/demonstrations
26. Strolling art installations
27. Hands on art for kids - Sidewalk chalk
28. Yoga classes
29. Family fitness classes
30. Walking club
31. 5k race
32. Dance classes
33. Fruit/veggie stand
34. Dog park or doggie hydration station
35. Music classes, guitar lessons
36. Barbershop quartet
37. Battle of the bands
38. Recycling roundup spot
39. Outdoor games (chess, checkers, volleyball, etc.)
40. Beer garden
41. Outdoor movies
42. Wi-Fi access
43. Meeting space for clubs
44. "Adopt a Plot" program - groups maintain a space on a seasonal or weekly basis
45. A Utica "photo-op"
46. Knitting/quilting club
47. Student photography exhibit with all Utica-inspired work
48. Designated graffiti space
49. School/church choir practice
50. Cheer practice
51. Band practice
52. Holiday carolers
53. Santa visits
54. Pep rallies
55. Tree/Menorah lighting location
56. New Year's Eve ball drop
57. Egg hunt
58. Memorial and Veteran's Day service
59. St. Patrick's Day event
60. Valentine's Day sweets stroll
61. Community potluck
62. Martin Luther King Day service
63. Halloween costume contest
64. Puppy parade, pet adoption drive
65. Garden club perianal exchange
66. Community garden space
67. Ladies night downtown - Babysitting/kids' activities while shops are open late, outdoor performances/entertainment
68. SOUP community fundraising events (See the League's case study, [Detroit SOUP⁴](#))

Endnotes

¹ “Grand Rapids Parket Manual,” Downtown Grand Rapids and the City of Grand Rapids, accessed 8/13/14,
http://www.downtowngr.org/news_item_files/DGRI_Parklet_Manual_April_2014.pdf.

² “Form-Based Codes,” Congress for New Urbanism, accessed 8/13/14,
<http://www.cnu.org/taxonomy/term/2169>.

³ “Highway Walls,” Creative Design Solutions, Inc., accessed 8/13/14,
<http://www.creativedesignresolutions.com/projects/highway/highway-walls/kellogg-woodlawn-interchange-us-54,-wichita,-kansas/77.html?headerbar=1>.

⁴ “Detroit SOUP,” Michigan Municipal League: Placemaking, accessed 8/13/14,
<http://placemaking.mml.org/detroit-soup>.



The Michigan Municipal League is the one clear voice for Michigan communities. Through advocacy at the state and federal level, we proactively represent municipalities to help them sustain highly livable, desirable, and unique places within the state. We create and offer our members services and events that range from traditional to cutting edge, in order to help educate and inspire them to remain focused on their passion for the area they represent. We are a non-profit, but we act with the fervor of entrepreneurs; our people are dynamic, energetic and highly approachable, passionately and aggressively pushing change for better communities.