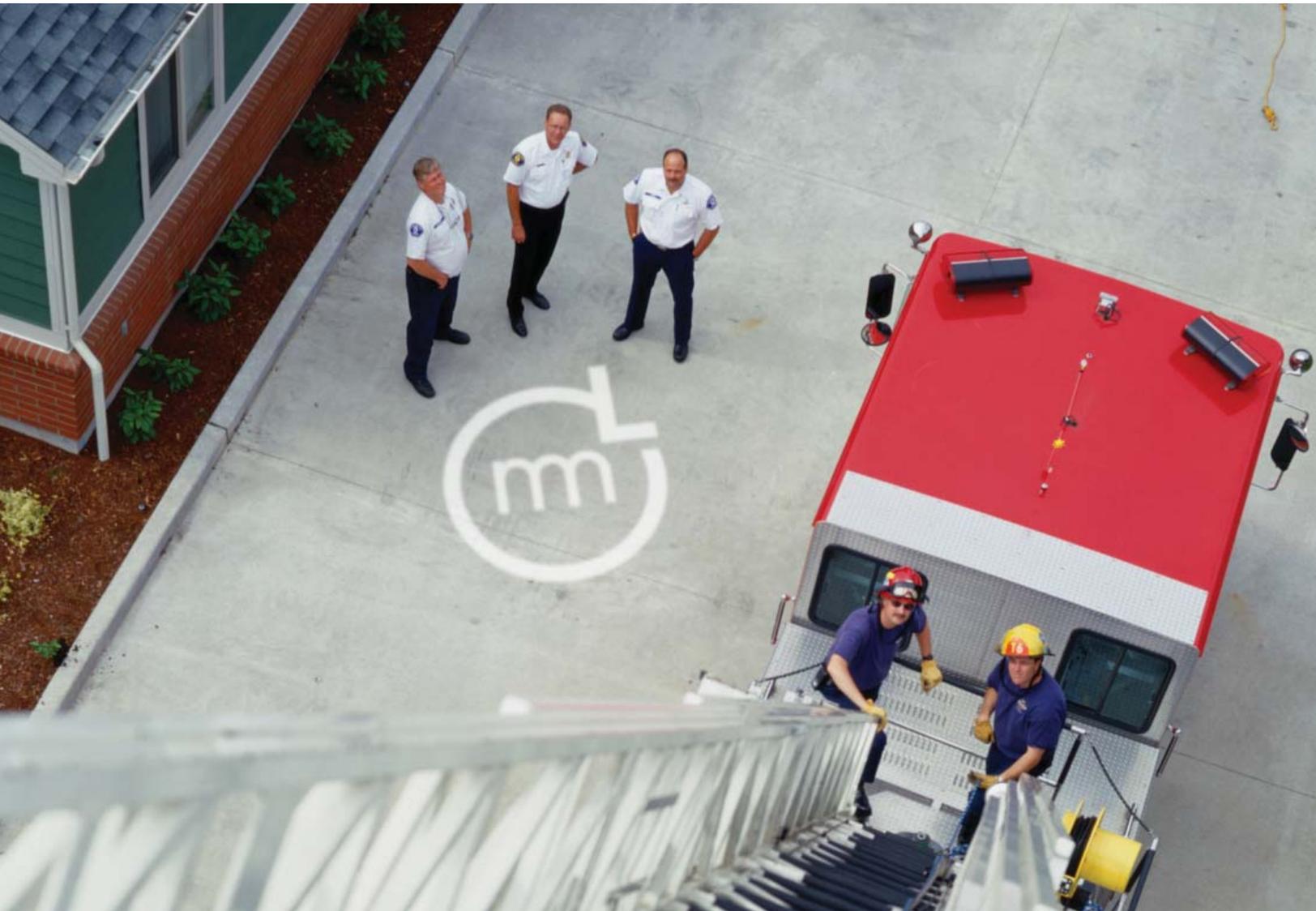


# MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL *review*



Durand  
Councilmember  
Deborah Doyle,  
MML President,  
2007-2008

DANIEL P. GILMARTIN  
A New Brand  
and a New  
Look

## Inside:

- Building the New Economy on the New Generation
- Community Excellence Award  
St. Joseph Takes Home the Cup
- 'New Urban Narrative' Excites  
Convention Audience
- Inkster: A Community of Revitalization

The Michigan Municipal League is the Michigan association of cities, villages and urban townships. A nonpartisan advocacy organization, the League works through cooperative efforts to strengthen the quality of municipal government and administration by providing technical assistance and information to local officials regarding municipal issues.

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# MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL review

The official magazine of the Michigan Municipal League.

Volume 80, Number 6

## Feature Articles

- 5** "You can never learn too much!"  
Durand Councilmember Deb Doyle, MML President, 2007-2008  
Terri Murphy
- 7** Introducing the New League Trustees  
Tawny Pruitt
- 10** Building the New Economy on the New Generation  
Caroline Weber Kennedy
- 11** Legislator Salute: Sen. Mark Jansen
- 12** 'New Urban Narrative' Excites Convention Audience  
Tom Wolff
- 14** Community Excellence Award. St. Joseph Takes Home the Cup  
Kim Cekola
- 18** Attracting the Young, College-Educated to Cities  
Caroline Weber Kennedy
- 20** League Recognizes Outstanding Service  
League Staff
- 23** Legislator Salute: Rep. Rebekah Warren (D-53)
- 27** Inkster: A Community of Revitalization  
Joyce A. Parker

## ON THE COVER

This is one of the League's new brand images. Our new brand seeks to capture the energy, passion and focus that the League brings to proactively represent our member communities. See the Executive Director's Message, page 3 for more details.



## Executive Director's Message

Daniel P. Gilmartin

# A New Brand and a New Look

### What's in a brand?

At the League, we believe that the answer is "a lot."

The League introduced its new brand in September at the 109<sup>th</sup> annual Convention in Traverse City. Our brand seeks to capture the energy, passion and focus that the League brings to proactively represent our member communities on a number of important fronts. As an organization, it's our firm belief that the state of Michigan's economic future is firmly and forever tied to the strength of its communities. That is why we have proudly adopted the **Better Communities. Better Michigan** tagline.

The new brand is also reflective of our commitment to provide our members services and events that range from traditional to cutting edge. Our goal is to educate and inspire our members to remain focused on the communities that they represent. There was a clear and distinctive buzz created in Traverse City by the lineup of thought-provoking speakers who challenged community leaders to look a little differently at their own challenges and embrace the opportunities currently before them. Later this year we will kick off a one-of-a-kind Community Design & Education Program that will explore ways in which communities can make themselves more attractive to knowledge-based businesses and talented workers. The program is a prime example of the type of synergy that can be created by focusing public, private and institutional resources to attack old problems from new angles.

New with this issue of *The Review*, we're especially pleased to include a pull-out section entitled "Restoring Michigan Communities—Building by Building." We know that vibrant communities are a key component in revitalizing Michigan. Each community has its problems—whether you call them eyesores, dangerous buildings, abandoned buildings, or blighted areas—that hinder it from achieving attractive and safe downtowns and neighborhoods.

The goal of this manual is to challenge each of us to take a fresh, critical look at our respective communities. Drive, or

preferably, walk down your streets. What do you see? Identify those buildings or conditions that, for one reason or another, impact your community's ability to create a sense of place—a place where we as Michigan residents can feel pride in where we live and work.

