This was last updated March 28, 2017 (3:10pm).
(A PDF version of this document is here: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/planning/questions_and_answers)

- Listing of most recent MSU Extension News Articles on planning:
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/planning
- Ask an Expert: http://www.extension.org/ask

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Links to MSU Extension News Articles on Planning

Alternative Energy (solar, wind, biofuels, wood)

- **New wind energy resource for planning commissions**  March 27, 2017 | Kurt H. Schindler | Wind energy systems continue to be a hot topic in Michigan. This updated sample zoning and planning discussion is for local governments.  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_wind_energy_resource_for_planning_commissions](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_wind_energy_resource_for_planning_commissions)

- **Planning and zoning for solar energy readiness**  February 11, 2015 | A hot proposition Brad Neumann | Solar energy systems are increasingly common around the nation. Local governments can help this technology expand through proactive planning and reasonable regulation.
  - Part one,  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_and_zoning_for_solar_energy_readiness_a_hot_proposition_part_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_and_zoning_for_solar_energy_readiness_a_hot_proposition_part_1)
  - Part two,  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_and_zoning_for_solar_energy_readiness_a_hot_proposition_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_and_zoning_for_solar_energy_readiness_a_hot_proposition_part_2)

- **Climate change and local government: Zoning for small wind energy**  April 14, 2015 | Brad Neumann | As more local governments explore their roles and responsibilities in climate change adaptation and mitigation, allowing and encouraging small alternative energy conversion systems is one way to address both strategies simultaneously.
  - Part two,  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/climate_change_and_local_government_zoning_for_small_wind_energy_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/climate_change_and_local_government_zoning_for_small_wind_energy_part_2)

- **Not all proposed large wind energy farms are controversial and there may be reasons why** Kurt H. Schindler January 21, 2015.
  - Part one,  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/not_all_proposed_large_wind_energy_farms_are_controversial_and_there_may](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/not_all_proposed_large_wind_energy_farms_are_controversial_and_there_may)

- **Should local governments regulate outdoor wood boilers?** February 28, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Although popular and cost-effective, many outdoor wood boilers produce a lot of smoke, creating potential health risks and nuisance complaints. Local governments can reduce that risk through zoning standards.
  - Part One  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_local_governments_regulate_outdoor_wood_boilers_part_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_local_governments_regulate_outdoor_wood_boilers_part_1)
  - Part Two  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_local_governments_regulate_outdoor_wood_boilers_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_local_governments_regulate_outdoor_wood_boilers_part_2)

Blight, Accumulated Junk

- **The basics of adaptive reuse** August 15, 2016 | Glenn Pape | Defining the three main types of adaptive reuse to plan for in your community.  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_basics_of_adaptive_reuse](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_basics_of_adaptive_reuse)
New Michigan Blight Elimination guidebook for community and economic development May 11, 2015 | Terry Gibb | Developed by the Michigan Vacant Property Campaign, the guidebook is designed to assist local officials and stakeholders with creating a plan to eliminate blight in their communities.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_michigan_blight_elimination_guidebook_helps_communities_increase_commu

Cleaning up your community: How to deal with the accumulation of junk April 4, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | Accumulated junk on properties can adversely affect the health, safety and property values in a community. Using a multi-faceted approach to dealing with junk can bring people together to improve the quality of life in their community.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cleaning_up_your_community_how_to_deal_with_the_accumulation_of_junk

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and infrastructure reviews

Cooperative efforts to address natural resource infrastructure issues November 20, 2014 | John Amrhein | County commissioners from 16 northern Michigan counties visited and learned about two cooperative projects to repair and improve local natural resource infrastructure problems.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cooperative_efforts_to_address_natural_resource_infrastructure_issues

The forgotten law: Planning Commission review of capital expenditures April 21, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | When government proposes to buy land, buildings, renovate or build, the proposal should be reviewed by that government’s planning commission first.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_forgotten_law_planning_commission_review_of_capital_expenditures

Financing capital investments; capital improvement program Kurt H. Schindler  
Part one: February 20, 2014 | Balancing one year’s government budget is just the start to long-term fiscal sustainability. Often when red ink appears in government budgets the reaction is to make cuts and balance that year’s budget. But there are also strategies to incorporate for long-term fiscal sustainability – so future year budgets are also balanced.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/balancing_one_years_government_budget_is_just_the_start_to_long_term_fisc

Part two: March 21, 2014 | Selecting which capital investments are made is an important part of a government’s capital improvement program. Rarely can one afford to do everything so setting priorities is critical.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/prioritizing_capital_investments_capital_improvement_program_part_2

Part three: March 21, 2014 | Usually the wish list of things to build, repair, and replace is longer than the cash on hand for government to do. So consideration is given to various different financing options, reviewed in this article.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/financing_capital_investments_capital_improvement_program_part_3

Rethinking local budget processes February 24, 2014 | Richard Wooten | The budgeting process as defined by the state of Michigan describes the procedures that local communities must follow. However, stagnant revenues and increasing costs challenge communities to be more creative in balancing annual budgets.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rethinking_local_budget_processes

Planning commissions' reviews ensure consistency July 6, 2012 | Brad Neumann | The planning commission plays an important role in reviewing local infrastructure and capital expenditures for consistency with the community’s master plan and the plans of its neighbors.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commission_reviews_ensure_consistency

Update your community's Capital Improvement Program June 5, 2012 | Brad Neumann | Planning commissions should annually prepare a capital improvements program of public structures and improvements.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/update_your_commuinitys_capital_improvement_program
Census, population, data

- **Mean vs. median: What do they mean and when do you use them?** September 19, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Should you use median income or average income statistics to get a more accurate projection of what is occurring in our communities? [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/mean_vs_median_what_do_they_mean_and_when_do_you_use_them](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/mean_vs_median_what_do_they_mean_and_when_do_you_use_them)

- **Understanding how census data can help in making planning decisions** September 19, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Planners use census data to understand the social, economic, and demographic conditions in their communities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/understanding_how_census_data_can_help_in_making_planning_decisions](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/understanding_how_census_data_can_help_in_making_planning_decisions)

- **What is a census and what kind of data is collected?** September 19, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Census data can help planners and others understand the social, economic, and demographic conditions in their communities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_a_census_and_what_kind_of_data_is_collected](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_a_census_and_what_kind_of_data_is_collected)

Costumer / client / taxpayer service

- **Government website is now an essential and expected** May 24, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | A constantly growing number of people expect an internet presence. A dynamic government webpage that provides a variety of content is now a basic part of providing government services. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/government_website_is_now_an_essential_and_expected](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/government_website_is_now_an_essential_and_expected)

Court cases, law, and jurisdiction

- **How land patents relate to planning, zoning and property taxes** March 27, 2017 | Kurt H. Schindler | Virtually all land has been land patented and that property is subject to property tax and zoning regulation. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_land_patents_relate_to_planning_zoning_and_property_taxes](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_land_patents_relate_to_planning_zoning_and_property_taxes)

- **It is not just any attorney: Find the lawyer that has a focus in municipal law** December 19, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | There are many different kinds of law. Different attorneys have experience in certain types of law. The task is to find the lawyer that focuses on the type of law you need. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/it_is_not_just_any_attorney_find_the_lawyer_that_has_a_focus_in_municipal_l](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/it_is_not_just_any_attorney_find_the_lawyer_that_has_a_focus_in_municipal_l)

- **When to call an attorney for planning and zoning issues** December 19, 2016 | Wendy Walker | Land use decision making is not always a do it yourself proposition for local officials; there are times when you really should hire a lawyer. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/when_to_call_an_attorney_for_planning_and_zoning_issues](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/when_to_call_an_attorney_for_planning_and_zoning_issues)


- **Michigan Compiled Law may be the preferred way to cite state law** August 19, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | There is more than one way to cite state law. But there are a number of reasons to use the MCL citation over the Public Act number. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigan_compiled_law_may_be_the_preferred_way_to_cite_state_law](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigan_compiled_law_may_be_the_preferred_way_to_cite_state_law)


- **Annual planning and zoning court case summaries now ready** May 30, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | The annual May 2014 summary of land use court cases is prepared and available to the public. Many of the 23 land use-related court cases in the past 12 months dealt with medical marijuana, Right to Farm Act, local zoning authority and other issues. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/annual_planning_and_zoning_court_case_summaries_now_ready](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/annual_planning_and_zoning_court_case_summaries_now_ready)
In disputes over zoning authority, follow the legislative intent test February 20, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Absent an overarching statute exempting state owned land and buildings from zoning regulations, Michigan courts follow a test to determine legislative intent. In short, if there is no sign of legislative intent, local zoning prevails. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/in_disputes_over_zoning_authority_follow_the_legislative_intent_test](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/in_disputes_over_zoning_authority_follow_the_legislative_intent_test)

Zoning runs with the land, except when it doesn’t January 19, 2014 | Brad Neumann | While equal treatment under the law must always be a government priority, a number of municipal attorneys believe that zoning approvals can expire if not acted upon within a specified period of time. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_runs_with_the_land_except_when_it_doesnt](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_runs_with_the_land_except_when_it_doesnt)

THE BASICS: Administration of zoning seldom results in property takings but claims are more frequent December 19, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler|  
- Part one: Property takings are always something government regulators should be concerned about. Understanding the different types of takings can clarify the topic. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/administration_of_zoning_seldom_results_in_property_takings_but_claims_are_rare](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/administration_of_zoning_seldom_results_in_property_takings_but_claims_are_rare)
- Part two: Property takings are always something government regulators should be concerned about. But understanding how a takings claim is analyzed can help waylay fears. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/administration_of_zoning_seldom_results_in_property_takings_but_claims_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/administration_of_zoning_seldom_results_in_property_takings_but_claims_2)

