

P R O C E E D I N G S

URBAN VISION

BUILDING COALITIONS FOR MICHIGAN CITIES

HOUSE BIPARTISAN URBAN CAUCUS SUMMIT
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PROCEEDINGS

URBAN VISION

SUMMIT

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for the
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of the Michigan House of Representatives

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Introduction

New coalitions are emerging in Michigan's urban policy debate. Legislators from rural and suburban communities, along with citizen and industry groups representing a wide variety of interests, have joined urban legislators and mayors in appreciating the significance of state policies for supporting Michigan cities. Increasingly, such stakeholders recognize that the destinies of Michigan communities are far more connected than they are divided. To save Michigan farms, to preserve the open space that supports recreational industries and our quality of life, we must restore the vitality and centrality of our cities. To revitalize our cities, Michigan must work together.



This report summarizes the proceedings of the second Summit of the Bipartisan Urban Caucus of the Michigan Legislature. As co-chairs of the Urban Caucus, we are pleased by the ideas and the energy represented by this event. The first such meeting, held in January 1998, was attended by nearly 300 people and resulted in collaboration that continues among elected officials and concerned citizens to address Michigan's most pressing issues: issues like urban revitalization, patterns of land use and growth, and economic prosperity for all citizens. Members of the Bipartisan Urban Caucus are committed to work with all stakeholders toward common solutions in these crucial areas. It was in order to continue this work that the Caucus organized and hosted Urban Summit 2000.

The second Urban Summit was designed to bring special attention to four key issues that face Michigan as we enter the new century: land use and the environment, transportation, housing, and education. These four issues were identified—during a statewide policy meeting attended by many caucus members in Traverse City last October—as key elements of any comprehensive state policy discussion. Each of the invited speakers for Summit 2000 was asked to keep in mind these four issues as they discussed urban policy.

Paul Hillegonds, President of Detroit Renaissance, opened the Summit on Thursday evening by emphasizing the need for the public and private sectors to work together. Mr. Hillegonds identified tax policy, land use planning, education, and race relations as fundamental issues to be addressed in coming decades, and reflected on the decision-making process of the state legislature as an important consideration in the development of effective policy.

The summit continued on Friday morning with addresses by Douglas Kelbaugh, Dean of the University of Michigan School of Architecture, and Curtis Johnson, co-director of the Citistates Group. Mr. Kelbaugh discussed the adverse effects of urban sprawl on



urban communities, and introduced the planning and design principles of New Urbanism that have emerged to counteract these tendencies. Mr. Johnson discussed trends he has observed across the nation in which regional approaches to solving problems have shown success and gained acceptance. Larry Morandi of the National Association of State Legislatures spoke during lunch about trends in land use legislation. Mr. Morandi offered insight into the potential application of these various approaches to Michigan.

The Friday program also included morning and afternoon breakout sessions on the topics of education, housing, transportation, and land use/environment. During these sessions, information was provided to participants about pending legislation related to these issues, and participants were able to contribute their ideas to the ongoing policy discussion.

The Urban Caucus would like to thank the Frey Foundation and the Kellogg Foundation for their support. We would also like to acknowledge the participation of the Michigan Economic and Environmental Roundtable, the Michigan State University Center for Urban Affairs, Public Sector Consultants, Inc., and the Urban Core Mayors in preparing for the Summit. Public Sector Consultants recently prepared the "Status of Michigan Cities" report, to help inform caucus members and other legislators about the issues facing urban Michigan. A summary of that document is included as an appendix to this report.

The state legislature has undergone significant changes since the first Urban Summit was held two years ago. Term limits have altered the composition of the House of Representatives, and will have similar effects in the Senate beginning in 2002. This presents new opportunities and new challenges. As co-chairs of the Urban Caucus, we have worked hard to inform incoming legislators of the complex and pressing issues that our group is committed to confront. At the same time, we learn from these new colleagues and their perspectives on the issues. As we move together into the new century, we are encouraged by the coalitions that persist.



William R. Byl *Buzz Thomas*

Representative William R. Byl

Representative Samuel "Buzz" Thomas III



Plenary Addresses

The Summit began Thursday evening with introductory remarks by Caucus co-chairs Representative William Byl and Representative Buzz Thomas, and a welcome from Mayor David Hollister of Lansing, representing the Urban Core Mayors. Following these, Paul Hillegonds delivered the keynote address.

On Friday, the Summit continued with morning presentations by Douglas Kelbaugh and Curtis Johnson, and a luncheon address by Larry Morandi.

Paul Hillegonds is President of Detroit Renaissance, a nonprofit organization of Southeast Michigan business leaders focused on economic development and public policy issues. Hillegonds represented Allegan County in the State House from 1978 to 1996, and served as Co-Speaker and Speaker of the House for four years. Hillegonds was honored by *Governing* magazine as Public Official of the Year in 1994, and named "Michiganian of the Year" in 1996 by the *Detroit News*.

Douglas S. Kelbaugh is Dean and Professor at the University of Michigan's A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, where he teaches in the areas of architecture and urban design. Kelbaugh is author of *Common Place: Toward Neighborhood and Regional Design* (1997). His design work has won more than 20 awards and has been published in over 100 books and periodicals.

Curtis Johnson is President of the Citistates Group, and co-author of the books *Citistates* (1993) and *Boundary Crossers* (1997). Johnson lives in the Twin Cities, where he has served as a community college president, head of a large citizens organization, policy adviser and chief of staff to a governor, and chairman of the Metropolitan Council. Since the mid-1980s, Johnson has been an independent journalist on metropolitan issues around America and the world.

Larry Morandi is director of the Environment, Energy and Transportation Program at the National Conference of State Legislatures in Denver, Colorado. He specializes in growth management and water resources issues, and authored *New Directions in Growth Management—Incentives for Land Conservation* (1998), and "Growing Pains," an article in the October/November 1998 issue of *State Legislatures* magazine. Prior to joining NCSL in 1979, Morandi served as staff in the Colorado and Connecticut legislatures.



Michigan in 2020: What Legacy Will We Leave?

Paul Hillegonds

It is a pleasure to be here among many friends from my days in elective politics. Another reason I always enjoy returning to Lansing is to take note of the tangible progress this metropolitan area is achieving.

Public investments in such projects as the Lansing Center, ballpark, riverfront park and transportation center have spruced up the downtown and encouraged significant private investment as well. As impressive are the examples of public-private sector collaboration in the campaigns to improve the Lansing public schools and retain and enhance General Motors' investment in the region.

In the era of prosperity and optimism, it is sometimes easy to forget how bleak the outlook for Lansing and other core cities in the state was in the 1980's. I remember one cold, gray morning in 1982, driving by empty parking lots adjacent to the Oldsmobile plant and the state office building complex wondering if Michigan's glory days were over forever. That was a year when the average state unemployment rate was 15.5%, welfare caseloads were at record levels, and the bumper sticker, "Will the last person out of Michigan please turn off the lights" was appearing on our roadways. I never imagined then that in 1999, Michigan's unemployment rate would have dipped below 3.5%—outperforming the national average for four-and-one-half consecutive years. As an aside, permit me to put on my Detroit Renaissance hat and share good news about the work in progress that is Detroit. After five decades of plummeting population, from nearly two million residents at its peak to a little over one million people counted in 1990, it appears that the city's residential base is beginning to stabilize. Housing permits and city income tax returns are up, and so is the value of residential property—a 34% increase in state equalized value since 1995. Births to teenaged mothers in Detroit have declined dramatically and the rate of unemployment has dropped from 17% in 1992 to 7.7% last year, clear evidence that revitalization in Detroit is beginning to have a positive social and economic impact on the people who reside in the city.