Once you've identified those problems, the manual will walk you through the process of taking an inventory of the tools and enforcement procedures that you currently have available, and determining how you might improve or revise your plan. The manual not only provides an overview of how Michigan statutes and ordinances work independently (and together) to address individual housing and building problems, it also provides a comprehensive framework for how your community can address these problems on a community-wide basis. Dealing with "bad buildings" is no longer a problem just for your code enforcement office. It requires input from community residents and policy makers to make a lasting impact.

If you're short on time, I encourage you to read the first three sections of the manual—The Problem, The Solution: Step by Step, and The Big Picture. Once you decide to restore the buildings in your community, the appendices will help you develop a plan.

### New look and new technology

You will also notice that we have redesigned our magazine. For those of you who have visited [www.mml.org](http://www.mml.org) you know that we have also made significant changes to the League's website. In the coming months expect to see even more videos, podcasts and other new media formats in an effort to reach a broader audience. All of these changes are being incorporated in an effort to make our programs and services more accessible to all members and to further drive information and ideas about making Michigan's communities highly livable, desirable and distinct places within the state.

I hope that you like the changes.

Daniel P. Gilmartin is executive director of the Michigan Municipal League. You may contact Dan at 734-669-6302, 800-653-2483 or [dpg@mml.org](mailto:dpg@mml.org).

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Volume 81, Number 1

## Departments

### 3 Executive Director's Message

A New Brand and a New Look. Daniel P. Gilmartin

### 22 Municipal Marketplace

### 25 League Education Programs: November

### 29 Municipal Retirement Planning

Choosing the Right Retirement Plan Provider. John McCann

### 31 Municipal Q&A

Mary Charles

## SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

"Restoring Michigan Communities-Building by Building"

This manual provides the tools for restoring Michigan communities by effectively dealing with dangerous and unsafe buildings, litter, overgrown weeds and abandoned buildings.

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## Feature Article

Reported by Terri Murphy

# “You can never learn too much!”

## Durand Councilmember Deborah Doyle, MML President, 2007-2008

Deborah Doyle likes to be part of change. When she first entered the work force in 1973, she was the only woman on a floor of engineers; every other woman employed with the company was in a clerical position. “The women didn’t like me and the engineers couldn’t understand what I was doing there,” she said, “it took a little time, but I won them over. I was really good at my job and a fun person to be around!”

Doyle was elected by the League Board of Trustees on September 19, 2007 to serve as the League’s president for a one-year term. The League’s new vice president is Troy councilwoman Robin Beltramini. The officers are joined by 16 trustees elected by the membership. Trustees serve three-year terms.

As a League trustee, prior to being elected president, Debora was instrumental in the re-design of the organization and looks forward to continuing that momentum in her new role. “I think we are already on the right path” she told me, “this more dynamic League we are creating, is going to make people want to get on board!”

“The League already represents over 50% of Michigan’s population” she said, “that should give us a very loud voice in Lansing. The League offers so many networking opportunities, so many chances to share information and concerns—it’s our most important role. In coming together, our advocacy efforts are that much stronger.”

Deborah became involved with the League 20 years ago when she was first elected to the Durand City Council. “When I attended my first Legislative Conference in 1998, I was blown away! I haven’t missed one since,

or a Convention either, for that matter.”

One of Deborah’s proudest accomplishments as an elected official was the new water project and treatment facility in her home city. It was completed on time and under budget. Her desire to protect residents’ investment in the community and watching Durand continue to grow and develop keeps her motivated to continue serving her city.

What is the one thing she knows now that she wishes she had known when she first ran for office? “How much there is to learn,” she said with a smile. “I learned you can never lose patience. It’s frustrating how long it takes to do something right. The League offers so many great educational opportunities. I want to say this to my fellow elected officials ‘if you’re not already involved with the Elected Officials Academy, get involved—you can never learn too much!’”

Looking to the next year, Deborah is excited. “Our vice president-elect is great! Robin is well-informed and meticulous; she’s a great asset to the League. It’s going to be a dynamic year.”

Deborah’s parting words to her fellow local government officials are: “Use the League—they are here for you.” And lastly, “Are there any ideas you would like to see implemented? Please tell us . . .”

**Deborah Doyle** was first elected to the Durand City Council nearly 17 years ago having served two of those years as mayor. In addition, her local government resume includes service on the DDA, the Planning Commission and the Shiawassee County 911 Board of Directors. Active in her community, Councilwoman Doyle’s numerous other affiliations include the Durand Centennial Committee, Durand Union Station board of directors and the Durand Rotary Club of which she is a past president. Her MML activities include membership on the MML Centennial Committee and the Elected Officials Academy (EOA) board of directors. A graduate of the academy’s Governance Level III, Councilwoman Doyle has written for the *Michigan Municipal Review* and serves as a moderator at League educational functions.

**Terri Murphy** is a meetings/publications coordinator for the Michigan Municipal League. You may contact Terri at 734-669-6342, 800-653-2483 or [tmurphy@mml.org](mailto:tmurphy@mml.org).





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## Introducing the New League Trustees

Things were definitely buzzing during our annual Convention, especially during the annual Business Meeting. Following a unanimous vote of approval, six officials representing diverse regions across Michigan were chosen to join the League's Board of Trustees, along with newly elected president Deb Doyle, Durand councilmember, and newly elected vice president Robin Beltramini, Troy councilmember; each will serve a one-year term. The new Trustees will serve a three-year term that expires in 2010.

### Richard Clanton, Commissioner, Kentwood

Richard Clanton is in his second term as city commissioner for the city of Kentwood. He has over 15 years of local government experience in the City of Kentwood having previously served on the Zoning Board, Economic Development Board, Brownfield Authority, Pension Board, and the Planning Commission. Clanton has been involved with the League for the past 8 years as secretary, vice president and president of Region III, president of the Elected Officials Academy (EOA), and vice president of Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (MBC-LEO). He is also a Level III graduate of EOA. In 2005, Grand Rapids awarded him the "Giants Award for Community Service."

### Kenneth Cockrel, Jr., Council President, Detroit

Kenneth V. Cockrel, Jr. has served on the Detroit City Council since 1998. A former journalist, Wayne County Commissioner and community activist, he made history as the youngest person ever elected to this body. In 2001 he was re-elected to the position of president pro tem and in 2005 elevated to the position of president. He has supported ordinances to prevent the over-concentration of liquor stores, pawn shops, and other disruptive businesses in residential neighborhoods. He serves on the Detroit Elections Commission, on the board of directors for the Detroit Transportation Corporation, and is also one of Detroit's delegates to the Southeastern

Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). Cockrel is a native Detroit with a strong commitment to the people of the city of Detroit.

### Penny Hill, Village Manager, Ontonagon

Penny Hill has served as village manager in Ontonagon for the past 6 years. Serving a total of 27 years in the public sector, she is an active advocate for local government. She is a member of the League's Liability & Property Pool board of directors and was a member of

the Michigan Local Government Management Association board of directors from 2004-2007. Hill is one of the founding members, and currently vice chair, of the Northern Michigan Public Service Academy, an organization that provides continuing education opportunities for officials in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. She is a life member of the Ontonagon County Historical Society, and in 2002, she was recognized by the Michigan Rural Water Association as Woman of the Year for her work in developing a regional water system.