Reviewing the origins of property rights tension in American society September 24, 2013 | Brad Neumann | The struggle between private property rights and the good of the community is nothing new; it is older than our nation. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/reviewing_the_origins_of_property_rights_tension_in_american_society](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/reviewing_the_origins_of_property_rights_tension_in_american_society)

"Due Process" is often a source of lost court cases in local government July 22, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | In planning and zoning due process is simple to do, but maybe because it is so simple it is often overlooked. Yet many times it is one of the most important things to get right. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/due_process_is_often_a_source_of_lost_court_cases_in_localgovernment](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/due_process_is_often_a_source_of_lost_court_cases_in_localgovernment)

County government powers are very limited May 30, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | A county government does not have general ordinance making authority. As a general rule counties cannot adopt ordinances. Municipalities have more authority, powers than counties, and can adopt police power ordinances. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/county_government_powers_are_very_limited](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/county_government_powers_are_very_limited)

Court cases on land use focused on medical marijuana and local zoning authority in 2012-13 May 30, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Many of the 36 land use-related court cases in the past 12 months dealt with medical marijuana, local zoning authority and an assortment of other issues. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/court_cases_on_land_use_focused_on_medical_marijuana_and_local_zoning_authority](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/court_cases_on_land_use_focused_on_medical_marijuana_and_local_zoning_authority)

Metro Detroit public transit authority will be zoning exempt January 17, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | An important strategy for economic development and placemaking for southeast Michigan, newly adopted legislation makes transit facilities exempt from zoning approval. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/metro_detroit_public_transit_authority_will_be_zoning_exempt](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/metro_detroit_public_transit_authority_will_be_zoning_exempt)

Planning commissions may not have jurisdiction, but can still have advocacy role June 26, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | There are a number of areas where local governments do not have jurisdiction, but a local government or its planning commission can still prepare testimony for submission at public hearings and during public comment periods. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_may_not_haveJurisdiction_bu](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_may_not_haveJurisdiction_bu)


Ethics, conflict of interest, incompatible office, and more

- Are village president and village manager incompatible offices? March 20, 2017 | Eric Walcott | A recent Attorney General opinion helps us answer whether one person can serve as both village president and village manager in Michigan. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/are_village_president_and_village_manager_incompatible_offices](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/are_village_president_and_village_manager_incompatible_offices)
Incompatible office: what does it mean and how does it differ from a conflict of interest? April 29, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Conflict of Interest and Incompatible Office are not the same thing. There are unique responses to each situation. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/incompatible_office_what_does_it_mean_conflict_of_interest

Conflict of Interest rules apply to all communities, regardless of size September 22, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | Often a small community struggles to avoid a ‘conflict of interest’ situation – particularly hard because of its small size. But there are not any exceptions or special dispensation due to the size of a community. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/conflict_of_interest_rules_apply_to_all_communities_regardless_of_size

Codes of conduct now more common for planning commissions, zoning boards of appeals February 28, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Members of administrative boards often sign a code of conduct. They perform an administrative, not a representative, function and speak publically to support the majority position adopted by that board. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/codes_of_conduct_now_more_common_for_planning_commissions_zoning_boards_of

Avoid ex parte contact to ensure impartiality July 23, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | While it’s difficult to avoid ex parte contact, it’s important for planning commissions and boards of appeals to do so. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/avoid_ex_parte_contact_to_ensure_impartiality

Extraction: oil, gas, aggregate, etc.

Hydraulic fracturing integrated assessment is excellent resource for local officials March 11, 2015 | Dean Solomon | A new draft report about hydraulic fracturing state-level policy options provides excellent background for local planning officials trying to address local oil and gas development issues. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/hydraulic_fracturing_integrated_assessment_is_excellent_resource_for_local

Local government roles in oil and gas regulation March 5, 2015 | Dean Solomon | Michigan communities are considering their role in regulating oil and gas development. State legislation limits this authority.

Michigan communities are considering their role in regulating oil and gas development February 10, 2015 | Dean Solomon | An MSU Extension webinar will help local planning officials understand the state regulatory framework and restrictions on local authority. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigan_communities_are_considering_their_role_in_regulating_oil_and_gas_d

What is the future for Michigan oil and gas development? September 25, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Oil and gas development is grabbing headlines in Michigan, but major short-term expansion is unlikely, according to a new University of Michigan report. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_the_future_for_michigan_oil_and_gas_development

New hydraulic fracturing reports are excellent resources for local officials September 25, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Local elected and appointed officials sometimes struggle to decide how to address resident concerns about hydraulic fracturing. A new set of reports help officials learn about the issues before they act. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_hydraulic_fracturing_reports_are_excellent_resources_for_local_official

Local governments can regulate but not prohibit natural resource extraction February 4, 2013 | Brad Neumann | The deciding factor is often what amounts to the likelihood of ‘very serious consequences.’ http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_governments_can_regulate_but_not_prohibit_natural_resource_extraction

Firewise

- Michigan's Upper Peninsula predicted to have increased wildfire potential this spring March 26, 2015 | Brad Neumann | After two years with lower than normal risk, much of the upper Midwest is predicted to have higher than normal wildfire risk this April.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigans_upper_peninsula_predicted_to_have_increased_wildfire_potential_th

- Contents of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) August 9, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | A CWPP helps protect communities from loss caused by wildfire.
  - Part one, August 7, 2013.
    http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/participating_in_your_community_wildfire_protection_plan_cwpp
  - Part two, August 9, 2013: content of a CWPP.

- Sample Wildfire Hazard Zoning helps communities protect against property and life loss May 15, 2013 | Brad Neumann | Wildfires are common in Michigan, and individuals and local governments both play roles in addressing wildfire mitigation and protection to make communities safer.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/sample_wildfire_hazard_zoning_helps_communities_protect_against_property_an

- Organized community planning and education can enhance home safety. February 7, 2013 | Mike Schira | Communities or homeowner groups working together within the Firewise Community Program can reduce risk of loss from wildfire or other catastrophic events. By teaming up, homeowners can protect their own residences and neighbor’s homes.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/organized_community_planning_and_education_can_enhance_home_safety

Form based zoning

- Understanding the urban transect April 20, 2015 | Glenn Pape | The urban transect is a community analysis tool that can lead to better understanding of community form and patterns.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/understanding_the Urban Transect

- Form based code/zoning may not be an advantage for rural zoning districts April 20, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Form based code is an important and innovative zoning style for urban areas including downtowns. But it may not hold advantages for application in rural zoning districts.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/form_based_code_zoning_may_not_be_an_advantage_for_rural_zoning_districts

- The numbers behind transect classifications December 16, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Understanding the numbers behind transect zones helps communities plan better and create places.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_numbers_behind_transect_classifications

- New resource on form-based codes is a practical guide for all communities January 13, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Municipalities with a small or non-existent planning staff will find this form-based code resource helpful for learning the basics and getting a handle on how to request assistance from planning consultants.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_resource_on_form_based_codes_is_a_practical_guide_for_all_communities

- Form-based codes and winter cities make for a hot combination December 10, 2013 | Brad Neumann | A good form-based code can help a winter city ‘crank up the heat’ of public street life by creating compact, mixed-use neighborhoods and more.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/form_based_codes_and_winter_cities_make_for_a_hot_combination

- Suttons Bay Charrette kickstarts rural form-based code September 18, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | The Suttons Bay Charrette provides a strong starting point for a rural form based zoning ordinance. MSU Extension conducting applied research on the applicability of form based zoning in rural areas.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/suttons_bay_charrette_kickstarts_rural_form_based_code

- Advantages of form-based zoning account for its growing popularity October 24, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Form-based zoning is starting to catch on with local governments in Michigan. There is a long list of advantages of form-based zoning.

- Form-based zoning becoming popular for its difference from conventional zoning October 17, 2012 | Kurt H.
Schindler | Form-based zoning is starting to catch on with local governments in Michigan. There are key differences between form-based and conventional zoning which has led to its popularity. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/form-based_zoning_becoming_popular_for_its_difference_from_conventional_zon)

### Housing

- **Aging in place: Implications for housing and community development**  
  February 7, 2017 | Brad Neumann  
  With an expanding older population, communities and caregivers will need to prepare for a growing demand for housing that is accessible and well-connected to services throughout the community. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/aging_in_place_implications_for_housing_and_community_development)

- **Considering regulation of short-term rentals in light of the sharing economy**  
  December 22, 2015 | Brad Neumann  
  Short-term rentals are sometimes perceived as nuisances in neighborhoods, but the emergence of the sharing economy suggests communities may want to offer something for everyone in terms of lodging experiences for visitors of all kinds.  