Change for the better is possible when people in the public and private sectors work together to address the challenges we face as communities and a state. And consider the assets we have to work with: our state's rich natural and human resources, our geographical proximity to fresh water and population centers of the United States, our highway system, renowned higher education, health care and cultural institutions and an increasingly diverse economic base.

Indeed, the potential for continued prosperity and growth in Michigan is great. But as the data contained in the Urban Caucus report, "Status of Michigan Cities," warns us, a better future for all Michigan citizens is not guaranteed.

If, as private and public sector stewards, we fail to nurture the resources we enjoy today, consider the ugly challenges we could leave for the next generation of policymakers, community leaders and business entrepreneurs in the year 2020.



Challenges such as the loss of open space, more congested, crumbling roads and highways, and ground and surface water spoiled by septic systems and surface run-off because water and sewer construction cannot keep up with poorly planned growth. You may have seen the recent *Detroit News* headline, “Unchecked sprawl throws region into uncertain future.” The article reported SEMCOG projections of a 4.6% population decline in Wayne County between now and 2020, while the predictions of growth range from 14% in Oakland and Macomb counties to 42.5% in Livingston County.

If we fail to nurture the resources we enjoy today, consider the ugly challenges we could leave for the next generation of policymakers, community leaders and business entrepreneurs.

Or the challenge of a more polarized society in which a history of racial distrust and uneven economic opportunity feed each other, leading increasingly to a state of haves and have nots and to the loss of community civility that is so necessary for a healthy economy and quality of life. Today, metropolitan Detroit is the third most racially segregated region in the country. At last count, the median income in Oakland County was \$51,400 compared to \$21,600 in Detroit. The family income of two-thirds of the students in the Detroit Public Schools falls below the poverty line and the school drop-out rate is at least three times higher than the suburban rate. If the drop-out rate does not decline, less than half of the ninth grade students who entered the public schools in Detroit this fall will graduate four years from now.

Of course this not the legacy we want to leave for our children and grandchildren in 2020. So in the next few minutes, I'd like to reflect from the front porch of where I work, Detroit, on some important policy challenges we must address in the years ahead in order to realize our state's full potential.

First, we need to be competitive. In a sea of uneven opportunity, a rising tide of prosperity may not lift all boats, but without a rising tide there is no hope for the poorest among us. Policymakers should be very cautious about using regulatory powers in the marketplace. The relative absence of government regulation of the industry most responsible for the steady economic growth we are enjoying—information technology—speaks volumes about the importance of policies that reduce cost and regulatory obstacles to productivity.

The legislature should be applauded for its decisions since the first Urban Caucus Summit to phase down Detroit income tax rates as a condition for maintaining state revenue sharing to the city—and to phase down the state income tax rate and phase out the Single Business Tax. The phased reduction strategy is an acknowledgement that tax rates must be competitive and, at the same time, sustain basic government services—public infrastructure, education, health and safety, environmental protection—if Michigan is to be prosperous in the years ahead.

Increasingly, we will have to focus on restructuring our state's tax policies and delivering government services in ways that reflect our rapidly changing information and service-based economy. Last year's report commissioned by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation indicates that since the mid-1970s, jobs in Michigan's durable manufacturing sector have dropped from 30% of total state employment to 15%, while the percentage of skilled service jobs has increased from 15% to 30%. When you consider that Michigan's sales tax is now a major source of K-12 school funding, and that this sales tax only applies to goods, not services, it is clear that future deliberations over tax policy in our state will have to deal with structure as well as rates.

Second, it will be our challenge to encourage wise land use planning without over-managing economic growth. Neither cities nor suburbs nor neighboring smaller towns can realize their full potential without working together as metropolitan regions. In our fast-changing world, Michigan communities must compete with

regions like Minneapolis-St. Paul, Indianapolis, or Portland, Oregon. There regional growth management strategies, mixed-income housing policies and tax base sharing to support activities like public transit and cultural institutions are resulting in new investment and prosperity.

By the use of incentives and state-authorized local land use tools, other forward-looking states are demonstrating that growth management, private property rights and local control can be compatible.

Likewise, land use policies and economic growth need not be an either/or choice. In fact, to simply oppose or ignore the impact of sprawl will ultimately undermine our state's ability to grow and compete economically. For example, if growth trends like those projected by SEMCOG for southeast Michigan continue throughout our state, future legislatures will not be able to raise taxes high enough to build new schools, roads and other necessary infrastructure, much less maintain what we have. What's more, unplanned, spread-out growth will increasingly diminish our second and third largest industries—agriculture and tourism and recreation—not to mention the damage to one of our state's greatest competitive assets: the quality of life we enjoy.

Third, education. Disadvantaged citizens in poorer communities will not reap the benefits of wise economic and land use policies—more jobs and stronger neighborhoods—if, as a society, we do not commit ourselves to continuous school improvement and high achievement standards.

The controversial law authorizing the mayor of Detroit to appoint a reform school board was a dramatic and I believe necessary state response to a failing school district that directly affects the lives and livelihoods of 180,000 students. Yet the problems confronting the Detroit Public Schools are not unique. The greatest challenge for school districts wherever they are is to balance their role as democratic melting pots in a very diverse society with the need to maintain uncompromisingly high standards of behavior and learning.

As stewards of our state, we must stand steadfast for high standards and accountability measures in our public schools. At the same time, we cannot ignore the growing parental demand in failing districts for educational alternatives that work today—not five or ten years from now—for their children. Today poor parents are flocking to an increasing number of publicly chartered academies that are opening in Detroit. And recently, when a privately funded voucher program advertised \$1,000 tuition scholarships for 1,000 Detroit K–12 students for this upcoming school year, nearly 30,000 parents applied.

The gap between rich and poor, advantaged and disadvantaged will grow not because parents are unwilling to make choices that are in the best interest of their children. In this information, high-skills age, the gap is growing and will continue to grow if all parents—not just those with means—do not have more freedom and responsibility to choose and shape the best learning environment for their children.

Fourth, race relations. We cannot close the racial divide by sweeping past conflicts under the rug of history and denying the vestiges and consequences of discrimination that remain. To suggest the racism and strained race relations are ancient history ignores Detroit's not very distant past. There, in 1964—just three years before the well-documented riots—an initiated city ordinance to legalize housing discrimination on the bases of race was adopted by a 55–45% vote of the people.



How constructively we participate in the ongoing debate over affirmative action and other race-related policies may well affect the long-term future of a state and nation whose population fifty years from now will be more brown and black than white.

This question of how we are going to engage ourselves in the decision-making process leads me to one final thought for legislators and all here tonight who help the legislature to function. You are not only stewards of the state. You are stewards of the House and Senate.

In a society where communities are increasingly segregated by race and economic class, one of the great strengths of the legislature is its diversity of gender, race, geography, life experience and political perspective. But that diversity means little in those instances when legislators do not listen to, learn from and respect each other.