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## Introducing the New League Trustees (continued)



New trustees David Post, Deanna Koski, Penny Hill and Richard Clanton are sworn in by Dan Gilmartin during the annual business meeting.

### Deanna Koski, Councilmember, Sterling Heights

Mayor pro tem Deanna Koski was first elected to the council in 1989. She has served the public in numerous positions, as Macomb County representative to the State Boundary Commission, an EOA board member, and on the Public Safety and Legislative Governance Committees. Koski is also a graduate of the Police Department Citizen's Academy, the Fire Department Citizen's Academy and has served as a member of the Public Safety and Crime Prevention steering committee of NLC. She has completed Level II of the EOA. She is a former president of Women in Municipal Government Association and former chairperson for Region I.

### David Post, Village Manager, Hillman

David J. Post has served as village manager for Hillman for the past 12 years in addition to his service on the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments. Post has been the chairman of the Montmorency County Economic Development Corporation since May 1999. He has been involved in the Regional Economic Development Advisory Committee, the County

Building Authority, and the local chamber of commerce. His policy interests include new and innovative ways to improve health care with reforms and changing the public's view on retirement investments (401Ks, IRAs and MERS) to encourage more investment within Michigan. He believes Michigan's economic recovery will be the result of pension fund investment coupled with local investment by citizens who believe in their community. Keeping money within Michigan is critical.

### Carol Shafto, Councilmember, Alpena

Carol Shafto, a veteran of the United States Air Force, is a past board member of the EOA and served as a Regional Officer chair in 2006. Shafto was appointed to the Alpena City Plan Commission in 1988 where she served 8 years. She was appointed to the city council in 1996 and has been re-elected to three 4-year terms. Since 1980, she has worked in a variety of positions for Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc. (NEMCSA), an 11-county regional Community Action Agency. Currently, Shafto is a grantsmanship trainer, and the Planning and Evaluation Director for NEMCSA.

Tawny Pruitt is the executive assistant for the Michigan Municipal League. You may contact Tawny at 734-669-6301 or tpruitt@mml.org.



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## Building the New Economy on the New Generation

Laurie Volk presented a jam-packed seminar of statistics revealing primary differences between the “boomer generation” and the “new millennials.” Both government and businesses in a community can leverage the potential of this vast economic resource. These two forces of human capital in America comprise 82 million and 78 million, respectively. Before we determine exactly who they are, what they need and how we can provide it, it’s helpful to clarify some standard terms. For the purpose of this presentation and generally speaking, the baby boom generation spans from 1946 to 1964, now ages 43-61. The new millennial years include 1977 to 1996, now ages 11-30.

All the attention focused on the baby boomers and the new millennials raises the question: Whatever happened to “Generation X?” And, what can we really project about “tweeners” and teens? Gen Xer’s lack significant numbers. They also share characteristics of both the boomers and millennials, rendering the group basically insignificant for economic market study. (However, Carol Coletta pays close attention to this group at CEOs for Cities, p. 18.)

As for the tweeners and teens, Volk says the presentation stats are a solid 5-7 years out. Wise community strategists will pay on-going attention. Following is just a smattering of the interesting stats from which community leaders can glean great insight.

### Marriage age, kids and jobs

The average boomer got married at age 21, with children quickly following. The average millennial marriage age is 26, with couples delaying children. Since millennials are not nesting, they join their majority single counterparts as highly social and mobile with early, unsettled careers. Millennials are college educated and may average 14-18 different jobs in a lifetime. Couples are cross-trained, making the trailing spouse syndrome slightly less of an issue. They are e-types, with an increasing ability to work from where they live. Mobility can make this generation difficult to retain, but the flipside is also true—they’re easy to lure back.

### Ethnically diverse and green

The millennials includes a high number of immigrant children now in their 20s, making this generation ethnically and culturally diverse. They appreciate variety in entertainment, music, art and food.

They are characterized as “green” for two reasons. One, they tend to be highly environmentally conscious. As such, they tend toward hiking, biking and yoga; not caring much for Michigan’s standard hunting, fishing, golfing and car racing. But they do appreciate all the same natural assets Michigan provides.

Two, they are risk takers. They both believe and make wild ideas happen. They are valuable as new entrepreneurs, and community colleges should be encouraged to provide entrepreneurship programs to help mine these talents locally.

### “Third places” and housing

Since millennials are out and about, as communities, we want to provide wonderful “third places” (not home or work) to go. Again, they appreciate diversity in entertainment, music, art and food—all in a walkable community. Detached housing presents too much of a commitment for an on-the-go lifestyle. Downtown apartments and small quarters encourage the use of third places. Popular “hard” lofts need only provide kitchen, bath and lots of closet space, leaving the use of the rest of the space to the creativity of the buyer/renter.

### Sense of place

Third places help establish a “sense of place.” What does it feel like where I live/play/work? Michigan’s historic buildings create immediate ambience for sense of place. What is your sense of place like? Do you have downtown opportunities for re-creating housing and third places to encourage entrepreneurship and capture the new millennials?

### Boomers and millennials converge

It’s interesting that while millennials are moving from suburbs to city, so too are retiring boomers with empty nests. You’ll want to accommodate both these generations in your community. Boomers have both earned and inherited more than any other generation in our history, and most plan second careers after retirement. They wield the economic power, while the millennials are shaping our economic future. Opportunities to plan for both are vast and exciting.

Laurie Volk is principal in charge of Zimmerman/Volk Associates’ market studies and is the firm’s primary analyst of demographic, market, and lifestyle trends. She has conducted more than 50 downtown studies across the country, in cities ranging in size from Allegan (population 5,000) to Detroit (population 895,000).

Volk currently serves on the board of directors of the Seaside Institute and the National Charrette Institute, and recently joined the Advisory Board of the Remaking Cities Institute. In 2002, she was a recipient of a Knight Fellowship in Community Building.



## Legislator Salute

### Sen. Mark Jansen (R-28)

Having worked with Sen. Mark Jansen (R-Gaines Twp.) throughout his tenure in the Michigan House of Representatives, the League has benefited from his significant undertakings and salutes his tremendous leadership on economic revitalization and downtown development initiatives.

Currently supporting the merits of the Michigan Housing and Community Development Fund, Jansen serves on the Senate Appropriations, Campaign and Election Oversight, and Finance committees; the Department of Human Services Subcommittee; and chairs the Family and Human Services Committee, as well as the Economic Development and Retirement subcommittees. He also serves on the board of directors for Habitat for Humanity of Michigan.

Considering his successful (term-limited) tenure in the House and his long list of public service positions and accomplishments, Jansen's move to the Senate was a natural next-step. After attending Grand Valley State University and Calvin College, Jansen held public service positions ranging from Gaines Township clerk to special initiatives director for Habitat for Humanity of Michigan to vice president of the Cutlerville Christian School Board.

The Senator and his family reside in Gaines Township and are members of Covenant Christian Reformed Church.