- **Building typology for housing: what is missing in Michigan**  
  September 24, 2013 | Glenn Pape  
  Understand the different housing typologies that are currently in demand by those entering the market. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/building_typology_for_housing_whats_missing_in_michigan)

- **Suttons Bay Charrette focuses on undeveloped subdivisions**  
  September 18, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler  
  Many subdivisions and site-condo remain with empty lots in Suttons Bay Township – the same as in many parts of Michigan. This reflects a change in tastes for the type of housing and neighborhoods many now want. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/suttons_bay_charrette_focuses_on_undeveloped_subdivisions)

- **Federal Block Grant Funds are critical to housing development in limited-income neighborhoods**  
  June 25, 2013 | Richard Wooten  
  In financially distressed communities, projects that are subsidized with federal funds may be the only housing activity occurring. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/federal_block_grant_funds_are_critical_to_housing_development_in_limited_in)

- **Millennial invasion: Communities must meet the needs of latest generation of young professionals**  
  May 5, 2013 | Glenn Pape  
  The population of 22-year-olds is at an all-time high. What does this mean for communities in Michigan? [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/millennial_invasion_communities_must_meet_the_needs_of_latest_generation_of)

- **Infill housing in Michigan can meet a “back to the city” demand**  
  January 9, 2013 | Brad Neumann  
  Michigan communities are uniquely positioned to supply needed infill housing as demand shifts to more housing types that compliment walkable neighborhoods. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/infill_housing_in_michigan_can_meet_a_back_to_the_city_demand)

- **Money, capacity and planning are key ingredients to good neighborhood development**  
  December 19, 2012 | Richard Wooten  
  Successful projects are well-financed, professionally staffed and are driven by a plan that was developed with considerable community input. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/money_capacity_and_planning_are_key_ingredients_to_good_neighborhood_develo)

- **Redevelopment of neighborhoods starts with housing**  
  October 15, 2012 | Richard Wooten  
  Viable neighborhoods find creative ways to maintain a strong housing inventory. The housing stock is the foundation of the neighborhood. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/redevelopment_of_neighborhoods_starts_with_housing)
Land Divisions, Subdivisions, Site-Condominiums

- What can and can't I do in my homeowners association? August 14, 2015 | Brad Neumann | Homeowners associations have become widespread; so widespread that some individuals may not even realize they live in such a community. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_can_and_cant_i_do_in_my_homeowners_association](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_can_and_cant_i_do_in_my_homeowners_association)

Land Use Inventory, Air Photography, GIS

- New airborne technology has many more uses for a cost similar to traditional air photography July 17, 2015 | Kurt Schindler | Airborne LiDAR now has costs comparable to traditional aerial photogrammetry. But this new technology has far more applications and increase in positional accuracy. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_airborne_technology_has_many_more_uses_for_a_cost_similar_to_traditional_air_photography](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_airborne_technology_has_many_more_uses_for_a_cost_similar_to_traditional_air_photography)
- Measuring change in a community with aerial images December 31, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | Utilizing aerial images to measure change in a community can provide a quality, accurate analysis of complex problems while providing strong visual support to assist decision-makers and inform the public. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/measuring_change_in_a_community_with_aerial_images](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/measuring_change_in_a_community_with_aerial_images)
- Making the most of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in your community December 31, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | A quality municipal GIS system provides substantial benefits to a community beyond parcel mapping. GIS can provide comprehensive services to a variety of departments, dramatically increasing efficiency and reducing costs. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/making_the_most_of_geographic_information_systems_gis_in_your_community](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/making_the_most_of_geographic_information_systems_gis_in_your_community)
- The difference between 'land use' and 'land cover' January 18, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | The terms 'land use' and 'land cover' have specific meanings in how they describe the land and should not be used interchangeably. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_difference_between_land_use_and_land_cover](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_difference_between_land_use_and_land_cover)

Meetings: Open Meeting Act (Freedom of Information Act)

- Preparation, deliberation and documentation are key to effective government meetings May 24, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Public planning and zoning meetings go better when each member actively engages in preparation, deliberation and documentation. These activities occur before the meeting starts and continue for the duration of the meeting. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/planning](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/planning)
- How to plan a meeting that people want to attend December 21, 2015 | Yvonne Wichtner-Zoia | Start with an outline. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_to_plan_a_meeting_that_people_want_to_attend](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_to_plan_a_meeting_that_people_want_to_attend)
- Major amendments to the Freedom of Information Act require local government attention now March 20, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | In late 2014, the Freedom of Information Act was amended, changing how information requests are charged. In order for a local government to be able to charge anything public bodies need to adopt FOIA policies and guidelines before July 1, 2015. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/major_amendments_to_the_freedom_of_information_act_require_local_government](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/major_amendments_to_the_freedom_of_information_act_require_local_government)
- The importance of the agenda May 5, 2014 | Bethany Prykucki | The agenda indicates what will be done at the meeting. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_importance_of_the_agenda](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_importance_of_the_agenda)
- Make decisions easier with this prioritizing tool December 10, 2013 | Yvonne (Bonnie) Wichtner-Zoia | Paired
Comparisons is an easy systematic way to compare multiple choices that can lead to surprising results! [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/make_decisions_easier_with_this_prioritizing_tool]

- What does it mean to be an "ex-officio" member? December 4, 2013 | Julie Pioch | A little clarity to what appears to be a common misunderstanding of the role of board members with the title “ex-officio.” [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_does_it_mean_to_be_an_ex_officio_member]

- Suggestions for organizing an effective committee of the whole November 27, 2013 | Julie Pioch | A new resource on how local government boards can use a committee of the whole for informal deliberations. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/suggestions_for_organizing_an_effective_committee_of_the_whole]

- New Open Meetings Act notice requirements April 17, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Michigan’s Open Meetings Act meeting notice requirements have changed. Notices now must be on government websites, emergency meeting notice requirements have also changed. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_open_meetings_act_notice_requirements]

- Parliamentary procedure: What is a motion to rescind? April 16, 2013 | Julie Pioch | Board members sometimes realize the need to change their mind regarding an issue before them. One method of revisiting a past decision is the motion to rescind. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parliamentary_procedure_what_is_a_motion_to_rescind]

- Parliamentary procedure: What is a motion to reconsider? April 16, 2013 | Julie Pioch | Board members sometimes feel the need to change their mind regarding an issue before them. One method of revisiting a past decision is the motion to reconsider. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parliamentary_procedure_what_is_a_motion_to_reconsider]

- Parliamentary procedure: How do you handle a motion? April 16, 2013 | Julie Pioch | A good first step to ensure effective meetings is to know how to properly handle a motion. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parliamentary_procedure_how_do_you_handle_a_motion]

- Parliamentary procedure: What is a parliamentary authority? April 16, 2013 | Julie Pioch | Using Robert’s Rules of Order to help build an official parliamentary authority allows groups to run effective meetings and members to feel like a valuable part of the process. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parliamentary_procedure_what_is_a_parliamentary_authority]

- Ten ways to invigorate meetings October 24, 2012 | Yvonne (Bonnie) Wichtner-Zoia | We meet to get things done – explore ways to make meetings useful, meaningful and effective. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/ten_ways_to_invigorate_meetings]

- How to become a Parliamentarian July 27, 2012 | Bethany Prykucki | What credentials are needed in order to be considered a parliamentarian? [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_to_become_a_parliamentarian]

New Economy (Global Economy)

- New Economy (A BASIC SET OF ARTICLES, START HERE) January 19, 2017 | Kurt Schindler |
  - Part one: A new economic age and playing field A very fundamental structural shift has occurred with economic development. In this new economic age, how one conducts business, governs and promotes economic development has changed. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_new_economic_age_and_playing_field]
  - Part two: Old versus new: New economy is where we are at A very fundamental structural shift has occurred with economic development. In this new economic age, it pays to know the difference between the old and new economy. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/old_versus_new_new_economy_is_where_we_are_at]
  - Part three: People count: Population growth causes basic economic growth Population growth is economic growth. Taking steps to attract people to move to a community is an important strategy. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/people_count_population_growth-causes-basic-economic_growth]
  - Part four: Local government’s economic development role: placemaking and regions It takes a region to provide the places, variety, resources and attributes to attract people. Attraction of people is attraction of new businesses and needs to be done at a multi-county regional level. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_governments-economic-development-role-placemaking_and_regions]
  - Part five: Prosperity comes from a focus on people, policy and place on a regional scale It takes a region to provide the places, variety, resources and attributes to attract people. Economic development also needs to be coordinated among state, regional, educational, local government and private sectors. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_governments-economic-development-role-placemaking_and_regions]
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/prosperity_comes_from_a_focus_on_people_policy_and_place_on_a_regional_sca

- Leaders in Economic Alliance Development: Your first step toward rural regional economic development
  December 16, 2016 | Ryan Coffey | The United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development’s Leaders in Economic Alliance Development program provides rural communities with increased capacity to work together regionally to improve economic development.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/leaders_in_economic_alliance_development_your_first_step_toward_rural_regio

- Stronger Economies Together: Could your Michigan community benefit? December 16, 2016 | Ryan Coffey | The United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development’s Stronger Economies Together program provides rural communities with increased capacity to work together regionally to improve economic development.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/stronger_economies_together_could_your_michigan_community_benefit

- Walkability is key to economic development October 10, 2016 | Brad Neumann | In the New Economy, it is all about creating communities with amenities and high quality of life to retain and attract talent. Talented individuals, who are mobile and can live anywhere, want a walkable, bikeable community to call home.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/walkability_is_key_to_economic_development

- The problems of legacy cities September 21, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Legacy cities are trying to resolve problems that impede the regeneration of their economic, social and physical environments.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_problems_of_legacy_cities

- The challenges of legacy cities September 21, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Significant job and population loss, regional migration and suburban flight have left an impoverished urban population behind in legacy cities.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_challenges_of_legacy_cities

- The importance of legacy cities September 21, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Legacy cities revitalization is critical to our nation’s economic sustainability.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_importance_of_legacy_cities

- The new economy's impact on legacy cities September 16, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Legacy Cities can use the New Economy principles to create shared economic prosperity at both the local and regional levels.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/legacy_cities_part_one_the_new_economy

- What to do when the big box store locates near your town, August 17, 2016 | Kurt H. Schindler | There are strategies a business community and individual store owners can and should do to remain successful with the new competition.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_to_do_when_the_big_box_store_locates_near_your_town

- Placemaking for economic development, August 16, 2016 | Glenn Pape | Placemaking as an economic development tool can be more efficient and cost effective than traditional attraction strategies.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_for_economic_development

- Community leaders: Has waiting for the phone to ring been a successful strategy for redevelopment? November 23, 2015 | Andy Hayes | Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) program offers assistance to communities wanting to ‘be prepared’ and ‘be proactive’.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/community_leaders_has_waiting_for_the_phone_to_ring_been_a_successful_strat

- The MEDC and Patronicity's Public Spaces, Community Places completes successful first year November 19, 2015 | Ingrid Ault | Co-Founder of Patronicity, Ebrahim Varachia, updates MSU Extension educator regarding the hugely successful Public Spaces, Community Places crowdfunding grant program with the MEDC.
  - Part one: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_medc_and_patronicitys_public_spaces_community_places_completes_successf

- Crowdfunding opens doors for entrepreneurs and communities to fund project in new ways October 19, 2015 | Ingrid Ault | Crowdfunding can be used to raise much needed capital for small businesses and public projects. This article provides some basics for understanding how this new method can be used by small businesses and communities looking to fund public projects.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/crowdfunding_opens_doors_for_entrepreneurs_and_communities_to_fund_project

- Is your community ready for the next opportunity? August 14, 2015 | Mark Hitchcock | Developing a local team is a proactive, economical and collaborative strategy for successful economic development growth and attraction.
  - Part one: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_your_community_ready_for_the_next_opportunity_part_1
Part two: [Energize your community's efforts to attract and grow entrepreneurs](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_your_community_ready_for_the_next_opportunity_part_2) August 14, 2015 | Andy Hayes
Connecting Entrepreneurial Conference – Registration is open, teams are forming now.