My fondest memories of the House are those instances when representatives painfully, but successfully, negotiated broad, bipartisan agreements on complicated, important public policy issues; Proposal A and public school finance come to mind. Almost always the most effective advocates around the negotiating tables were those who asked good questions, listened carefully, and grasped the concerns and needs of other bargainers. In the problem-solving process, good questions are usually far more effective than the most articulate speeches.

Today you are operating under a constitutional constraint of term limitations—which erases institutional memory and doesn't give you much time to achieve your goals or build the human relationships that make goals more attainable. To reckon with these realities, I urge you to use forums like the Bipartisan Urban Caucus to consider and advocate for process improvements that I and others who served before you were never able to fully implement.

For example, in dealing with the loss of institutional memory, there is an even greater need for lawmakers to better define and record the purpose of policies you enact. To develop performance measurements that you and future legislators can use in evaluating the success of policies and programs you enact. To schedule more time for oversight and the evaluation of results.

In addressing legislative training, beginning-of-session orientations and occasional retreats are no longer enough. My own introduction to Michigan tax policy was made possible by a wise, old veteran committee chair who, on his own, initiated for legislators a six-month, once-a-week series of seminars on the history and structure of state taxation. By their calendar and schedule-setting powers, leadership teams and committee chairs have the ability to institutionalize continuing education programs for new and experienced legislators. The guaranteed results will be deeper, broader member knowledge of policies and procedures—and more collegiality among policymakers.

The reflections I have shared this evening on problems and policies confronting Michigan in the new century are not new to you. The first Urban Vision Summit of the Urban Caucus in 1998 produced numerous policy principles and recommendations that merit refinement and action still today.

Whether or not the constructive exchanges at the first and present urban summits translate into positive actions will depend on process as much as policy. Please look beyond the frantic pace and constant demands of your legislative service, and ask yourself, “How do I want my stewardship to be remembered 20 years from now? Did the values and ideas I imparted to colleagues and constituents inspire respect and unity, or fear and division? Did I leave the legislative institution and state I served a better place?”

How we decide to get along as a body politic will determine whether our communities will succeed together or fail apart. How you exercise the stewardship with which you have been entrusted will help to determine the legacy we all leave—for better or for ill—to the generations who will follow us.

You have an awesome responsibility and a magnificent opportunity. I wish you well.

How we decide to get along as a body politic will determine whether our communities will succeed together or fail apart.



Urban Landscapes and Principles of New Urbanism

Douglas Kelbaugh

We must stop subsidizing the automobile. It is society's ends—such as education, the arts, parks, housing—and not its means that deserve tax dollars.

Douglas Kelbaugh discussed the impacts of sprawl on urban planning and design in the United States. He compared America's land use patterns with those of other nations, and described a number of social, fiscal, and environmental consequences of U.S. dependence upon the automobile.

Kelbaugh described seven policy initiatives that he considers crucial if the United States is to reduce urban sprawl:

1. *Get development priorities right.* Kelbaugh recommended that existing communities, because their social, physical, and institutional infrastructures are already in place, should be given higher priority than building new communities. He suggested Urban Growth Boundaries around towns and cities as one effective way to encourage infill and redevelopment of existing areas.
2. *Get automobiles under control.* Kelbaugh recommended that society stop subsidizing the automobile. He recommended adoption of taxes and regulations that make market prices more commensurate with true and total costs of automobile travel, including right-of-way land, roads, bridges, police patrols, gasoline subsidies, congestion, noise, pollution, and highway injuries and deaths. Kelbaugh also identified several secondary economic incentives, including congestion pricing, pay-as-you-drive auto insurance and location-efficient mortgages.
3. *Get transit on track.* In conjunction with strategies to reduce society's dependence on automobiles, Kelbaugh recommended that public mobility, access and walkability be incorporated into federal, state and local transportation policy. He also advocated comprehensive regional transit systems, including light-rail systems where feasible.
4. *Get planning.* Kelbaugh recommended establishment of a regional plan and planning body at the metropolitan level, with the power to require municipalities and counties to establish a vision for regional growth and improvements across jurisdictional boundaries. He suggested the adoption of urban design guidelines and neighborhood-level plans as an overlay to existing zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans.
5. *Get more granny flats and live-work units.* While this may seem at first to be a secondary issue, Kelbaugh indicated that increasing the availability of accessory units such as these should be first-order business. Kelbaugh considers accessory dwelling units and live-work units as a good measure of the social health of a city.
6. *Get funding and taxing right.* Kelbaugh recommended that allocation of government funds be tied to local land use, transportation, and development that nurtures compact, affordable, coherent, and less auto-dependent communities. He also highlighted tax-base revenue sharing systems as a promising tool to increase equity and reduce competition within regions.



7. *Get governance right.* Finally, Kelbaugh recommended that government be reconfigured to empower to a greater extent both the region and the neighborhood. In addition to regional planning and funding systems, Kelbaugh urged increasing the localized development of specific development plans and design guidelines.

Kelbaugh concluded his presentation by discussing some of the adverse consequences of not acting to reduce urban sprawl. These include increased air and water pollution, more traffic congestion, increasingly expensive housing, less and less open space and wilderness, and social unrest due to growing inequality. Kelbaugh acknowledged that to make many of the changes he recommends would be difficult, but he maintained that continuing on the present course would result in significant and growing problems.



We must find strategies that allow our metropolitan areas to grow in ways that do not leave behind hollowed-out inner cities that are racially and economically segregated.



The Urban Core: It's Back

Curtis Johnson

Curtis Johnson spoke on the trends he has observed concerning core cities around the United States. He observed that cities appear, “in more and more regions, like an under-valued stock, finally rising in the market.” Johnson offered the following five assumptions about how cities stand today, and described six trends he believes are driving urban change.

ASSUMPTIONS FROM OBSERVING AMERICAN CITIES

1. Cities and their surrounding suburbs and communities are highly interdependent. The stereotypes that each has used to characterize the other still survive, but the majority of research suggests that suburban incomes rise faster in regions that have healthy center cities.
2. In areas that would otherwise be good markets for commercial and industrial development, environmental clean-up and liability-clearing pays off. Nearly everywhere, new tax revenues overwhelm the costs of clean-up. “In our nearly-everything-is-subsidized politics,” Johnson remarked, “this one actually works!”
3. Where we put things in regions does matter. Regions that delegate location decisions to developers, and then dutifully chase the consequences with ever more infrastructure, can observe the case of Atlanta to see some of the undesirable outcomes.
4. We must do whatever it takes to be sure that the older, interior parts of the region are attractive, competitive, livable places. Larger and longer pipes and roads and other infrastructure loom as horrendous long-term costs. If we want to slow or stop urban sprawl, then there is no alternative to restoring livability to central cities. People are rational and the market is powerful. People will go where their best interests lie.
5. It has been demonstrated—“from New York City to New Orleans”—that crime can be suppressed through better policing. Using software strategies to increase precinct accountability or using the simple logic of more community-oriented policing, cities are getting better results. But it has also been demonstrated that merely sequestering troublemakers in prisons doesn’t assure a healthy community.