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IT'S THE PEOPLE

# 'New Urban Narrative' Excites Convention Audience

Members attending the Convention in Traverse City were treated to especially uplifting and encouraging general and concurrent sessions by Paul Schutt. Paul, a co-founder and co-CEO of Issue Media Group, a Detroit-based media company, described his company's online magazines that provide an 'alternative narrative' to traditional media. Local media is obsessed with reporting about job loss, crime, poverty and deteriorating schools. It seems they rarely have anything good to say about Michigan and its cities. Issue Media Group is in the process of changing this 'narrative' by providing online magazines that focus on all the positive things going on in Michigan, particularly in Detroit, Lansing and Grand Rapids. Whether it's an old bank being converted into lofts, a high-tech company adding 12 jobs or a new, hip restaurant that is generating buzz in a neglected neighborhood, these are stories that need to be told.

## Ingredients for vibrant cities

Paul began his talk by emphasizing that cities have to have certain characteristics in order to be successful. Cities have to have T.I.D.E, or Talent, Innovation, Diversity and Environment. Cities with talent such as large populations of people with BAs or better are going to be attractive to high-tech companies and other businesses. Cities that encourage innovation will be attractive places as well. The establish-

ment of Tech Town in Midtown Detroit, which had 30 startup companies in its first three years, is a good example of how encouraging innovation can lead to incredible success. Diversity is another necessary component for cities; the Asian community moving into Detroit is a great example of a positive trend. Finally, environment or sense of place is very important. The growing arts scene on Division Avenue in Grand Rapids continues to be a destination for people in their 20s. And the simple act of setting up chairs and tables in parks, squares and other open spaces where everyone can relax and congregate gives people a sense of place and makes cities more livable.

## Online magazines and all their useful information

Issue Media Group's goal is to get people to see these places—Detroit, Lansing and Grand Rapids—differently. One way of doing this is featuring a mixture of pictures in their online magazines. This could include a photograph of a recently refurbished historic building in Lansing with lots of incredible detail or a photograph of people kayaking on the Detroit River. These positive representations of what's going on make people think about these places in new ways.

Their publications write about what's happening next and focus on profiling small compa-

nies or startups. If there's a new tech firm opening in Lansing with 25 employees, Issue Media Group wants to make sure the company is profiled. Paul explained that the new economy is comprised of many of these smaller companies and has a "long tail" meaning smaller numbers of jobs are added incrementally over time. Traditional media tend to report only when a large manufacturing plant is built that will add 3,000 or 5,000 jobs, or when the plant is closing and will lose these jobs. But a small company that is adding six jobs is also contributing to the economy and may one day be the next Microsoft or BlackBerry.

The information contained in these online magazines is leveraged by different groups in the community. Developers, economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, institutions of higher education, healthcare organizations and foundations are some of the organizations that have RSS feeds into these sites and receive information on a regular basis. They have also partnered with Google so that ads for local destinations as well as job listings are featured. The sites are typically organized into sections of Development News, Innovation and Job News, Neighborhoods and Cities, Featured Place to Live and Lifestyle. All journalists, photographers and film crews working for the online magazines are hired locally.

## Benefits for all

While the publications are geared for highlighting all the good things taking place in Detroit, Lansing and Grand Rapids, all of Michigan benefits when these three cities are successful. As Charlotte Councilmember Heather Spielmaker stated, because of Charlotte's proximity to Lansing, her constituents will benefit as jobs become available in the capital. And former Mackinaw City village president Robert Heilman recognizes that the more employed people there are downstate, the more people there will be vacationing in places such as Mackinaw City, Petoskey and Traverse City.



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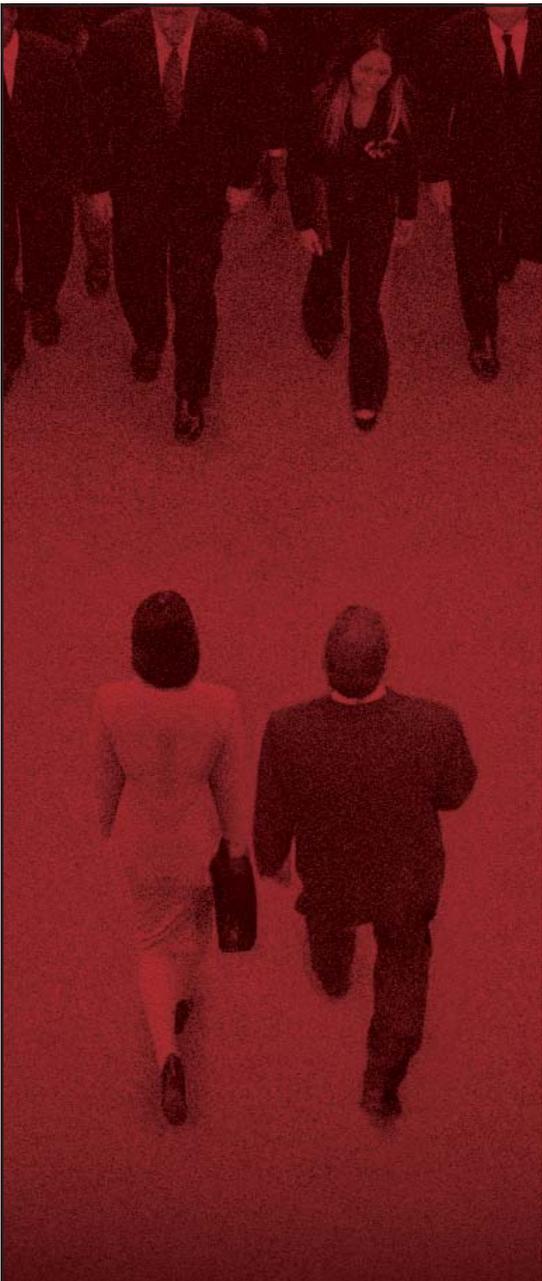
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# Community Excellence Award

## St. Joseph Takes Home the Cup

After the opening Parade of Flags at the 2007 Convention, seven Community Excellence Award regional winners queued up, ready to represent their communities in the final stage of the award competition. L'Anse, St. Joseph, Sandusky, Alma/St. Louis/Pine River Township, Grand Haven, Brighton, and Alpena all gave wonderful presentations, with a variety of good practical ideas.

For the first time, Convention attendees voted on which community would win the award. Plante Moran, the official auditors of the Community Excellence Awards, oversaw all levels of voting operations. When the votes were counted, President Vicki Barnett received the official envelope, and announced St. Joseph as the first winner of the Community Excellence Awards.

**Heartfelt Congratulations to the City of St. Joseph!**

### Project descriptions of the seven regional winners

#### Region 1

City of Brighton  
pop. 6,701

##### **Brighton Biennial Mixes Outdoor Art with Walkable Downtown**

The Brighton Biennial is a 27-piece sculpture exhibition integrated into the walkways of Downtown Brighton. The Biennial was initiated jointly by a local sculptor and the city's former mayor, Kate

Lawrence, as a cultural tourism initiative: a perfect marriage of sculpture and a pedestrian friendly downtown. The Biennial put "feet in the street" in downtown Brighton according to many business owners. The Biennial has been such a draw for downtown that the City Council and DDA purchased four of the pieces for permanent display. A fifth piece was purchased by the city manager and donated to the city on the condition it remains in public ownership.



#### Region 2

City of St. Joseph  
pop. 8,789

##### **Art on the Beach**

In 2004 downtown St. Joseph was struggling with less than 70% of their storefronts in business. Much to their dismay, downtown was dying. The city partnered with their local arts council to create a public art display as an attempt to put some energy back into the downtown. They had no idea if adding carousel horses, bears and kiddie cars would bring people back downtown. Just 3 years later there is a new downtown St. Joseph. The occupancy rate is more than 95% and merchants have noticed a dramatic increase in their business. The public art displays put a strong heartbeat back into their downtown.