What are the ten top trends for businesses today that local government should be aware of, and how that should be shaping local policy and strategic actions.

[What a developer looks for and what a municipality is needs to match](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_a_developer_looks_for_and_what_a_municipality_is_needs_to_match) November 24, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler
Developers look for certain attributes in a municipality where they may do business. Municipalities should understand what that is, and work to have those attributes already in place.

[To attract talent think what kind of place the emerging generation of professionals want to live](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/to_attract_talent_think_what_kind_of_place_the_emerging_generation_of_profes) May 23, 2014 | Glenn Pape
Communities need to start discussions about placemaking to attract talent for success in the 'New Economy.'

[Cultural Currents: Creatives and cultural entrepreneurs build community](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cultural_currents_creatives_and_cultural_entrepreneurs_build_community) November 22, 2013 | Julie Avery
Investing time and resources to cultivate artists, creatives and cultural nonprofits will reap economic benefits and result in enlivened community spaces and destinations.

[Mixed-use walkable communities are what the market wants](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/mixed_use_walkable_communities_are_what_the_market_wants) November 17, 2013 | Glenn Pape
Neighborhoods that have a mix of houses and stores and other businesses that are accessibly by foot are preferred nearly 2 to 1.

[Zoning in on Millennials not making them zone out](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_in_on_millennials_not_making_them_zone_out) September 17, 2013 | Glenn Pape
Changing community codes to attract talented youth is one economic development strategy.

[Local government plays a leadership role in revitalizing Michigan's economy](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_has_a_major_role_in_revitalizing_michigans_economy) March 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler
MSU Extension’s training program is a great jump-start to Michigan’s economic recovery.
Placemaking (See also Rural Small Town and Urban Design)

- **Looking to boost tourism revenue? Start with placemaking** October 10, 2016 | Brad Neumann | In the New Economy, placemaking must be part of an economic development strategy. For the tourism industry, businesses and communities can enhance the tourist experience through placemaking, which serves as a population attraction strategy. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/looking_to_boost_tourism_revenue_start_with_placemaking](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/looking_to_boost_tourism_revenue_start_with_placemaking)

- **PARK(ing) Day is September 16**, August 12, 2016 | Glenn Pape | Create a temporary public park in your community on this year's PARK(ing) Day. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parking_day_is_september_16_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parking_day_is_september_16_1)

- **Marquette prioritizes bikes, pedestrians to boost business on Third Street** August 26, 2015 | Brad Neumann | Projects to improve convenience and safety for pedestrians and cyclists downtown are good placemaking strategies for retaining and attracting talent. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/marquette_prioritizes_bikes_pedestrians_to_boost_business_on_third_street](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/marquette_prioritizes_bikes_pedestrians_to_boost_business_on_third_street)

- **Workshops reveal small-town placemaking strategies** June 15, 2015 | Brad Neumann | It's not just a big city thing; participants from small towns at placemaking strategy development Workshops produced many project ideas for improving the quality of life and economy of their communities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/workshops_reveal_small_town_placemaking_strategies](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/workshops_reveal_small_town_placemaking_strategies)

- **Placemaking: Fueling Detroit's resurgence** February 20, 2015 | Mohamed Ayoub | Placemaking is proving to be a successful approach to urban planning by reviving cities from post-industrial decline and Detroit has many examples to share. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_fueling_detroits_resurgence](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_fueling_detroits_resurgence)


- **Placemaking projects don't have to be large scale to have large impact** November 19, 2014 | Andy Hayes | What do kayaking, way-finding signs and sidewalks have in common? They were all recently funded placemaking projects. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_projects_dont_have_to_be_large_scale_to_have_large_impact](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_projects_dont_have_to_be_large_scale_to_have_large_impact)

- **Crowdfunding placemaking** August 13, 2014 | Brad Neumann | For years, crowdfunding has been a popular way to raise money to develop the latest gadgets. Now, Michigan communities can utilize crowdfunding to launch placemaking projects for economic development. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/crowd_funding_placemaking](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/crowd_funding_placemaking)

- **Placemaking continues to expand in Michigan** July 15, 2014 | Terry Gibb | MSU Extension partners with Macomb County and MACRO to kick off placemaking with countywide summit. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_continues_to_expand_in_michigan](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_continues_to_expand_in_michigan)

- **Parklets for placemaking** June 13, 2014 | Brad Neumann | A new guide from the City of Grand Rapids makes it easier for businesses and citizens alike to undertake placemaking projects that attract pedestrians, increase retail activity and provided needed green space and bike parking. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parklets_for_placemaking](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parklets_for_placemaking)

- **Place-based streets: Getting standards correct to create public places** May 23, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Communities can create better functioning streets by changing the rules for streets in their community. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/place_based_streets_getting_standards_correct_to_create_public_places](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/place_based_streets_getting_standards_correct_to_create_public_places)

- **For small communities, what is the difference between standard and strategic placemaking?** April 24, 2014 | Dean Solomon | Strategic placemaking is a more focused form of placemaking designed to attract talented workers. Small communities struggle to distinguish this approach from more general placemaking efforts. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/for_small_communities_what_is_the_difference_between_standard_and_strategic](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/for_small_communities_what_is_the_difference_between_standard_and_strategic)

- **Build better places today** February 28, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Tactical placemaking is a set of tools municipalities and community groups can use today to start building better places. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/build_better_places_today](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/build_better_places_today)

- **Rethinking neighborhood commercial development** January 24, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Business placement is an important activity when trying to create vibrant, thriving business districts, corridors and nodes. Successful communities will be those that creatively rethink the mix and location of neighborhood commercial development. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rethinking_neighborhood_commercial_development](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rethinking_neighborhood_commercial_development)

- **Eight steps to better retail areas** January 21, 2014 | Glenn Pape | New tool identifies eight concepts to create better retail areas and create place in your community. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/eight_steps_to_better_retail_areas](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/eight_steps_to_better_retail_areas)
• Older suburbs will need more creative community development strategies December 17, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Limited financial growth, especially in property tax revenue will restrict the ability of local municipalities to redevelop declining and blighted neighborhoods. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/older_suburbs_will_need_more_creative_community_development_strategies](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/older_suburbs_will_need_more_creative_community_development_strategies)

• What is a winter city's placemaking strategy? December 10, 2013 | Brad Neumann | The 'coolest' winter cities equate snow, ice and cold to outdoor recreation, festivals and tourism dollars, turning what some might consider a ‘bad hand’ into a ‘full-house’ on which to double-down. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_a_winter_citys_placemaking_strategy](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_a_winter_citys_placemaking_strategy)


• Parking meters and evening hours can increase downtown retail shopping November 21, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Putting in parking meters and keeping stores open in the evening hours were two of many techniques for increasing commerce. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parking_meters_and_evening_hours_can_increase_downtown_retail_shopping](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parking_meters_and_evening_hours_can_increase_downtown_retail_shopping)

• Preserving dark night sky is a northern Michigan placemaking strategy August 13, 2013 | Dean Solomon | The Emmet County Headlands International Dark Sky Park is an excellent example of how to promote a unique rural asset as a placemaking strategy. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/preserving_dark_night_sky_is_a_northern_michigan_placemaking_strategy](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/preserving_dark_night_sky_is_a_northern_michigan_placemaking_strategy)

• Successful rural placemaking: a Newaygo County example August 7, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | Placemaking efforts can improve infrastructure and provide safe, healthy recreation and tourism opportunities while promoting economic development for rural Michigan communities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/successful_rural_placemaking_a_newaygo_county_example](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/successful_rural_placemaking_a_newaygo_county_example)

• Placemaking success is seen when people using those Places June 19, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Seeing people engaged on the street shows it is a vibrant Place, and Placemaking efforts are succeeding. Placemaking is an important economic strategy, and has already worked in a number of Michigan communities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_success_is_seen_when_people_using_those_places](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_success_is_seen_when_people_using_those_places)

• We know we like vacation destinations, but why not expect the same thing at home? June 19, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | People know what types of places and cities they like. Those are our tourist destinations. But then we come back home and do not expect the same in our hometown. Placemaking is about changing that, and making Michigan competitive in the new global economy. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/we_know_we_like_vacation_destinations_but_why_not_expect_the_same_thing_at](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/we_know_we_like_vacation_destinations_but_why_not_expect_the_same_thing_at)

• Creating complete communities April 27, 2013 | Glenn Pape | Using targeted urban design tools to repair suburban communities provides residents a complete range of housing and daily living needs [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/creating_complete_communities](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/creating_complete_communities)

• Neighborhood planning leads to place April 4, 2013 | Glenn Pape | Planning at the neighborhood level leads to better communities and better placemaking, also forms building blocks for local government's plans. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/neighborhood_planning_leads_to_place](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/neighborhood_planning_leads_to_place)