If you want to slow sprawl, then you have to do whatever it takes to be sure that the older, interior parts of the region are attractive, competitive, livable places.

TRENDS THAT WILL SHAPE THE FUTURE OF CITIES

1. Business is discovering a substantial under-tapped market in our core cities. The purchasing power, labor pool, and entrepreneurial advantages of central cities will continue to emerge as important market forces.



2. Business is speaking out on issues of growth management. Because most firms and knowledge workers are “footloose assets,” quality of life considerations have emerged as the driving criterion in making decisions about where to live or do business. Traffic in Atlanta and housing costs in Silicon Valley are two examples where such considerations are having an impact on regions.
3. Continued low-density development at the expense of maintaining a vital core produces long-term costs that no one is willing to pay. Ultimately, such development can threaten an entire region’s competitive position. Showing people these numbers does change the local politics.
4. Economic development practices are increasingly sophisticated in nature and global in scope. Some examples include regional cluster analyses, and examining the alignment between the way public resources are spent and the nature of the economic base being sought.
5. New housing is showing up in cities, in locations where it would have been unimaginable a decade ago. Some examples include cities like San Diego and Dallas, and small, southern cities like Chattanooga. Housing values in solid neighborhoods in central cities are beginning to rise faster than at the edge. Demography and traffic will drive trend further, as baby boomers are turning fifty and traffic is destined to be the top local political issue within 5 years.
6. Using powerful new visualization tools and a new spirit of public participation, some cities are showing how to “love the NIMBYs.”
In many mature suburbs, there’s a resurgence of interest in establishing a stronger sense of place. We’re discovering that we built a lot of subdivisions in the second half of the 20th century, but not many real communities.



We built a lot of subdivisions in the second half of the 20th century, but not many real communities.

Johnson concluded his remarks by emphasizing that in the core of many older cities this challenge can only be met by getting back the primary economy, restoring a level of confidence that draws institutions to return, and most of all, attracting the people who can choose to live anywhere. To succeed, Johnson argued, we must also get beyond where we are today on the issues of schools and race. “Both are ripe for fresh approaches,” he predicted, “as we slowly emerge from the long preoccupation with individualism and separateness.”



Growth Management: Perspectives from Other States

Larry Morandi

Regionalism can work and still maintain urban values if urban entities are willing to cooperate, and they cannot cooperate if they're not confident.

Larry Morandi discussed trends in growth management strategies implemented by other state legislatures. He prefaced his remarks by acknowledging that Michigan's strong home rule tradition may require that specific approaches used by other states be adapted in order to be effective in Michigan.

Morandi provided examples of four distinct approaches that state legislatures have used in seeking to manage growth and land use. The first of these relies heavily on the existing locally dominated planning and zoning structure. This approach seeks to guide localities in making planning decisions without adding new regulation. For example, the Arizona legislature has required that any locally adopted comprehensive plans incorporate a land use element, a growth area element, and a cost of development element. Together these measures are intended to promote infill development; identify areas suitable for multimodal transportation, mixed use development, and infrastructure expansion; and require that developers pay a fair share of infrastructure.

A second approach to growth management, and one that Morandi indicated might be suited to adoption by various states, is the use of incentives. As an example, Morandi cited recent Florida legislation that encourages municipalities to promote redevelopment by designating specific urban infill areas. If they do so, incentives from the state to the local government include the authority to issue community redevelopment revenue bonds, community redevelopment tax increment financing, and priority in the allocation of private activity bonds. The municipality, in turn, can pass these incentives along to developers by waiving permit and license fees, waiving local option sales taxes, expediting the permit process, lowering impact fees; prioritizing infrastructure spending; or absorbing a developer's transportation concurrency costs.

Morandi cited Maryland legislation as an example of leveraging state assistance, the third approach to growth management. Although Maryland, unlike Michigan, is a state where county governments are especially strong, Morandi suggested that the Maryland statutes might be effectively adapted to the Michigan context. In Maryland, counties are required to have plans that include defined priority funding areas to encourage infill development. If a county applies for state assistance to support an economic growth project, it must certify the request is consistent with the locally developed priority funding areas. Otherwise, the state will not provide financial assistance. In conjunction with the priority funding area provision, Maryland has also implemented a Rural Legacy Program to enhance the protection of natural resources and maintain the viability of agricultural and forestry lands through the purchase of such land by local governments or land trusts. Funding sources for this program include a portion of the state's property transfer tax, general obligation bonds and zero-coupon bonds.

The fourth strategy for growth management utilized by state governments, one that Morandi noted is not widely used, is the regulatory approach. In Georgia, this approach was recently taken to address transportation policy after the Environmental Protection Agency declared the Atlanta region in non-attainment of air pollution



standards and suspended federal transportation spending in the region. In response, Governor Roy Barnes worked with the legislature to establish the Georgia Regional Transit Agency (GRTA). This regional body of thirteen members appointed by the Governor has the authority to issue up to one billion dollars in bonds, may purchase facilities and exert powers of eminent domain, and has the power to rescind local government development permits when such development would have a regional impact.

Morandi also shared two examples in which local government, rather than state legislatures, enacted growth management policies. In the Dayton, Ohio, area a countywide revenue sharing plan was implemented to support economic development in the wake of an Air Force base closure. To fund economic development grants for the 29 local governments in Montgomery County, the local sales tax was increased by ½%. In order to qualify for the grants, however, a locality is required to share up to 15% of the increase in local property and income tax revenues attributable to the economic growth of the region. This is a voluntary revenue sharing program, with incentives in the form of economic development grants.

In Pittsburgh, Morandi indicated, the fiscal policy of a “split property tax” has contributed to urban redevelopment and diminished sprawl. Contrary to national trends, the city of Pittsburgh is growing faster than its surrounding region. This has been accomplished by increasing the proportion of property tax that is levied on the land and decreasing the tax on the facilities located there. This fiscal approach discourages the practice of speculators holding idle property in urban areas by increasing the tax consequences of not developing the land for productive use.

In conclusion, Morandi expressed the opinion that fiscal policy, rather than land use planning, will in the long term have a greater impact on growth management practices across the country. He suggested that approaches that offer financial incentives, and those that leverage state government contributions to achieve growth management objectives, are most likely to be effective.



Fiscal policy and not land use planning will have the greatest impact on growth management.



Breakout Sessions

After the second morning plenary address, Summit participants joined in small group discussions to gather ideas for improving urban policy in the areas of education, housing, land use and the environment, and transportation. A bipartisan pair of state legislators led each discussion. Faculty and graduate students from MSU summarized the key points from each session. Breakout discussions continued after lunch, and the Summit concluded in late afternoon with a summary of key points from each policy area.



Education

PRINCIPLES

- Parental involvement in education is crucial.
- Every child should walk into a building that feels safe and welcoming.
- Effective long-term partnerships are essential between schools, businesses and the community.