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# Thank you!



## **Daisy Bear and the St. Joseph City Commission**

*Left to right are Mike Garey, Dr. Jeff Richards, Mayor Mary Goff, Bob Judd and Steve Upton*

We are very proud and humbled to be the inaugural winner of the Michigan Municipal League's **Community Excellence Award Cup.**

*See you next year on the Island!*



## Community Excellence Award (continued)

### Region 3

City of Grand Haven  
pop. 11,168

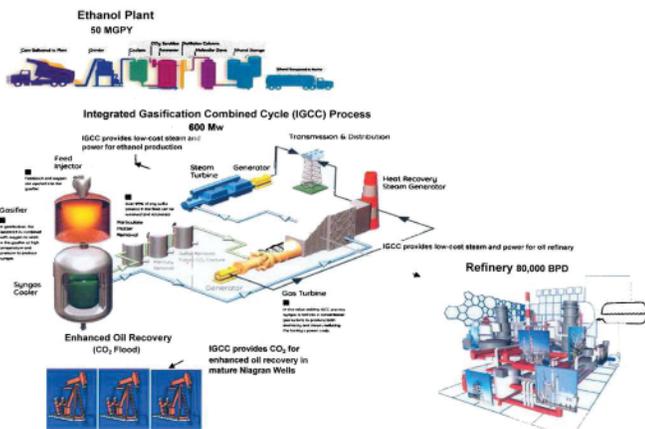


#### Grand Landing

In 1997, the north end of the city of Grand Haven was a land use wasteland. The gateway to a beautiful waterfront community was littered with a junk yard, an abandoned wastewater treatment facility, various obsolete industrial properties and several underutilized commercial buildings. Through over ten years of planning, patience, persistence and the help of many, many partners, they now have a mixed-use development on the brownfield that will add \$100,000,000 to the city's tax rolls, 600 jobs to the employment base and 500 people to the population by the year 2020.

### Region 4

Alma/St. Louis/Pine River Township  
pop. 9,274 Alma  
pop. 4,495 St. Louis  
pop. 2,451 Pine River Township



### Great Lakes Research Park-Intergovernmental Agreement to Provide Water

The cities of Alma and Saint Louis and Pine River Township created a community growth alliance. By working together, all three municipalities are poised for greater growth and opportunities. Alma and Saint Louis agreed to provide water and sewer to set districts in Pine River. In return, Pine River agreed that if water and sewer are provided in other districts, the property will be transferred to the neighboring city. Pine River also agreed to permit the cities' searching for additional water well within the township. The impact of the project has been additional growth in all three municipalities that would not have occurred without the agreement.

### Region 5

City of Sandusky  
pop. 2,745

#### Sunrise Village Senior Apartments

The city of Sandusky's challenge was to develop affordable senior housing. They currently have a 51-unit apartment building for seniors; however, the waiting list is at least one year. The city needed to find and acquire land close to the present building so they could share services



and develop a program to finance the project. The results of a preliminary market study and survey conducted in 2005 showed the need for additional affordable senior housing and support for a 48-unit building. The total cost of this project is \$4,533,049, and due to assistance from various agencies, there was no cost to either the city or its residents.

### Region 6

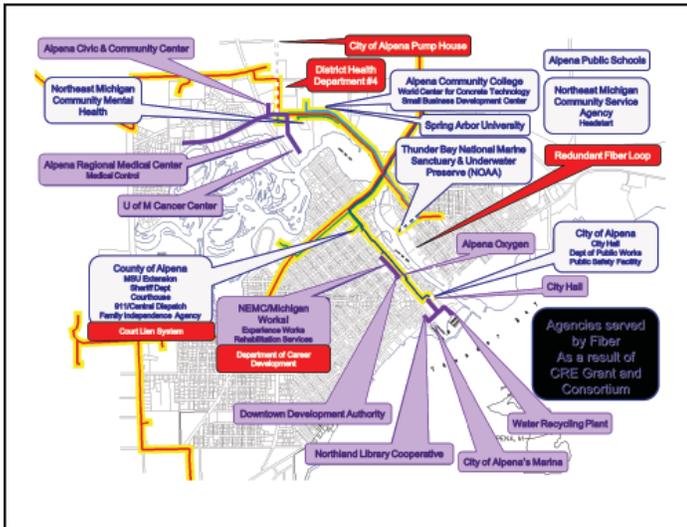
City of Alpena  
pop. 11,304

#### Fiber Optics Consortium

The city of Alpena partnered with 16 other agencies to bring high-speed, next generation networking to the Alpena area by constructing an integrated fiber optic network. By organizing the Alpena Regional Fiber Consortium, the project spurred network development through the use of a \$25,000 state grant; producing \$75,000 in direct network infrastructure investment and lowering construction costs through partnerships with \$250,000 in other community projects. The city's project improved local

Kim Cekola is a research associate for the Michigan Municipal League. You may contact Kim at 734-669-6321 or kcekola@mml.org.

## Community Excellence Award (continued)



services, while reducing expenses for local agencies. It created a model for statewide replication that produced a community telecommunications network for the future and will significantly reduce communication expenses.

## Region 7

Village of L'Anse



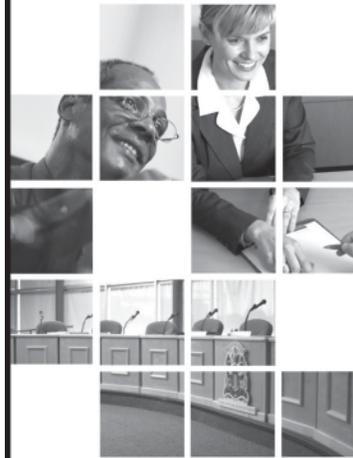
pop. 2,107

### Village of L'Anse Downtown Renewal

On Mother's Day in 2002 a major flood catastrophe in the village of L'Anse downtown ultimately led to an "astounding" downtown renewal program that is transforming a dilapidated core area into one that is attracting entrepreneurs and giving new life to a tired retail area. A portion of Main Street in L'Anse was under more than 2 feet of water during the 2002 rain event. Although village officials and citizens had been talking about a new streetscape for their downtown before the flood, all involved were hesitant to construct improvements that might then be damaged. Action to correct the flooding became the lynch-pin of the downtown renewal.

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## Attracting the Young, College-Educated to Cities

Keynote speaker Carol Coletta, president and CEO for Cities, provided new and valuable statistics to help Convention attendees better position their communities for attracting young, college-educated professionals.

Coletta's presentation focused on the demographic of 25-34 year-old college educated professionals. Not surprisingly, unlike our parents and probably ourselves, 64 percent of these young people are more likely to first seek a desirable location to live and then look for a job, as opposed to 36 percent who seek the best job possible, with location as a secondary consideration. Men are somewhat more likely than women to be motivated by the best possible job. With Michigan's economy changing from industrial to knowledge-based, now is the time for our communities to "strut their stuff" to this group if we hope to enlist our brightest young minds in our economic recovery efforts.

Since we now know these people will choose first where they want to live, we can use the following statistics on their living preferences to keep them here or lure them back.