• Suburbs are not the future for Michigan March 2, 2013 | Glenn Pape | Suburbs are unsustainable and not the focus of future housing demand. The next generation is looking for walkable places. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/suburbs_are_not_the_future_for_michigan](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/suburbs_are_not_the_future_for_michigan)

• Cultural Currents: Artist entrepreneurs as community leaders February 17, 2013 | Julie Avery | Artist entrepreneurs bring unique skills and perspectives to town. Their contributions to community leadership add dimension, and to governance insure creative perspectives and problem-solving approaches bring unique solutions. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cultural_currents_artist_entrepreneurs_as_community_leaders](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cultural_currents_artist_entrepreneurs_as_community_leaders)

• Is there such a thing as rural placemaking? January 18, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Placemaking principles are most commonly applied in urban areas, but rural townships are vital to a region's identity. Emerging rural placemaking strategies can add increased vitality and economic development opportunities in those areas. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_there_such_a_thing_as_rural_placemaking](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_there_such_a_thing_as_rural_placemaking)

• Urban triage: Lessons learned from medicine January 3, 2013 | Glenn Pape | Tight resources need to be targeted for return on investment. Applying techniques from other fields builds place quicker.
Putting parking into "place" November 29, 2012 | Glenn Pape | Design and planning strategies to merge human scale design with automobile parking. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/putting_parking_into_place](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/putting_parking_into_place)

Placemaking: People make ‘great places’ November 13, 2012 | Richard Wooten | The concept of placemaking is the newest evolution in planning and it involves creating attractive, interesting and viable places that draw people. However, planners must never forget the key ingredient in a creating a ‘place’ is people. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_people_make_great_places](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_people_make_great_places)

Good urban form promotes walkability and physical health Brad Neumann | The physical layout and design of a city directly determines how accessible, welcoming, convenient, and safe the city is for walking, all of which are important for enabling and encouraging more physical activity among residents.

- Part One. September 21, 2012: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/good_urban_form_promotes_walkability_and_physical_health_part_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/good_urban_form_promotes_walkability_and_physical_health_part_1)
- Part Two. September 24, 2012: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/good_urban_form_promotes_walkability_and_physical_health_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/good_urban_form_promotes_walkability_and_physical_health_part_2)


Community input will benefit and focus ‘placemaking’ efforts June 5, 2012 | Ann Chastain | Success with community placemaking efforts includes several key considerations. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/community_input_will_benefit_and_focus_placemaking_efforts](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/community_input_will_benefit_and_focus_placemaking_efforts)

What does placemaking mean for me and my community? May 14, 2012 | Ann Chastain | Communities that embrace and actively apply concepts that support a strong sense of place will experience a robust economic viability, as people will choose to live, work and establish their businesses within and around that community. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_does_placemaking_mean_for_me_and_my_community](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_does_placemaking_mean_for_me_and_my_community)


Rebuilding the structure in your neighborhood March 2, 2012 | Glenn Pape | Michigan can get back to creating neighborhoods that are the building blocks of communities and transform subdivisions into places. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rebuilding_the_structure_in_your_neighborhood](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rebuilding_the_structure_in_your_neighborhood)

Shine the right light on the places in your community February 4, 2012 | Glenn Pape | Proper lighting brings out people and highlights places in your community which can generate economic activity and save your community money. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/shine_the_right_light_on_the_places_in_your_community](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/shine_the_right_light_on_the_places_in_your_community)

Planner (professional, consulting)

- Qualifications-based selection, not bidding, is best to contract with professional services December 17, 2015 | Kurt Schindler | Everyone knows governments should bid for jobs over a certain dollar amount. But bids are not always the best selection system. When hiring professional services Qualifications-Based Selection process is the better system to use. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/qualifications_based_selection_not_bidding_is_best_to_contract_with_profess](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/qualifications_based_selection_not_bidding_is_best_to_contract_with_profess)
- Tips for managing stress as a planning director June 2, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Working as planning director can be very stressful. Like other professionals, planning directors must find ways to reduce the stress of the position. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/tips_for_managing_stress_as_a_planning_director](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/tips_for_managing_stress_as_a_planning_director)
- Planning professionals must have faith in the process May 23, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Good codes define many of the processes that planning officials must follow. When conducting compliance reviews, the goal should be to follow the defined processes. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_professionals_must_have_faith_in_the_process](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_professionals_must_have_faith_in_the_process)
- Should your professional planning staff have AICP certification? November 17, 2013 | Richard Wooten | In my discussions with other professional planners there seems to be mixed feelings about the planning certification as
Planning and Zoning generally, and training (and critique)

- **County invests in local Citizen Planner Program** February 2, 2017 | Terry Gibb | Macomb County pilots scholarship program to enhance planning and zoning education for local community officials. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/city inversión en programa de planificación y zonificación local](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/city-inversion-en-programa-de-planificacion-y-zonificacion-local)

- **Beware of zombie planning commissioners this Halloween** October 24, 2016 | Brad Neumann | When one member of a planning commission attends training, they sometimes returns to the next meeting with the others staring as if they’d been abducted, filled with ‘alien’ information, and turned back to the community as some sort of zombie. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/beware-of-zombie-planning-commissioners-this-halloween](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/beware-of-zombie-planning-commissioners-this-halloween)


- **Does conservation pay?** August 4, 2014 | Steve Lovejoy | While educating developers concerning environmental impacts is important, greater profits will induce developers more than appeals to their environmental ethic or their conscience. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/does-conservation-pay](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/does-conservation-pay)

- **Zoning and police power ordinances are not the same, and should not be mixed together** June 19, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | There are three types of ordinances local government might adopt. Important to focus on the difference between police power ordinances and zoning ordinances. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning-and-police-power-ordinances-are-not-the-same-and-should-not-be-mixed-together](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning-and-police-power-ordinances-are-not-the-same-and-should-not-be-mixed-together)

- **Embarking on planning and zoning for the first time? Think it through!** March 31, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Local units of government without zoning, or townships subject to county zoning that might be considering adopting their own zoning ordinance, should think the process and requirements through carefully. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/embarking-on-planning-and-zoning-for-the-first-time-think-it-through](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/embarking-on-planning-and-zoning-for-the-first-time-think-it-through)

- **Communities have many options in addressing zoning needs** November 14, 2013 | Richard Wooten | As a regulatory tool, zoning was designed to mitigate nuisances, preserve property values and provide some certainty of land use. However, since its inception, the tool now has many variations. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/communities-have-many-options-in-addressing-zoning-needs](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/communities-have-many-options-in-addressing-zoning-needs)

- **Be strategic about planning commission training** September 20, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Limited budgets have restricted many communities’ ability to fund professional development for many of their boards and commissions. However, an informed and trained commission is critical to the success of an effective planning commission. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/be-strategic-about-planning-commission-training](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/be-strategic-about-planning-commission-training)

- **Do not be afraid to benchmark your zoning code** August 28, 2013 | Richard Wooten | One of the most important local regulatory documents that Michigan Communities control is their local zoning ordinance. This ordinance literally defines how land will be used and how uses affect and interact with other uses. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/do-not-be-afraid-to-benchmark-your-zoning-code](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/do-not-be-afraid-to-benchmark-your-zoning-code)

Communities can enhance local planning and zoning using the Internet March 24, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Advances in Internet technology and accessibility provide an excellent opportunity for land use officials to make planning and zoning information more available, and increase the number of citizens engaged in planning decisions. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/communities_can_enhance_local_planning_and_zoning_using_the_internet

Does zoning contribute to forest parcelization? November 27, 2012 | Dean Solomon | Michigan forestry professionals recently met to discuss current causes and research about forest fragmentation. Zoning is one of the factors that can influence this issue, both negatively and positively.

- Part One: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/does_zoning_contribute_to_forest_parcelization_part_1
- Part Two: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/does_zoning_contribute_to_forest_parcelization_part_2

Protecting your community officials with liability insurance November 15, 2012 | Ryan Coffey | Carrying liability insurance helps protect officials in the event of a lawsuit, but it is important to work with your municipal attorney to review the policy’s scope of coverage to ensure that your community’s coverage needs are met. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/protecting_your_community_officials_with_liability_insurance

Community planning’s dirty word: Sprawl October 24, 2012 | Ryan Coffey | Managing growth can prevent sprawl and encourage the development of prosperous Michigan cities and countrysides. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/community_plannings_dirty_word_sprawl


TRAINING BASICS: The importance of discussing best practices for continuing education in planning and zoning April 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Continuing Education is an important strategy for local government risk management. Bylaws and local policy should also address how much training is appropriate and what topics training should focus on. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_importance_of_discussing_best_practices_for_continuing_education_in_pla

Bad zoning can be worse than no zoning at all February 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Communities can evaluate planning and zoning programs using performance audit materials from Michigan State University Extension. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/bad_zoning_can_be_worse_than_no_zoning_at_all

TRAINING BASICS: Training, continuing education is best strategy for planning and zoning risk management February 4, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Continuing education and training an important planning and zoning risk management strategy for local governments in Michigan. While Michigan has many training opportunities, participation has not been very high. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/training_continuing_education_is_best_strategy_for_planning_and_zoning_risk

Planning Commission

- Planning commissions and zoning board of appeals required to have three year staggered terms December 19, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Michigan statute requires three-year staggered terms of office. But many communities have gotten off that pattern. It is a problem that needs correcting. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_three
- Our Planning Commission has a vacancy, now what? May 27, 2016 | Bethany Prykucki | The correct way to address a vacancy of a position on the board is through the bylaws. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/our_planning_commission_has_a_vacancy_now_what
- Function of a county planning commission and department | Kurt Schindler | In an era of increased need for coordination, cooperation, and regionalization between local governments, the role of county planning is much
Part One: November 18, 2015, Public involvement is a major tool for three successful county planning programs.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/function_of_a_county_planning_commission_and_department_part_1