ISSUES

- Schools continue to segregate youth by race, economic status, and achievement.
- No statewide plan exists to ensure sufficient infrastructure funding for schools.
- Teacher availability is a significant concern in certain urban or poor rural districts.
- Family and societal factors result in some students arriving at school not ready to learn.
- MEAP scores are of questionable value as a means of evaluating teachers, schools and districts.
- Some parents “have the will but lack the skill” to participate effectively in their child’s education.
- Tension persists around the balance between local control and the state government role in education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Depoliticize local school boards.
- Implement parent training and empowerment initiatives.
- Use MEAP scores as a tool to improve schools rather than evaluate them.
- Listen to the opinions of children in making decisions that impact education.
- Train teachers and administrators to use more effective discipline techniques.
- Provide alternative routes to teacher certification and incentives to teach in particular areas.
- Adjust the length of the school day and year to increase educational quality and better meet the needs of students and families.





Housing

PRINCIPLES

- The state of Michigan has a role to play in housing.
- Housing should not be viewed in isolation from other policy topics.
- Market-based economics is not sufficient for providing housing to all communities.

ISSUES

- Michigan is only one of twelve states with no general revenue committed to affordable housing.
- Families at or below 60% of median income have the least chance of obtaining affordable housing.
- The capacity to build affordable housing has grown over the past fifteen years, but many gaps persist.
- Because of the restrictions on how it may be used, redirecting unspent TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) money to fund housing will not solve the problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase the use of tax incentives for “economically diverse” developments.
- Create a state version of the federal low income tax credit to spur investment.
- Standardize a statewide building code, along with code interpretation and enforcement.
- Utilize the experience of local Community Development Corporations in the production of affordable housing.
- Modify the state historic tax credit to make it available to investors as well as owners and to eliminate the sunset provision.
- Establish an affordable housing trust fund program with a dedicated revenue stream, to fund services and other soft costs as well as capital costs.
- Consider programs such as Montgomery County, Maryland, that require integrating low-income housing within new developments and provide incentives for doing so.





Land Use and the Environment

PRINCIPLES

- Land use and the environment are intimately linked to the quality of life in Michigan.
- Land use policies are inseparable from transportation, zoning, economic development, and agriculture policies.

ISSUES

- Environmental and land use issues cut across multiple lines of jurisdiction.
- Brownfield redevelopment initiatives have been quite successful in Michigan.
- The strong tradition of “home rule” in Michigan will determine the viability of alternative solutions.
- The viability and quality of life of cities are of increasing importance to business location decisions.
- Communities and decision makers need better sources of information on costs, alternatives, sample policies, and success stories.
- Limited public awareness about the implications of land use policy makes it difficult to generate political support for comprehensive strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Employ incentive-based approaches to encourage collaboration.
- Match issues and strategies to the appropriate level of government.
- Provide state incentives for regional planning, using a “big carrot, small stick” approach.
- Provide local and regional governments with tools and information to ensure appropriate development.
- Develop and use creative problem-solving techniques such as charrettes (structured time for community members and planning experts to jointly consider alternatives).





Transportation

PRINCIPLES

- World-class states and cities require world-class transportation systems.
- Maintaining existing infrastructure takes precedence over investment in new construction.

ISSUES

- The demand for new roads most commonly arises at the local level.
- Policies that favor automobiles over transit contribute to urban sprawl.
- Influencing transportation trends is more practical at the state than the local level.
- Three billion dollars—8% of state's revenue—was spent on transportation last year.
- Government spending on parking structures, highway patrols, subsidizes automobile use.
- Highway spending constitutes 90% of state transportation budget; transit amounts to 10%.
- Of the 500 miles of new roads constructed in Michigan last year, all were constructed by the private sector—none by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Coordinate transportation planning with land use planning.
- Consider transportation planning examples from outside the United States.
- Extend the local veto option on transportation projects to include townships.
- Recognize the subsidies for automobiles inherent in current transportation policy.
- Include vehicle leases and automotive sales by retailers in the “auto-related sales tax” figures that are used to calculate transit spending.
- Implement “congestion mitigation” policies, such as giving free bus passes to residents who commute along especially congested routes.
- Restore state transit appropriations to the full ten percent of transportation spending permitted by the constitution; increase the constitutional cap on transit spending.





Appendix



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Status of Michigan Cities

An Index of Urban Well-Being

PREPARED FOR
Michigan Bipartisan Urban Caucus and the
Michigan Economic and Environmental Roundtable

PREPARED BY
Public Sector Consultants, Inc.

August 1999

There is both bad and good news about Michigan cities. On the one hand, in our sample 13 municipalities, population continues to shift from the urban core to the surrounding area and farther, taking with it job opportunities and economic activity. On the other hand, crime is down significantly in the cities, and general measures indicate that residents' physical health has improved. The data and our analysis of each measure are presented in detail in the exhibits that comprise the body of this report. Our findings may be summarized as follows.

- **Urban population** continues to fall, both in absolute terms and relative to the nonurban areas. From 1990 to 1996, the population in the 13 representative cities fell 2.3 percent, while during the same period the population of the state rose 4.7 percent. In 1996, the population of the 13 cities represented 32 percent of the total surrounding counties, down from 37 percent in 1990.
- **Population change** results both from natural events (births minus deaths) and migration. Each of the cities (except Traverse City) experienced considerable out-migration from 1990 to 1996. Net out-migration was as high as 17 percent of the 1996 population in Saginaw and more than 9 percent in Detroit.
- The **unemployment rate** dropped sharply in most of the 13 cities from 1988 to 1998. The average fell from 8.6 percent unemployed in 1988 to 5.0 percent last year and declined in each of the 13 cities. Flint enjoyed the biggest drop, from 19.0 percent in 1988 to 9.8 percent in 1998, a reduction of nearly one-half.
- Nevertheless, the **unemployment rate** gap between the urban and nonurban areas increased. In 1988 the 13-city average unemployment rate was 13.2 percent higher than the statewide average; by 1998 it was 32 percent higher.
- The relative decline in the economic activity in the urban areas is evident in the data on **total employment**. The number of workers in the 13 cities fell 1.6 percent from 1988 to 1998, but during the same 10-year period, employment increased 15.7 percent for the state as a whole. In 1988, 22.6 percent of state employment was in the 13 cities; by 1998 the figure had fallen to 19.2 percent. If the 1988 ratio of urban-to-state employment had remained constant, in these 13 cities there would have been additional 164,000 workers last year.
- Median **household income** in the 13 cities rose from \$25,140 in 1989 to \$33,483 (estimated) in 1997. Although this 33 percent increase is only slightly above the 29 percent inflation rate during the same period, it is far below the 43 percent increase for the state as a whole. In the most recent year, median household income in the 13 cities was only about three-quarters of the median state income.
- Overall, **property values** grew 4.2 percent in the 13 cities from 1988 to 1998—much less than the 6.9 percent average of the counties in which the cities are located. Business property recorded the largest difference in growth rates, rising 3.5 percent in the cities and 6.0 percent for the counties as a whole. In 1988, of all business property value in the 12 counties in which the 13 cities are located, 72 percent was located within the cities; by 1998 the percentage had fallen to only 54 percent.