### Singles downtown, marrieds nearby

Single people show a strong inclination to live in a city; especially downtown or in a neighborhood near downtown. And while married couples and parents still gravitate toward suburbs, they also prefer to live near a city—within about a three mile radius. These same preferences are applicable in any community, so "city" vernacular should not discourage our mini-urban communities. Mini-urbans describe the majority of Michigan's cities and villages, with the exception of the highest population centers.

### Old habits die hard

This demographic tends to live in environments similar to where they were raised. They

seem to have an established comfort zone—so if they grew up in or near a downtown, in a suburb, or rurally, that is their same desire at this age. (Note that people slightly younger than this age group are more likely to seek downtown living, regardless of where they grew up; see *Building the New Economy on the New Generation*, p. 10.)

### Regional preferences

The good news for Michigan is that the "comfort zone" theory also extends to regional preferences. Of the 236 respondents who grew up in the Midwest, 74 percent still live in the Midwest. This is particularly good for Michigan because the Great Lakes region has a high concentration of top universities and produces nearly 80 percent of the nation's college educated holding four-year degrees or higher. This would indicate that if Michigan produces job opportunities, our brightest will move back home to work.

### Attracting the CEOs

How does this demographic decide specifically where they want to live? Coletta's data indicates that personal experiences (weekend visits or home seeking), experiences of family and friends and local websites are the top

influencers. Reading local papers, magazines and books, visiting convention and visitor bureaus or chamber of commerce websites or visiting for several weeks are somewhat lesser influences for this group. A community seeking these individuals might try attracting college students for weekend events.

### Hierarchy of needs

What is most important to this group is basic quality of life: a clean, attractive, safe and green place to live. Aspirations are also important; they desire to grow both personally and professionally in this location with the ability to raise a family. They further want an interesting, diverse place to live with space for social interactions (third places that are not home or work), and a location close to family.

### In conclusion

All of Coletta's findings fit neatly with what was revealed in other League Convention sessions—*The New Urban Narrative* and *Building the New Economy on the New Generation*. Combining the information of these presentations provides municipalities with a truly comprehensive vision of what we need to do to keep our brightest and our best.



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Ordinance-protected communities have property values more than twice as high, three to five times the population growth over a quarter century, much higher median incomes, a stronger tax base, lower general taxes and more.

If you'd like a copy of the study, complimentary planning assistance or an on-site workshop call Amy Nelson at (773) 857-6784 or email her at [anelson@bia.org](mailto:anelson@bia.org).

The study confirms it – if there's a lot of new home construction in your area and you want to leave a legacy of economic stability 25 years from now, insist on minimum standards for the use of brick.



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## League Recognizes Outstanding Service

During this year's 109th annual Convention banquet in Traverse City, the following people were awarded for their outstanding efforts on behalf of Michigan communities.

### Special Awards of Merit

#### Timothy Doyle, Councilmember, City of Durand

Councilmember Doyle has been a tireless promoter and volunteer for the League for many years. He serves on the Durand Zoning Board of Appeals and is a member of the Shiawassee County Solid Waste Management Committee. His League activities include membership on the Finance and Taxation Committee and the Elected Officials Academy (EOA) board of directors. He is currently serving as Vice President of the EOA Board and has attained the Academy's Level III: The Governance Award. Tim has also served as a moderator and session leader at numerous League functions.

#### Robert May, Mayor, City of Hastings

Mayor May sits on the Planning Commission, the DDA and the LDFA, and is an Ambassador for the Barry County Area Chamber of Com-

merce. Bob is a Level III graduate of the EOA, a former member of the EOA's advisory board of directors, and a member of the League's Transportation, Infrastructure and Environmental Affairs Committee. He currently serves on the League's Governance Committee, is a Grand Valley Metro Council board member, and is on the Michigan Association of Mayors board.

#### Timothy Wolff, Manager, Village of Lake Isabella

Timothy Wolff, an active advocate on behalf of municipalities, serves as a village manager and as a planning commissioner with a unique perspective on land use needs for developed communities. Wolff has played an integral role in Senate workgroup discussions on planning law in Michigan, and has continuously given essential feedback through the League legislative committee process. He is an active member of the League, Michigan Local Government Manager's Association, the International City/County Management Association, the Michigan Association of Planning, and also an accredited village clerk by the Michigan Secretary of State.

### Distinguished Achievement Awards

#### Representative Ed Clemente (D-Lincoln Park)

Rep. Clemente works with the League to ensure that bills are friendly to our communities—he was the lone vote against cable franchise legislation in the House Commerce Committee, and also on the House floor. As the House New Economy and Quality of Life Committee chairman, Clemente has focused on the importance of attracting young workers to our developed communities to bring back jobs. He is assisting in crafting the Commerce Centers legislation, and working to ensure that the Brownfield program is strong for local communities.

#### Senator Jerry Van Woerkom (R-Muskegon)

Jerry Van Woerkom, a dedicated supporter and contributor of local government progress was elected to the State Senate and re-elected in 2006. He has been highly supportive of local government issues throughout his entire legislative career. Most recently, as Chair of the Senate Local, Urban, and State Affairs Committee, he was instrumental in advocating for statutory reforms that benefit local governments.

### 81st Honorary Life Member

Kate Lawrence has served as a municipal official with the city of Brighton since 1993. She served as mayor pro tem from 1995 to 1999 and as mayor from 1999 to 2005. She became active with the League as soon as she became a councilmember, serving as chair of Region 1 in 1995. She completed a three-year term on the League's Board of Trustees in 2003 and served as president of the League from 2002-2003. Kate is the current chair of the Michigan Municipal League Liability and Property Pool board, and also serves as treasurer on the League Foundation board. Taking advantage of the League's EOA offerings, Kate has attained Level III: The Governance Award.

Kate presently serves on the Brighton Area Fire Authority, the Greater Brighton Area Chamber of Commerce board of directors



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Kate Lawrence, 81st Honorary Life Member

and is very active with the Livingston Sunrise Rotary Club. She is a founding member of the Mayor's Commission on Art in Public Places. She believes in the League and encourages all to be involved.

### Introducing

This year the League also introduced two new awards honoring past League presidents Mayor Michael Guido of Dearborn and Jim Sinclair councilmember of Rogers City. After viewing the touching video tributes to these extraordinary men who were great supporters and advocates for the League, there were few dry eyes in the banquet hall. The Guido and Sinclair families attended as honorary guests and said a few words which made the award introductions even more emotional.

#### The Michael A. Guido Leadership and Public Service Award

Celebrating a chief elected official who personifies professionalism and leadership, is dedicated to the citizens in their community and advocates on their behalf in Lansing and Washington, DC.

#### The Jim Sinclair Exceptional Service Award

Celebrating a person dedicated to public service who has shown passion and commitment to the League, enthusiastically supporting its mission and promoting its purpose.



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## Legislator Salute

# Rep. Rebekah Warren (D-53)

MML applauds Rep. Rebekah Warren (D-Ann Arbor) for dedicating her first term in the Michigan Legislature to pioneering local-friendly environmental legislation and for advocating on behalf of Michigan's communities throughout the revenue sharing debate. She keeps an open door to discussing various local government issues and works enthusiastically with the League on environmental initiatives.