Part Two: November 19, 2015, Technical assistance, education and mapping are important tools for successful county planning.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/function_of_a_county_planning_commission_and_department_part_2

How planning commissions are appointed can have an impact on success June 2, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Communities struggle with finding local volunteers for commissions. Empowering appointed officials, broadening their duties and formal representation can help.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_planning_commissions_are_appointed_can_have_an_impact_on_success

A metropolitan county planning commission can, and should, apply to both urban and rural counties January 23, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Metropolitan county planning commissions are about more cooperation and intergovernmental coordination in planning. It is not something for just urban or metro-like counties.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_metropolitan_county_planning_commission_can_and_should_apply_to_urban_and

Putting planning back into the planning commission October 8, 2014 | Glenn Pape | The primary role of the planning commission is implementing the master plan. There are several tools to make that job easier.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/putting_planning_back_into_the_planning_commission

Your planning commission prepares an annual report, but what about a work program? December 7, 2012 | Brad Neumann | Since 2008, an annual report has been required of all planning commissions in Michigan, but it is the work program that sets the agenda for next year’s planning commission initiatives in tandem with the annual budget request.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/your_planning_commission_prepares_an_annual_report_but_what_about_a_work_pr

What’s in a planning commission’s annual report? | November 9, 2012 | Brad Neumann
- Part One: The annual report is a requirement of all local government planning commissions and is an opportunity to provide those in charge of the ‘purse strings’ with a dashboard of planning commission achievements.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/your_planning_commission_prepares_an_annual_report_but_what_about_a_w
- Part Two: The annual report is a requirement of all local government planning commissions and is an opportunity to provide those in charge of the ‘purse strings’ with a dashboard of planning commission achievements.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/Whats_in_a_planning_commissions_annual_report_part_2

Does your personal opinion matter as a planning commissioner? October 1, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Developing Complete streets provide for a variety users to coexist in the public right-of-way.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/does_your_personal_opinion_matter_as_a_planning_commissioner

Ten traits of a successful county planning commission May 16, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | As planning commissions form to make changes in their counties, consider adopting these characteristics for greater success.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/ten_traits_of_a_successful_county_planning_commission

Planning commissions and zoning board of appeals are required to have governing bylaws April 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | There is a minimum content for bylaws, but normally there is much more, including specifying which parliamentary authority is used.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_bylaw

Planning commission is much more than zoning March 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Planning commissions have a large job that includes coordination, intergovernmental cooperation, master plan, zoning administration, infrastructure, land division, subdivision reviews and capital improvement planning all contribute to a master plan.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commission_is_much_more_than_zoning
Planning, Cooperation and Joint Planning

- **Joint zoning board of appeals can be done** November 22, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | The Michigan Municipal Joint Planning Act allows for joint planning commissions but overlooks joint zoning board of appeals. It can still be done but takes considerable finesse to accomplish. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/joint_zoning_board_of_appeals_can_be_done](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/joint_zoning_board_of_appeals_can_be_done)

- **Joint Planning Commission involves 11 townships** September 23, 2016 | Kurt H. Schindler | It may be the largest Joint Planning Commission in Michigan, with 11 governments cooperating. The Joint Commission forms one planning commission and one zoning ordinance for the 11 participating townships. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/joint_planning_commission_involves_11_townships](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/joint_planning_commission_involves_11_townships)

- **Five levels of community partnerships** July 18, 2016 | Bonnie Zoia | This framework can help a community or organization assess what level of collaboration best meets their needs. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/five_levels_of_community_partnerships](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/five_levels_of_community_partnerships)

- **Regional planning** February 16, 2016 | Kurt Schindler
  - Part I: Research continues to suggest that regional planning, as done in Michigan, does not work very effectively. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regional_planning_part_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regional_planning_part_1)
  - Part 2: Discussion on one possible solution. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regional_planning_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regional_planning_part_2)

- **Building strong connections between tribal nations and government** John Amrhein | County commissioners from 18 northern Michigan counties learn about Michigan tribal sovereignty, history and cooperative efforts with counties.
  - Part Two: December 24, 2015, History: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/building_stronger_connections_between_tribal_nations_and_county_government_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/building_stronger_connections_between_tribal_nations_and_county_government_2)

- **Collaboration key to providing efficient community services** March 1, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | Collaboration between local governments, organizations and agencies can save valuable local financial resources and help leverage outside financial resources without duplication of services. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/collaboration_key_to_providing_efficient_community_services](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/collaboration_key_to_providing_efficient_community_services)

- **What’s all this talk about joint planning?** January 21, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | Joint planning allows multiple municipalities in Michigan to collectively, more effectively and more efficiently plan for their community’s future. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/whats_all_this_talk_about_joint_planning](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/whats_all_this_talk_about_joint_planning)

- **Government planning coordination begins with review of master plans and zoning ordinances** December 31, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Government planning commissions have the job of reviewing proposed neighboring municipal master plans; county planning commissions review township zoning ordinances. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/government_planning_coordination_begins_with_review_of_master_plans_and_zon](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/government_planning_coordination_begins_with_review_of_master_plans_and_zon)

Planning, Master Plan

- **To plan or not to plan? Minimum contents of a master plan** December 30, 2014 | Brad Neumann | For local governments that chose to adopt zoning, this is a moot question, as zoning must be based on a plan. Still, the minimum contents of a master plan are not well defined in law and communities have great latitude in developing a master plan. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/to_plan_or_not_to_plan_minimum_contents_of_a_master_plan](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/to_plan_or_not_to_plan_minimum_contents_of_a_master_plan)

- **Communities can plan for character and form not just specific types of use** October 23, 2014 | Glenn Pape |
Communities can plan for creating complete neighborhoods that are walkable, mixed use and meet daily needs. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/communities_can_plan_for_character_and_form_not_just_specific_types_of_use](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/communities_can_plan_for_character_and_form_not_just_specific_types_of_use)

- Master plan priorities should be considered in budget processes July 2, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Yearly budgets can create a short-term approach to local financial management. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/master_plan_priorities應該.be_considered_in_budget_processes](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/master_plan_priorities應該.be_considered_in_budget_processes)

- Consider government planning at two levels: internal plans and plans for the entire community April 21, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | Any government body should be able to write a plan for its activities. Why should government have to have a planning commission to do so? [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/consider_government_planning_at_two_levels_internal_plans_and_plans_for_the](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/consider_government_planning_at_two_levels_internal_plans_and_plans_for_the)

- Including master plans in the budget process March 3, 2014 | Richard Wooten | A community’s master plan is a good document to identify community priorities. Well-written plans have strong public participation components and a longer term perspective. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/including_master_plans_in_the_budget_process](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/including_master_plans_in_the_budget_process)

- The usefulness of feasibility studies December 31, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | Feasibility studies can be very helpful for guiding a community’s decision-making process. They can provide neutral, third party professional analysis including cost-benefit analysis, alternative options and verification. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_usefulness_of_feasibility_studies](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_usefulness_of_feasibility_studies)

- New master plans will need to be very different from traditional ones October 24, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Many traditional master plans were based on a continuing growth assumption. Populations were increasing and the goal was to accommodate coordinate that new growth. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_master_plans_will_need_to_be_very_different_from_traditional_ones](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_master_plans_will_need_to_be_very_different_from_traditional_ones)

- Do not lose sight of your community vision September 20, 2013 | Richard Wooten | A community’s vision is captured in its master plan, and good plans involve a deal of community input and analysis of data. However, the plans only have value if they are used in an active, ongoing manner. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/do_not_lose_sight_of_your_community_vision](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/do_not_lose_sight_of_your_community_vision)

- What materials should I consult to develop a Master Plan for our municipality? August 20, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | MSU Extension often receives the question “what materials should I consult to develop a Master Plan for our municipality?” The answer provides a long list of resources for local government officials. This article reviews some of those materials. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_materials_should_i_consult_to_develop_a_master_plan_for_our_municipali](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_materials_should_i_consult_to_develop_a_master_plan_for_our_municipali)

- Regional community health assessments are a great tool for planning officials August 13, 2013 | Dean Solomon | A regional community health assessment is a great tool for understanding community health status and addressing these issues through planning and zoning. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regional_community_health_assessments_are_a_great_tool_for_planning_officia](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regional_community_health_assessments_are_a_great_tool_for_planning_officia)


- Study neighborhood typology to discover a library of information on form July 16, 2013 | Brad Neumann | A typological approach to zoning puts greater emphasis on building form, but does not result in a true form-based-code. Still, conventional zoning can be tailored to reflect neighborhood typology, easing ordinance administration and reinforcing place.
  - Part one: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/study_neighborhood_typology_to_discover_a_library_of_information_on_form_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/study_neighborhood_typology_to_discover_a_library_of_information_on_form_1)

- Putting place into planning: Placemaking and the master plan March 2, 2013 | Glenn Pape | A focus on placemaking in master plans allows communities to attract talent and improve quality of life. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/putting_place_into_planning_placemaking_and_the_master_plan](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/putting_place_into_planning_placemaking_and_the_master_plan)

- Planning commissions can turn opposition into support by planning ahead June 19, 2012 | Brad Neumann | Planning commissions can head-off opposition by taking a proactive approach to communications and public involvement surrounding a local planning effort.
Planning, Strategic (not the same thing as a master plan, see: Consider government planning at two levels: internal plans and plans for the entire community)

- Simple steps to a strategic plan December 18, 2015 | Yvonne Wichtner-Zoia | As the saying goes, it is like eating and elephant, one bite at a time.
  - Part one As the saying goes, it is like eating and elephant, one bite at a time.
    http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/simple_steps_to_a_strategic_plan_part_1
  - Part two Plan implementation occurs one bite at a time.
    http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/simple_steps_to_a_strategic_plan_part_2