- **Home ownership** rates are much higher in nonurban areas than in cities. In 1998 an estimated 49 percent of housing units in the 13 cities were owner-occupied single-family homes, compared to 65.7 percent for the state as a whole. Home ownership rates in the cities essentially were unchanged from 1989 to 1998.
- **Crime**, especially major crime (murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, arson, and car theft) declined dramatically in the 13 cities from 1986 to 1996: from 103.0 to 75.8 major crimes per thousand population—a 26.4 percent decline. Total crime fell 13.6 percent during the same period. However, the crime rate remains much higher in cities than in nonurban areas. At 75.8 instances per thousand population in 1996, the major crime rate in the 13 cities was 63 percent above the state average.
- More than 21 percent of all Michigan **K–12 pupils** are enrolled in one of the 13 urban school districts. We compiled composite satisfactory and proficient MEAP scores for the cities, their intermediate school districts (ISDs), and the state. In 1998, 38.9 percent of the 13 cities' students achieved satisfactory or proficient MEAP scores, up slightly from 37.0 percent in 1996 (the MEAP has undergone so many changes in the last decade that we concentrated only on the last few years). The average 13-city MEAP score, 38.9 percent in 1998, was below the 46 percent ISD average.
- There are more **low-income families** in the cities than in the nonurban areas. In 1998, 49.5 percent of students in the 13 school districts qualified (based on family income) for the federal free or reduced-price school lunch program. This compares to only 31 percent of the students in the ISDs in which the cities are located and 32 percent for the state as a whole.
- On average, **school spending per pupil** is higher in the urban districts than it is for their surrounding ISDs or state as a whole. The \$6,241 state foundation grant per pupil in 1998 is \$167 higher than the ISD average and \$180 higher than the statewide average. Had we included the state's "at-risk" funding (a program to help pupils at risk of academic failure) the gap would be even wider, since the greater percentage of at-risk monies are directed to urban schools. The 1998 average urban teacher salary, \$47,688, was \$679 higher than the state average but \$64 below the average for the ISDs in which the cities are located.
- The 13 urban schools in this study have higher **dropout rates** and lower graduation rates than the average of the surrounding ISDs or the state as a whole. In 1998 the average dropout rate for the 13 school districts was 10.4 percent, ranging from a high of 26 percent in Detroit to a low of 3.0 percent in Warren. On average, the dropout rate for the urban schools is nearly double the average rate for their surrounding ISDs.
- **City government finances** improved greatly from 1987 to 1997, with most cities increasing their fund balance during this period. A combination of strong economic growth and, in some cities, operating millage increases, have left city governments with healthier local budgets than in the late 1980s.



- Measures of the **physical health** of city residents improved during the last ten years. Infant mortality declined in 9 of the 13 cities. For all, the rate fell from 13.0 per 1,000 live births in 1987 to 10.6 in 1997, an 18.5 percent decline. Even so, the infant death rate in most of the 13 cities was above the rate for the county in which the city is located: In 1997, the average rate for the 13 cities was approximately 20 percent above that of the surrounding counties.
- The rate of **heart disease and cancer deaths** also declined in the 13 cities. From 1987 to 1997, the heart disease death rate fell from 380 per 100,000 residents to 320, a 16 percent decline. The cancer death rate also fell slightly, from 210 per 100,000 residents in 1987 to 205 in 1997. Nevertheless, the death rate from these two diseases still is much higher in the urban centers than in it is in the counties in which they are located.
- Tracking **environmental conditions** in our major urban areas is very difficult because the data are inconsistent among the cities and collection methods vary from year to year. Clearly, an important policy objective should be to upgrade the available urban environmental data. This report summarizes four measures of pollution: number of hazardous waste facilities, number of “brownfield” sites (abandoned, idle, or underused industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is impeded by real or perceived environmental contamination) being redeveloped with state funding, toxic-release inventory, and “ozone days.” The 13 cities have a high percentage—39 percent—of all hazardous waste facilities in the state yet only 21 percent of the state’s population. In 1997 nearly 50 percent of all state dollars directed to cleaning up brownfield sites were in the 13 cities. Finally, as recorded by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, the combined on-site releases and transfers of toxic materials in the 13 cities rose 73 percent from 1990 to 1996—from 53 million to 92 million pounds a year.

Index of Urban Well-Being

In an effort to summarize the change in living conditions in Michigan’s urban centers, we have compiled an “index of urban well-being.”

As is the case with any composite index, the components and calculations are somewhat arbitrary. In most cases, this index measures the relative progress of selected Michigan cities in comparison to the county or ISD in which they are located and/or the state as a whole. For this report, the index comprises 12 factors. These particular 12 variables were selected because they represent the broad subject areas covered in this report and a full range of data is available for each.

- City population growth relative to the county average (1990 to 1996)
- Absolute change in urban unemployment rates (1988 to 1998)
- Change in the unemployment rate relative to the county average (1988 to 1998)
- Relative change in total employment (1988 to 1998)
- Growth of median household income (1989 to 1997)
- Growth in total property values (1988 to 1998)
- Relative growth of business property values (1988 to 1998)
- Change in total crime (1986 to 1996)



- Change in crime relative to the statewide average (1986 to 1996)
- Relative improvement in MEAP scores (1996 to 1998)
- Relative change in graduation rates (1996 to 1998)
- City government fund balance as a percentage of total revenue (1987 to 1997)

A base year was calculated and set to 100. The most current data were used to measure the change from the base. Due to data limitations, the base year of the index is a composite of many years—1987, 1988, 1990, and 1996. The most recent data for each of the series also vary. The goal is to recreate and improve the index each year the report is released.

Overall, the index of urban well-being fell from 100 in the base year of the late 1980s to 97.5 today, a 2.5 percent decline. Of the 12 measures used for this index, seven declined and five increased. The biggest improvements were the absolute decline in the unemployment rate and the fall in the crime index, but neither measure improves when compared to the average for the surrounding county. Exhibit 1 lists the 1999 value for the various factors.

1999 Index of Urban Well-Being

compared to a base year of 100

MEASURE	CURRENT YEAR VALUE
Relative population change	93.8
Unemployment rate	112.0
Relative unemployment rate	83.7
Total employment	87.1
Average household income	96.8
Total property values	96.1
Business property values	75.0
Crime index	113.7
Relative crime index	97.4
MEAP test scores	107.0
Graduation rates	101.0
City government fund balance	106.8
Composite Index	97.5

SOURCE: Public Sector Consultants, Inc.