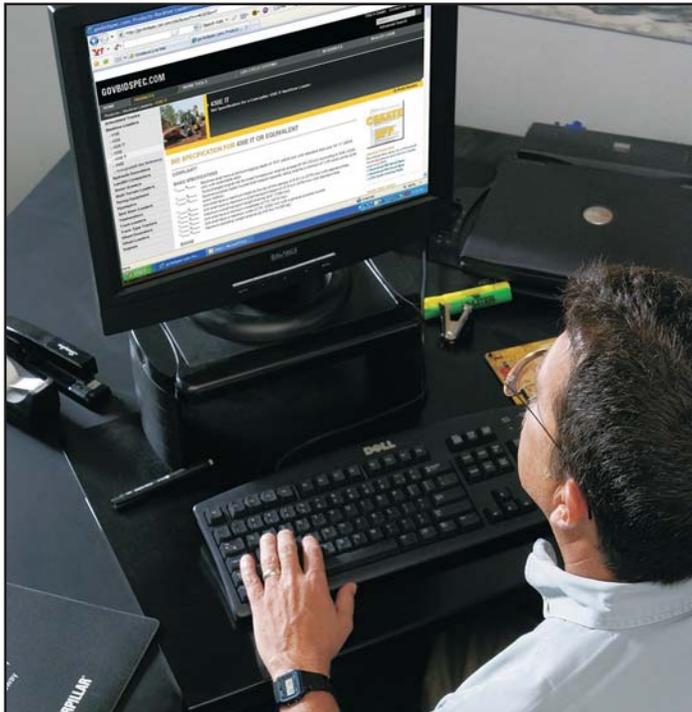
Chairing the Great Lakes and Environment Committee and the Judiciary Subcommittee on Corrections, Warren also serves on the House Judiciary; Tax Policy; and Senior Health, Security and Retirement committees.

She is involved in Washtenaw County Democracy for America, Women Progressive Activists, the Ward 5 Precinct 4 Democratic Party Organiz-

ing Committee, Women in Government, National Conference of Environmental Legislators; chairs the pro-choice caucus and co-chairs the recycling caucus.

A passionate Warren kicked off her public service career in 1993 working as the legislative assistant for former Reps. Mary Schroer and Hubert Price. Later she became executive director of MARAL Pro-Choice Michigan, the state's oldest and largest grassroots pro-choice organization.

A lifelong Michigan resident, Warren took root in Ann Arbor 17 years ago as a University of Michigan student; she and her fiancé reside on the city's historic west side and enjoy volunteering for the non-profits in their community.



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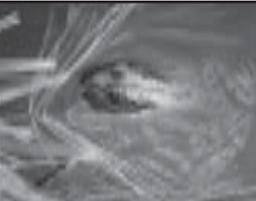


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## November

### Risk Management 201—Root Cause Analysis

Tuesday, November 6

Wednesday, November 7

Thursday, November 8

In RM101 the entire risk management process was overviewed. RM201 will focus on the first two steps of that process: identifying the exposures and eliminating the exposures. The Root Cause Analysis (RCA) methodology goes beyond troubleshooting and problem solving; it is a tool directed at identifying prevention strategies. The goal is to prevent recurrence of adverse events. Workshops will be conducted on both workers' compensation and property and liability to demonstrate how this methodology can work in your municipality with examples and informative presentations. At the conclusion of this program attendees will be able to identify exposures and develop ways in which to eliminate exposures.

- Check-in 8:30 a.m.; Begin 9:00 a.m.; Adjourn 4:00 p.m.
- Locations & Dates:
  - November 6 (07K-01)**  
MML Headquarters, Ann Arbor 734-662-3246
  - November 7 (07K-02)**  
Comfort Inn & Suites, Mount Pleasant 989-772-4000
  - November 8 (07K-03)**  
Treetops Sylvan Resort, Gaylord 517-732-6711
- Speakers: Beverly Booker, Meadowbrook Insurance Group  
Gene King, Meadowbrook Insurance Group
- Cost Code A; Special Pricing: \$10 for MML Pool & Fund members
- Credits: CEU .6, EOA 6

### Cost Codes

#### Cost Code A

When registered one week before the program, Members \$115; Non-members \$160. Less than one week before the program add \$35 to the fee.

#### \*Risk Management is Good Management

In continuing with the success of the Risk Management is Good Management program, the Michigan Municipal League Liability and Property Pool and Workers' Compensation Fund have agreed to cover some of the cost for Pool and Fund members to attend many of the liability and workers' compensation-related training programs offered through the MML. For questions about the Risk Management is Good Management program or about MML Pool and Fund membership please contact Jennifer Orr at [jorr@mml.org](mailto:jorr@mml.org) or 800-653-2483.



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# Feature Article

Reported by Joyce A. Parker

## Inkster: A Community of Revitalization

The city of Inkster is a community on the forefront of change. Inkster, 16 miles west of Detroit with a population of approximately 30,000, has many exciting endeavors taking place. Being branded as "Michigan's Hottest Zip Code" for the many housing developments underway has started buzz about Inkster. Now to keep the momentum going, the city has more ongoing revitalization projects in effect.

Our focus is on providing quality service for residents and businesses in the city. On February 7, 2005, the Inkster City Council adopted several goals including providing facilities for city operations of a quality where the buildings are maintained, clean, operate efficiently and present a positive image of the organization and the Inkster community at large. As a result, the Inkster Building Facilities Committee was formed.

In Fall 2005, the committee had a vision for a new Inkster City Hall. In partnership with the Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA), the vacant building located at 26215 Trowbridge Avenue was acquired and renovated. This provided 15,000 square feet of office space as opposed to the 7,500 square feet at the old facility.

The new Inkster City Hall promises to be an economic development catalyst in the TIFA area. The total construction cost for the facility is \$1.3 million. The new City Hall provides new features for Inkster residents, including, but not limited to: one-floor handicap accessible offices and restrooms, additional parking, a state of the art city council chambers, and a TIFA community room.

Another endeavor that is receiving kudos is the median enhancement project along Michigan Avenue in downtown Inkster. Prior to 2004, the median of Michigan Avenue, which is the main thoroughfare of the city, was a picture of simple trees and grass. In 2004, by way of the Downtown Development Authority of Inkster and the Michigan Department



of Transportation, the median has become a vision of beauty that includes an irrigation system, flowers, plants, trees, shrubbery, manicured grass and signage.

These projects are just a few of the new and exciting changes to come from Inkster.

Joyce A. Parker is the manager of the city of Inkster. You may contact Joyce at 313-563-4232 or [jparker@cityofinkster.com](mailto:jparker@cityofinkster.com).



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## Municipal Retirement Planning

John McCann

# Choosing the Right Retirement Plan Provider

As part of their process for deciding on the right plan provider to administer their retirement plan, employers focus on many critical performance aspects of the candidates. Service, the breadth of fund offerings and the performance of those funds are all important considerations.

But it's also essential for employers to gain a complete understanding of all cost-related provisions in the agreements. Sometimes, language in the fine detail is not readily apparent until specific circumstances arise. Then, employers find their options are severely limited.

Employers should focus on two specific areas—stable value fund practices and fees on mutual funds. In the area of stable value accounts, a provision at times encountered is tiered interest rates—one rate for “new” money rate and a second, lower rate for money that has been in the fund for a period of time. In this practice, the fund attracts new money through a higher initial rate.