Public Participation; visioning, Charrette, hearing, and more

- Ishpeming plans with eyes on a sustainable future for Bancroft Park February 6, 2017 | Brad Neumann | It’s a vision in which environmental, social and economic dimensions all thrive and work together for the benefit of the whole.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/ishpeming_plans_with_eyes_on_a_sustainable_future_for_bancroft_park

- Ensuring public participation in meetings takes work and organization September 23, 2016 | Kurt H. Schindler | Meaningful public participation requires some very basic communication skills. Remember the key components of planning effective meetings.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/ensuring_public_participation_in_meetings_takes_work_and_organization

- Reframe community proposals to reduce conflict July 12, 2016 | Yvonne Bonnie Zoia | Many communities promote conflict by how they present an issue to the public. Decrease conflict using this simple strategy.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/reframe_community_proposals_to_reduce_conflict

- NIMBY solutions July 14, 2016 | Monica Day
  - Part one: Four tools with a track record of success http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/nimby_solutions_part_one
  - Part two: Examples of effective communication tools for risk reduction
    http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/nimby_solutions_part_two

- Public comment made simple: April 29, 2016 | Bethany Prykucki | Easy rules to follow to make public comment go smoothly in public meetings.
  - Part one: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/public_comment_made_simple
  - Part two: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/public_comment_made_simple_part_2

- Not all public participation events are charrettes March 29, 2016 | Kurt H. Schindler | Charrette is a very specific type of public involvement system for design and planning projects. Do not be fooled by people calling every public participation event a charrette. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/not_all_public_participation_events_are_charrettes

- The steps of collective visioning Makena Shultz | Carrying out the collective visioning process in your community.
    http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/collective_visioning_deciding_on_a_destination_together_and_planning_the_tr
    http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_steps_of_collective_visioning_part_2
Collective visioning: deciding on a destination together and planning the trip there August 25, 2014 | Makena Shultz | Where do you see your community in 25 years? Inviting all your community members to join in the journey can create an investment in progress towards those goals and positive change in the future. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/collective_visioning_deciding_on_a_destination_together_and_planning_the_trip](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/collective_visioning_deciding_on_a_destination_together_and_planning_the_trip)

Email can be an effective tool in community engagement processes June 2, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Electronic updates can help residents and other stakeholders stay informed during community engagement processes. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/email_can_be_an_effective_tool_in_community_engagement_processes](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/email_can_be_an_effective_tool_in_community_engagement_processes)

Should planners get into social media? February 26, 2014 | Dean Solomon | Facebook and Twitter can be effective ways for small local governments to increase engagement in planning decisions. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_planners_get_into_social_media](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_planners_get_into_social_media)

Boyne City uses design charrette to help reimagine a public facility January 24, 2014 | Dean Solomon | Design charrettes are an excellent way to engage community members in a design challenge, even one involving a single community structure. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/boyne_city_uses_design_charrette_to_help_reimagine_a_public_facility](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/boyne_city_uses_design_charrette_to_help_reimagine_a_public_facility)

Who are local community advocates and what role do they play in community development? July 23, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Community advocates are important to urban neighborhood development. These are the people who actually live in the community and have a personal stake in the overall vitality of their community. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/who_are_local_community_advocates_and_what_role_do_they_play_in_community_development](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/who_are_local_community_advocates_and_what_role_do_they_play_in_community_development)

Design charrette creates Lansing to Webberville corridor improvements May 30, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | The Vision Charrette for Michigan/Grand River Avenues, from the Lansing Capitol to Webberville, is an example of a Michigan region using this process to enhance a highway corridor. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/design_charrette_creates_lansing_to_webberville_corridor_improvements](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/design_charrette_creates_lansing_to_webberville_corridor_improvements)

The charrette is the ticket for those problematic development sites January 3, 2013 | Brad Neumann | For tricky, undeveloped sites, the charrette can likely produce the best results with broad community support, a feasible project plan and a shortened timeline to project implementation. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_charrette_is_the_ticket_for_those_problematic_development_sites](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_charrette_is_the_ticket_for_those_problematic_development_sites)

Design charrette helps Alpena move ahead with plaza project December 31, 2012 | Dean Solomon | Design Charrettes are an excellent tool for engaging stakeholders to address development challenges. Alpena is an example of a Michigan city using this process to design a new downtown plaza. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/design_charrette_helps_alpena_move_ahead_with_plaza_project](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/design_charrette_helps_alpena_move_ahead_with_plaza_project)

Increasing public participation in the planning process November 14, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Public participation is critical to an effective planning process and is a key ingredient in successful communities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/increasing_public_participation_in_the_planning_process](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/increasing_public_participation_in_the_planning_process)

Having a voice in your community's decisions October 24, 2012 | Ryan Coffey | Explore steps you can take to be aware of decisions taking place in your community and to actively participate in the decision-making process with your local officials. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/having_a_voice_in_your_communitys_decisions](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/having_a_voice_in_your_communitys_decisions)

Before settling for a public hearing, consider the continuum of public involvement October 9, 2012 | Brad Neumann | Referring to the continuum of public involvement before the next big community decision will help your local government design the most effective method for engaging the public. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/before_settling_for_a_public_hearing_consider_the_continuum_of_public_involvement](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/before_settling_for_a_public_hearing_consider_the_continuum_of_public_involvement)

Rethinking the role of collaboration in community-focused projects March 5, 2012 | Richard Wooten | The successful communities of the future will be those that can develop and manage large, complex community collaborations. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rethinking_the_role_of_collaboration_in_community_focused_projects](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rethinking_the_role_of_collaboration_in_community_focused_projects)

The public hearing is the worst way to involve the public February 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | While there are many ways to effectively involve the public, the public hearing is not one of them. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_public_hearing_is_the_worst_way_to_involve_the_public](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_public_hearing_is_the_worst_way_to_involve_the_public)
Right to Farm Act & local jurisdiction (including urban agriculture), Right to Forest Act

- Urban agriculture and agriculture-like sample zoning text available to local governments in Michigan May 4, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Local government should encourage urban agriculture. But there needs to be proper safeguards and a consensus to balance agriculture activities without undesired impacts in the neighborhood. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/urban_agriculture_and_agriculture_like_sample_zoning_text_available_to_local_governments_in_michigan)

- The basics of planning and zoning for horse-friendly communities March 18, 2015 | Christine Skelly | If you are a horse owner, this webinar will help you identify horse-friendly plans and regulations in your local community. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_basics_of_planning_and_zoning_for_horse_friendly_communities)

- A BASIC ARTICLE, START HERE: Right to Farm Act can preempt local regulation authority, but not all local regulations August 26, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | Many statutes and laws result in limiting local government’s ability to adopt and enforce regulations. Most are straightforward, but the Right to Farm Act preemption is confusing, changing and only preempts local regulation of certain things. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/right_to_farm_act_can_preempt_local_regulation_authority_but_not_all_local_regulations)

- Urban farming and livestock and 2014 GAAMPs changes
  - Introduction: New Right to Farm Act Siting GAAMP now in effect May 16, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | Agriculture Commission adopted new Site Selection GAAMPs. The new GAAMP has the potential to open the door to more urban agriculture and local food activity. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_right_to_farm_act_siting_gaamp_now_in_effect)
  - Community Food: Changes to Site Selection GAAMP mean communities have greater opportunity to plan for food systems May 16, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Michigan law requires local governments to provide for all lawful land uses where there is a demonstrated need. Is there any greater need than food? [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/changes_to_site_selection_gaamp_mean_communities_have_greater_opportunity_to_plan_for_food_systems)
  - Government to do list: New Right to Farm Site Selection GAAMPS needs local government attention May 16, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | Agriculture Commission adopted new Site Selection GAAMPs. This means local government needs to start discussions about urban agriculture and local food activity, and work to accommodate this new economic niche. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_right_to_farm_site_selection_gaamps_needs_local_government_attention)
  - Large Farms: Changes to the Right to Farm 2014 Site Selection GAAMPs May 16, 2014 | Jerry May | The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development recently made significant changes to the GAAMPs for Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Facilities. Livestock producers should be familiar with these changes. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/changes_to_the_right_to_farm_2014_site_selection_gaamps)
  - Existing Livestock: Existing livestock farms in ‘primary residential’ areas can continue July 18, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Recent changes to the Site Selection GAAMP do not likely affect existing livestock facilities in primarily residential areas. Considered nonconforming land uses, such livestock facilities are probably allowed to continue under zoning. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/existing_livestock_farms_in_primary_residential_areas_can_continue)

- Court clarification on Right to Farm and local regulation October 18, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | A recently published Michigan Court of Appeals case may provide some clarification over the confusing issue of local regulation and the Right to Farm Act. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/court_clarification_on_right_to_farm_and_local_regulation)

- Michigan’s Right to Forest Act protects forestland owners from nuisance complaints October 16, 2013 | Dean Solomon | The Right to Forest Act helps private forestland owners manage their property without fear of nuisance complaints if they follow generally accepted practices. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigans_right_to_forest_act_protects_forestland_owners_from_nuisance_complaints)

- Detroit’s new urban agriculture is a good start Richard Wooten
  - Part One, May 4, 2013 | The city of Detroit’s urban agriculture ordinance makes community gardens legal where they were once prohibited due to certain zoning rules. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rural_smart_growth_to_reinforce_regional_placemaking_part_1)
  - Part Two, May 29, 2013 | Detroit’s new urban gardening ordinance allows urban gardens in a majority of its...
zoning districts. The use is permitted by right in all of the City’s six residentially zoned districts. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rural_smart_growth_to_reinforce_regional_placemaking_part_2

- **Food innovation districts are a powerful economic development tool** April 9, 2013 | Randy Bell | Food innovation districts provide a way of improving a community’s food infrastructure while creating a cooperative business environment for food-oriented businesses. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/food_innovation_districts_are_a_powerful_economic_gardening_tool