Summit Participants

Rebecca Allen	Michigan Capital Fund for Housing	Ben Fedewa	Michigan Housing Development Authority
Sandy Allen	City of Lansing	Dennis Fedewa	Department of Environmental Quality
Kristine Angel	Office of Representative Pan Godchaux	Thomas J. Fegan	Wayne County-JED
Rob Bacigalupi	Traverse City DDA	Dana W. Foster	City of Brighton
Ann K. Beaujean	Michigan State University	Jeff Frommeyer	Michigan State University
James Bedell	Bay City Planning	Fr. Joseph Gagnon	MOSES
Tony Benavides	City of Lansing	Julie Gales	Legislative Service Bureau
Maenette Benham	Michigan State University	Valde Garcia	State Representative, 86th District
Kenneth W. Bensen	Michigan Habitat for Humanity	Jeff Gerritt	Detroit Free Press
Terry Bergstrom	Legislative Service Bureau	Pan Godchaux	State Representative, 40th District
Virgil Bernero	Ingham County Commissioner	Amy Golke	Michigan State University
David Bertram	Michigan Townships Association	Jose Gomez	Michigan State University
Patricia Birkholz	State Representative, 88th District	Barbara Gordon	City of Kalamazoo
Rochelle Black	Oakland University	Edgar G. Gordon	City of Kalamazoo
Harry Blecker	University of Michigan Flint	Michael Green	Department of Corrections
Patricia Bluman	City of Kalamazoo	Nancy Green	Senate Democratic Staff
Rose Bogradus	State Representative, 47th District	Robert Hagerty	Grand Valley State University
Beth Bogue	Sustainable Lansing	Bill Hamilton	House Fiscal Agency
Doug Bovin	State Representative, 108th District	Karen-Kendrick Hands	EMEAC
Jonathan Bradford	ICCF	Stephen Hands	Transportation Rides United
Mark Breederland	Michigan State University Extension	Michael Hanley	State Representative, 95th District
Mary Brown		John Hansen	State Representative, 52nd District
William R. Byl	State Representative, 75th District	Lisa Hansknecht	House Democratic Policy Staff
Robert Campau	Michigan Association of Realtors	Stacey Harysak	Michigan Township Association
Jean Carlberg	City of Ann Arbor	Doug Hart	State Representative, 73rd District
Doris Carlice	LCMS	Damon Harvey	Council Member, Nicholas Hood
Sandra Caul	State Representative, 99th District	LeRoy Harvey	Michigan State University
Rick Chapla	Right Place Program	Roy A. Hayes	Michigan State University Extension
Mary Charles	Michigan Municipal League	Gordon Hayward	Peninsula Township
Sandra Clark	State Historic Preservation Office	Gary Heidel	MSHDA
Susan Cocciarelli	Michigan State University	Edwina Henry	City of Detroit
Jon Coleman	Tri-County Regional Planning	Tom Hickner	Bay County
Tom Coleman	Ingham County E.D.C.	Karen Hildebrant	Media Relations, House of Representatives
Jay Connor	The Collaboratory	Richard Hill-Rowley	Environmental Research
Paul G. Connors	Legislative Service Bureau	Paul Hillemonds	Detroit Renaissance
Dan Cooney	City of Kalamazoo	Doug Hoekstra	City of Wyoming
Gretchen Couraud	Lansing Regional Chamber	Tom J. Holm	Urban Options
Samuel Craig	St Peter Claver Career Training Center	Dave Hollister	Mayor, City of Lansing
Bernard Crawford	Michigan State University	Curtis Holt	City of Wyoming
Jim Curran	SMART	Tammy Holt	Michigan State University
John Czarnecki	Michigan Economic Development Corp.	Jeff Horner	Citizens Research Council of Michigan
Deila L. Davis	Council Member Nicholas Hood	Kendra Howard	House Democratic Policy Staff
Larry Davis	Michigan State University Extension	Sarah Hubbard	Detroit Regional Chamber
Ron DeCook	County Road Association of Michigan	Maxie Jackson	MSU Center for Urban Affairs
Eric R. DeLong	City of Grand Rapids	Robert E. James	MSHDA
Pat DiGiovanni	City of Kalamazoo	Jon Jellema	State Representative, 89th District
Robert Donahue	Oakland County	Charlene Turner Johnson	Michigan Neighborhood Partnership
Patricia Donath	Michigan League of Women Voters	Curtis Johnson	The Citistates Group
Joseph W. Dorsey	Michigan State University	Rick Johnson	State Representative, 102nd District
Doug Drake	Wayne State University Policy Center	Mike Johnston	Michigan Manufacturers Association
Christopher Dunbar	Michigan State University	Rev. Steve Jones	MOSES
Lorna Elliot	House Democratic Policy Staff	Robert B. Jones	Mayor, City of Kalamazoo
Rev. James Ephraim	MOSES	Dan Joranko	Michigan State University
Scott Everett	Michigan Farm Bureau	Janice Joseph	MOSES
Lois Ewen	Office of Representative William R. Byl	Jay C. Juergensen	Juergensen and Associates
Michael Farley	Legislative Service Bureau	Larry Julian	State Representative, 85th District



Ted Jurkewicz	High Scope Education Research Foundation	Jeff Roth	Office of Representative William R. Byl
Keith Keeler	Office of Representative Jack Minore	Jack Rozdilsky	Michigan State University
Douglas Kelbaugh	University of Michigan, Department of Architecture	Bill Rustem	Public Sector Consultants
Caroline Kennedy	Michigan Municipal League	Susan Safford	Office of Representative Pan Godchaux
Polly Kent	Department of Planning	Maurice Sanders	Office of Representative LaMar Lemmons
Arminda Koch	Department of Natural Resources	Mark Schauer	State Representative, 62nd District
John K. Koches	GVSU-Water Resources Institute	Scott Schragger	Michigan Municipal League
Chris Kolb	City of Ann Arbor	Nick Scott	Office of Representative Samuel Buzz Thomas III
Dennis Koons	Michigan Association of Realtors	Ingrid Sheldon	Mayor, City of Ann Arbor
Bill Kordenbrock	Family Independence Agency	Sam Singh	Michigan Nonprofit Association
Victoria Kovari	Swan Housing	Charles Smith	
Neil Kulmuench	Governmental Consultant Services	Conan Smith	Michigan Environmental Council
Gabriel Labovitz	MSHDA	Patricia Spitzley	E.C.T.
Ed LaForge	State Representative, 60th District	Ellen Sprouls	Impression 5
Rex L. LaMore	MSU Center for Urban Affairs	Tonja Stapleton	University of Michigan
Harold Leeman Jr.	City of Lansing	Celeste Starks	Michigan State University
LaMar Lemmons III	State Representative, 2nd District	Cathy Stauffer	Michigan State University
Matt Levin	Office of Representative Samuel Buzz Thomas III	Julie Stoneman	Michigan Environmental Council
Jim Lively	Land Information Access Association	Eileen Storer	High/Scope
Amy Malmer	SEMCOG	Faron Supanich-Goldner	MSU Center for Urban Affairs
Lynne Martinez	State Representative, 69th District	Chris Swope	Senate Democratic Office
Pat McAvoy	Michigan Townships Association	Paul Tait	SEMCOG
Mark McDaniel	Michigan Capital Fund for Housing	Craig Thomas	Citistates
Robert McKay	State Historic Preservation Office	June Thomas	Michigan State University
Hannah McKinney	City of Kalamazoo	Samuel Buzz Thomas	State Representative, 10th District
Brett J. McRae	Senate Democratic Staff	Thomas L. Thorburn	W. K. Kellogg Foundation
John Melcher	MSU Center for Urban Affairs	Dozier W. Thornton	MSU Center for Urban Affairs
Larry Meyer	City of Lansing	Steve Tobocman	Community Advocates of Detroit
Jack Minore	State Representative, 49th District	Carol Townsend	Michigan State University Extension
Larry Morandi	NCSL	Thomas Valli	Legislative Service Bureau
Bob Morris	Wayne County	Dyck Van Koevering	Michigan League of Community Banks
Mickey Mortimer	State Representative, 65th District	Shawn M. VanDyke	City of Kentwood
Chuck Moss		Jerry Van Woerkem	State Representative, 91st District
Michael C. Murphy	City of Lansing	Lori Villar	E.C.T.
Art Nash	DEQ	Caroline Webber	Michigan Municipal League
Wayne H. Nierman	Michigan State University, Extension	Matthew Weber	
Stacy Owen	Michigan Department of Career Development	Steve Webster	MSU Governmental Affairs
David Palzrok	Michigan Association of Realtors	Stephanie Whitbeck	Celebrate Lansing
Linda Patrick	Michigan State University, Extension	Luscious Williams III	City of Detroit
Polly Peterson		Peter Wills	Office of State Representative Gene DeRossett
Thom Peterson	WMEAC	Schvonne Wilmore	Michigan State University
Joe Petrosky	Focus: HOPE	Carol Wood	City of Lansing
Paul C. Pratt	Ingham County Commissioner	Patti Wood	Michigan State University
Hubert Price Jr.	State Representative, 43rd District	Mark Wyckoff	Planning and Zoning Center
Robert Prud'homme	MOSES	John Wynbeek	Alternative Directions
Mike Quillinan	House Communications	Stephanie A. Young	Office of Representative Triette Reeves
Daniel Reed	Bay City Planning	Virginia L. Zeeb	Farm Bureau
Bob Rice	Michigan Department of Career Development	Angela Zemboy	Community Legal Resources
Randy Richardville	State Representative, 56th District		
Stacey Ripley	Office of Representative William R. Byl		
Milt Rohwer	Frey Foundation		
Tim Roseboom	CATA		