Once the new money is in the fund for a period of time—one year, for example—the return on those funds can suddenly drop to a lower, below market, rate. Another related practice sometimes employed is for a provider to offer an above-market rate during the bid process, which then falls below market over time to make up for the initial loss incurred by the vendor.

Why is this important? Because, typically, 25 to 40 percent of the assets of a 457 or other retirement plan are invested in the stable value fund, so there is a major impact on the economics of a plan. In the end, long-term investors generally do less well as a result of these rate manipulations.

The second problem in stable value accounts is back-end fees. While a provider can reasonably include provisions for an orderly withdrawal of funds during transition, employers should know in advance if a provider is going to charge a significant cost if the plan sponsor wants to change vendors.

Providers also need to understand the full details about charges for the mutual funds in their plan, both the proprietary funds offered by the vendor's company and funds offered from other fund families. Often there are undisclosed revenues retained for plan administration, which plan sponsors have difficulty identifying for purposes of measuring and comparing plan expenses among candidates.

Congress has shown an increased interest in making sure that all expenses and fees charged participants are fully disclosed. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), chair of the House Education and Workforce Committee, which has jurisdiction over private sector retirement plans, is looking at ways to provide better information on plan costs.

**Another related practice sometimes employed is for a provider to offer an above-market rate during the bid process, which then falls below market over time to make up for the initial loss incurred by the vendor.**

The bottom line is that public employers should carefully review all plan costs. The buyer should demand total transparency. There's no place for hidden costs and charges that can hurt plan sponsors and plan participants.

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John McCann is managing vice president of ICMA-RC, serving the Great Lakes and Midwest Territories. You may contact John at 800-825-0765 or [mccannj@icmarc.org](mailto:mccannj@icmarc.org).

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## Municipal Q&A

Coordinated by Mary Charles

### Q: Can our Board of Zoning Appeals vote by secret ballot?

No, No, No, No, No! No local public body can ever vote by secret ballot on any matter—ever! The public's business must be conducted in public.

The Open Meetings Act provides that any public official who knowingly violates the act can be fined up to \$1,000 for the first offense and up to \$2,000 and a year in jail for the second offense (MCL 15.272).

### Q: We have a seven member council. How many votes does it take to pass a motion?

It depends on several things. First, if you are a home rule village or city, you need to check your charter. It will tell you whether certain motions take a simple majority (one more than half - 4) or a super majority (two thirds of the council - 5) on various issues.

It will also tell you whether the count is based on the total number on the council or only on those present and voting.

A general law village requires the vote to be based on the maximum number that constitutes council, i.e. four is the majority of a seven person council and it takes five votes to pass a motion by a 2/3 vote.

### Q: Can we give employees gift certificates for the holidays?

We have a One-Pager Plus on Municipal Expenditures on our website (<http://www.mml.org/members/pdf/opp/Contributions.PDF>) which you might find useful with respect to gifts made by a municipality. In addition, you will find a Bulletin from the State Tax Commis-

sion ([http://www.mml.org/members/pdf/opp/lawful\\_expenditures.pdf](http://www.mml.org/members/pdf/opp/lawful_expenditures.pdf)) and a paper further defining an allowable public purpose.

Article XI, Section 3 of the Michigan Constitution deals with "extra compensation" and provides that no extra compensation can be given after the service has been performed or the contract entered into.

Conceivably, if a city wanted to give out turkeys at Christmas, and it was part of the city's benefits package, it may meet the criteria of the law.

The best advice we can give on this is to review the issue with your municipal attorney for an opinion.

### Q: How do we "copyright" our village logo?

According to the U.S. Copyright office, "copyright does not protect titles, slogans, or short phrases. In some cases, these things may be protected as trademarks. However, copyright protection may be available for logo artwork that contains sufficient authorship. In some circumstances, an artistic logo may also be protected as a trademark."

On its website, the Copyright office has a page of helpful Q&As.

To answer the question of how a copyright is different from a patent or a trademark, this explanation is given: A copyright protects original works of authorship, while a patent protects inventions or discoveries. Ideas and discoveries are not protected by the copyright law, although the way in which they are expressed may be. A trademark protects words, phrases, symbols, or designs identifying the source of the goods or services of one party and distinguishing them from those of others.

### Request for Information

The Resource Center relies on contributions from local officials to keep materials current.

We would appreciate receiving:

- Capital Improvement Plans
- Zoning Board of Appeals Rules of Procedures

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Contact the U.S. Copyright office at 202-707-3000 or go to its website [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov) for further information.

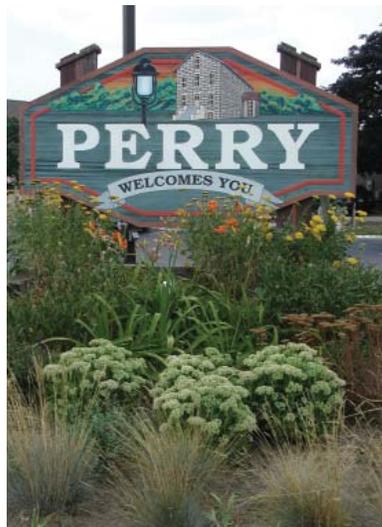
For further information on trademarks, contact the U.S. Patent & Trademark office at 800-786-9199.

### Q: If our village logo is trademarked, and people want to use it, how do we go about allowing them to do so? Do we need to issue a license or something?

You should grant permission, with any conditions, in writing. A license is one method of granting permission. If you feel your trademark has been infringed on, consult an attorney. A civil lawsuit in federal district court may be ultimately required to protect your logo. For further information, contact the U.S. Patent & Trademark office at 800-786-9199.

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# Perry



The city of Perry was founded in 1850 but did not become a city until 1964. Perry is located approximately 22 miles northeast of Lansing, 30 miles southwest of Flint and 80 miles northwest of Detroit; Owosso is to the north and Williamston to the south. Because of our excellent location, easy access to two international airports, and pleasant downtown business district, Perry is a popular place to live and raise families. We have a population of close to 2,000 people who like working in a bigger city but enjoy living in the small town atmosphere.

City Hall has been located at the historic site of the Perry Glove and Mitten Factory for the past ten years. Last year the Perry Community Building turned 100 years old. The three-story building houses the Council Chambers (first floor), City Hall and Perry Police Department (second floor) and is used for a community room (third floor). The spacious area located alongside the building offers many opportunities for events to happen inside and out.

Perry enjoys the PerryFest festival the third weekend in September, which brings amusement rides, craft vendors, fireworks and many other fun activities. We also have an annual cardboard sledding contest the second Sunday in February. Perry also has a small historical museum, which is open on weekends from 1 pm to 5 pm.

I-69 and M-52 intersect at Perry and offer a convenient stopping place for travelers with a good variety of fast-food restaurants and service stations. With our easily accessible location and family friendly atmosphere we can only expect to see Perry continue to grow.

The city of Perry may be a small city but our residents have huge hearts and are always ready with a handshake and a smile. We invite you to visit us soon so that we can show you all the benefits and beauty offered by the city of Perry. For more information on our city, go to our website at [www.perry.mi.us](http://www.perry.mi.us).

Please send address and recipient corrections to Susan Vasher at MML, P.O. Box 1487, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1487; phone 800-653-2483; fax 734-662-8083, or email [svasher@mml.org](mailto:svasher@mml.org). Thank you.