Urban Caucus Members

Byl, William, <i>Co-Chair</i>	R	Grand Rapids	Kent County
Thomas, Samuel Buzz, <i>Co-Chair</i>	D	Detroit	Wayne County
DeWeese, Paul, <i>Steering Committee</i>	R	Williamston	Ingham County
Godchaux, Patricia, <i>Steering Committee</i>	R	Birmingham	Oakland County
Jansen, Mark, <i>Steering Committee</i>	R	Grand Rapids	Kent County
Jellema, Jon, <i>Steering Committee</i>	R	Grand Haven	Ottawa County
Lockwood, Patricia, <i>Steering Committee</i>	D	Fenton	Genesee County
Martinez, Lynne, <i>Steering Committee</i>	D	Lansing	Ingham County
Minore, Jack, <i>Steering Committee</i>	D	Flint	Genesee County
Price, Hubert Jr., <i>Steering Committee</i>	D	Pontiac	Oakland County
Schauer, Mark, <i>Steering Committee</i>	D	Battle Creek Metro Area	Calhoun County

Allen, Jason	R	Traverse City	Grand Traverse County
Baird, Laura	D	Okemos	Ingham County
Birkholz, Patricia	R	Holland	Allegan County
Bisbee, Clark	R	Jackson	Jackson County
Bogardus, Rose	D	Davison	Genesee County
Bovin, Douglas	D	Gladstone	Delta County
Brater, Liz	D	Ann Arbor	Washtenaw County
Brewer, Lingg	D	Holt	Ingham County
Cassis, Nancy	R	Novi	Oakland County
Cherry, Deborah	D	Burton	Genesee County
Clarke, Hansen	D	Detroit	Wayne County
DeHart, Eileen	D	Westland	Wayne County
Dennis, Julie	D	Muskegon	Muskegon County
Faunce, Jennifer	R	Warren/Sterling Heights	Macomb County
Garcia, Valde	R	St. Johns	Clinton County
Gielegghem, Paul	D	Clinton Township	Macomb
Hale, Derrick	D	Detroit	Wayne County
Hanley, Michael	D	Saginaw	Saginaw County
Hansen, John	D	Dexter	Washtenaw County
Hardman, Artina Tinsley	D	Detroit	Wayne County



Hart, Doug	R	Rockford	Kent County
Jamnick, Ruth Ann	D	Ypsilanti	Washtenaw County
Johnson, Rick	R	LeRoy	Osceola County
Julian, Larry	R	Lennon	Shiawassee County
Kelly, Thomas	D	Wayne	Wayne County
Kilpatrick, Kwame	D	Detroit	Wayne County
Koetje, James	R	Grandville	Kent County
Kuipers, Wayne	R	Holland	Ottawa County
LaForge, Edward	D	Kalamazoo	Kalamazoo County
LaSata, Charles	R	St. Joseph	Berrien County
Law, Gerald	R	Plymouth	Wayne County
Lemmons III, LaMar	D	Detroit	Wayne County
Mans, George	D	Trenton	Wayne County
Mead, David	R	Frankfort	Benzie County
Mortimer, Mickey	R	Horton	Jackson County
Pappageorge, John	R	Troy	Oakland County
Pestka, Steve	D	Grand Rapids	Kent County
Perricone, Charles	R	Kalamazoo	Kalamazoo County
Pumford, Mike	R	Newaygo	Newaygo County
Raczkowski, Andrew	R	Farmington Hills	Oakland County
Reeves, Triette	D	Detroit	Wayne County
Richardville, Randy	R	Monroe	Monroe County
Richner, Andrew	R	Grosse Pointe Park	Wayne County
Rivet, Joseph	D	Bay City	Bay County
Scott, Martha G.	D	Highland Park	Wayne County
Stallworth, Keith	D	Detroit	Wayne County
Switalski, Michael	D	Roseville	Macomb County
Tabor, Sue	R	Delta Township	Eaton County
Tesanovich, Paul	D	L'Anse	Baraga County
Toy, Laura M.	R	Livonia	Wayne County
Vander Roest, Jerry	R	Galesburg	Kalamazoo County
Van Woerkom, Gerald	R	Norton Shores	Muskegon County
Wojno, Paul	D	Warren	Macomb County



For Further Information

To contact the House Bipartisan Urban Caucus:

Representative William R. Byl
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514
(517) 373-2668

Representative Samuel "Buzz" Thomas
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514
(517) 373-1782

For videotapes of the Urban Vision Summit:

Michigan Government Television
111 S. Capitol Avenue
4th Floor, Olds Plaza
Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 373-4250

To contact the MSU CEDP:

Michigan State University Center for Urban
Affairs
Community and Economic Development
Program
1801 W. Main Street
Lansing, MI, 48915
(517) 353-9555

Mission and Principles of the Bipartisan Urban Caucus

The House Bipartisan Caucus was formed in 1995 with the support of Democratic and Republican House leadership in an effort to focus attention on the needs of Michigan cities. The mission of the Caucus is to work toward a comprehensive and cohesive urban policy and to focus on leadership development, research on urban issues, and educating government officials, interest groups, and the public about Michigan's urban policy issues.

The members of the House Bipartisan Urban Caucus believe that an appropriate urban policy for the State of Michigan is one evidenced in public laws and rules that recognize the benefits of core cities and their positive relationship with suburbs and rural areas. Michigan decision makers and the public need to recognize the interrelationship of urban, suburban, and rural areas of the state, since the relative health of urban areas affects entire regions and all the residents of this state.

Benefits of new development should be weighed against the cost of these developments in infrastructure and natural resources consumed. Long-term public costs of private sector development decisions should be more systematically weighed in public sector decision making. Costs of the geographic mobility of business and residents should be accurately attributed to such development.

Michigan's urban residents should not be forced to deal with problems in urban communities by escaping to other areas of the state. Hence, our state government needs to play a positive, supportive role in the maintenance and revitalization of Michigan cities.