- **Planning your community’s future for a stronger, sustainable, self-reliant food system** April 4, 2013 | Randy Bell | How a community grows, changes and prepares for its future is guided by its master plan. Where does the food system fit into your community’s future plans? 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_your_communitys_future_for_a_stronger_sustainable_self_reliant_food_system

- **Right to Farm Act protects certain farm activities from some local government regulations** November 27, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | The Right to Farm Act impacts local government regulation of certain farm activities, but it does not extend to all agricultural activity and does not supersede all local regulations. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/right_to_farm_act_protects_certain_farm_activities_from_some_local_government_regulations

**Rural and small town (see also Placemaking and Urban Design)**

- **Placemaking is a rural responsibility too** September 16, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Placemaking is not just for urban and built environments. It has an important rural component also. Here is one quick and easy way for rural governments to do their part with placemaking. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_is_a_rural_responsibility_too

- **Top 10 planning practices for making things happen in rural and small towns** October 27, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | Placemaking and new economy can also work in rural small town Michigan. Here are the top 10 best practices for making that happen. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/top_10_planning_practices_for_making_things_happen_in_rural_and_small_towns

- **Rural Smart Growth to reinforce regional placemaking** August 27, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Regions are the smallest geographic unit of sustainable growth and development. Rural Smart Growth strategies combined with urban Placemaking efforts contribute to a region’s quality of life and sense of place.
  - Part one: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rural_smart_growth_to_reinforce_regional_placemaking_part_1

- **Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Trails Conference explores coastal tourism development opportunities** July 29, 2014 | Brandon Schroeder | Scheduled for September 8 - 9 in South Haven, this conference will explore and celebrate our Great Lakes fisheries heritage as a means to promote coastal tourism development opportunities. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/great_lakes_fisheries_heritage_trails_conference_explores_coastal_tourism_development_opportunities

- **Outdoor recreation is a key component of placemaking** March 4, 2014 | Andy Hayes | Public outdoor recreation grants available for communities. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/outdoor_recreation_is_a_key_component_of_placemaking

- **Michigan Main Street seeks applicants for 2014** September 10, 2013 | Brad Neumann | The Main Street Four-Point Approach® helps traditional downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts leverage assets, adapt to a changing economy, celebrate public space, and organize for success. 

- **Visionary leadership and shared regional assets are critical for small town success** September 3, 2012 | Ann Chastain | Small, rural towns that are distanced from large population centers will experience more sustainable economies through creative and effective strategies for regional collaboration and cooperation. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/visionary_leadership_and_shared_regional_assets_are_critical_for_small_town

- **Successful communities have a “community champion”** August 17, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Successful urban neighborhoods need strong community-based organizations that can access and effectively use resources to help sustain and develop the communities where they are located. 
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/successful_communities_have_a_community_champion

- **New report highlights green infrastructure importance** February 16, 2012 | Dean Solomon | As Michigan emerges from the deep recession and economic turmoil, our green infrastructure will be an important economic development
driver. A new MSU study shows that natural amenities can have a positive impact on population, income and jobs. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_report_highlights_green_infrastructure_importance](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_report_highlights_green_infrastructure_importance)


### Signs

- Many local governments still need to update sign regulations following the 2015 Supreme Court case April 22, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | It has been almost ten months since the US Supreme Court ruling on content-neutral regulation of signs. The June 2015 ruling re-emphasized and further restricted content-based regulation of signs. Many local governments have yet to adopt new regulations. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/many_local_governments_still_need_to_update_sign_regulations_following_the_Supreme_Court_ruling_on_sign_regulation](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/many_local_governments_still_need_to_update_sign_regulations_following_the_Supreme_Court_ruling_on_sign_regulation)

- **Supreme Court ruling on sign regulation has major implications for all local governments** June 29, 2015 | Brad Neumann | The decision means many, if not all, sign regulations in Michigan will need to be reviewed and likely changed if the municipality wants to reduce legal risks. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/supreme_court_ruling_on_sign_regulation_has_major_implications_for_all_local_governments](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/supreme_court_ruling_on_sign_regulation_has_major_implications_for_all_local_governments)

- **Sign regulation guidebook helps communities find their way** November 29, 2013 | Brad Neumann | Signage is a defining characteristic of a community and a regulatory aspect of local government that must simultaneously protect free speech and community aesthetics.
  - Part one. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/sign_regulation_guidebook_helps_communities_find_their_way_part_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/sign_regulation_guidebook_helps_communities_find_their_way_part_1)
  - Part two. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/sign_regulation_guidebook_helps_communities_find_their_way_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/sign_regulation_guidebook_helps_communities_find_their_way_part_2)

### Towers (cell, phone, wireless, etc.)


- **New restrictions on local government regulation of wireless service facilities** October 20, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Local governments in Michigan are restricted as to what they can regulate or prevent when it comes to wireless service facilities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_restrictions_on_local_government_regulation_of_wireless_service_facilities](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_restrictions_on_local_government_regulation_of_wireless_service_facilities)

- **Local wireless communication zoning further restricted** June 26, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Local zoning regulation of wireless communication and fireworks are subject to less regulation by zoning ordinances. The list of things that restrict zoning jurisdiction continues to get longer. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_wireless_communication_zoning_further_restricted](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_wireless_communication_zoning_further_restricted)

### Transportation, transit, bike, Complete Streets

- **New transportation act allows greater flexibility in street design** December 9, 2015 | Brad Neumann | The new FAST Act allows local engineers and planners to design lanes and configurations with greater flexibility to focus on pedestrians and bicyclists. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_transportation_act_allows_greater_flexibility_in_street_design](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_transportation_act_allows_greater_flexibility_in_street_design)
- **Planning based on community typology** August 24, 2015 | Glenn Pape | Focusing planning efforts on pedestrian scale communities can lead to better places. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_based_on_community_typology](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_based_on_community_typology)

- **New bike lanes make international news and set the stage** August 14, 2015 | Andy Northrop | As Michigan recognizes cycling and the importance of trails for our communities what can we learn from our international neighbors on both sides going forward. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_bike_lanes_make_international_news_and_set_the_stage](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_bike_lanes_make_international_news_and_set_the_stage)

- **Getting started on pedestrian friendly streets** August 14, 2015 | Glenn Pape | Using the A/B grid to prioritize and focus efforts on pedestrian streets. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting_started_on_pedestrian_friendly_streets](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting_started_on_pedestrian_friendly_streets)

- **Paint is cheap, walking is good** August 14, 2015 | Glenn Pape | A low cost investment in walking and biking infrastructure can improve talent attraction. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/paint_is_cheap_walking_is_good](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/paint_is_cheap_walking_is_good)

- **Investing in bicycle infrastructure generates returns** September 10, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Attracting cyclists can have economic benefits for a community but it needs to be safe for cyclists. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/investing_in_bicycle_infrastructure_generates_returns](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/investing_in_bicycle_infrastructure_generates_returns)

- **Suburbs drive high cost of transportation** August 11, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Development patterns are causing more driving and higher transportation costs which can hamper local spending. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/suburbs_drive_high_cost_of_transportation](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/suburbs_drive_high_cost_of_transportation)

- **A walkability paradox: Cars may improve the pedestrian experience** July 24, 2014 | Brad Neumann | It may seem counterintuitive, but cars are needed to make most walkable urban retail environments successful. The key is how communities manage those cars to enhance the pedestrian experience and support business activity. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_walkability_paradox_cars_may_improve_the_pedestrian_experience](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_walkability_paradox_cars_may_improve_the_pedestrian_experience)

- **Open streets: Placemaking with physical activity in mind** February 3, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Around the nation, communities are turning streets over to pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized users for the purposes of building social capital, promoting physical activity and accessing local businesses in new ways. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/open_streets_placemaking_with_physical_activity_in_mind](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/open_streets_placemaking_with_physical_activity_in_mind)


- **Complete streets in Michigan: Progress, pitfalls and promise** October 17, 2013 | Brad Neumann | Three years after Michigan’s complete streets legislation became law, design guidance is improving and research into the benefits of complete streets is continuing to emerge, yet funding for projects is lean and implementation seems limited. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/complete_streets_in_michigan_progress_pitfalls_and.promise](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/complete_streets_in_michigan_progress_pitfalls_and.promise)

- **Add a frontage quality analysis to your next walking audit** October 17, 2013 | Brad Neumann | Conventional walking audits only assess municipal infrastructure like sidewalks and crosswalks. Since walkability is also dependent on how interesting the walk is, conduct a frontage quality analysis for a more robust assessment of walkability. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/add_a_frontage_quality_analysis_to_your_next_walking_audit](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/add_a_frontage_quality_analysis_to_your_next_walking_audit)

- **A citizen's guide to promoting complete streets** June 12, 2013 | Brad Neumann | In Michigan, approximately 100 local governments have adopted policies to support the development of complete streets. Learn if your community is doing so and help in the effort to improve access and mobility of all users of the community’s public ways. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_citizens_guide_to_promoting_complete_streets](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_citizens_guide_to_promoting_complete_streets)

- **Road diets can improve pedestrian safety without compromising capacity** June 10, 2013 | Brad Neumann | Since pedestrian safety is a function of vehicle speed, and vehicle speed is a function of roadway width, 4-to-3 lane conversions, also known as road diets, can improve safety without compromising capacity of the roadway. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/road_diets_can_improve_pedestrian_safety_without_compromising_capacity](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/road_diets_can_improve_pedestrian_safety_without_compromising_capacity)

- **What is a "complete street" and why is it important?** September 3, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Developing complete streets provide for a variety of users to coexist in an efficient and safe manner in the public right-of-way. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_a_complete_street_and_why_is_it_important](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_a_complete_street_and_why_is_it_important)

Is historic preservation un-American?  July 7, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Preservationists are Un-American because they oppose the conventional American idea of consuming ever more, and are reversing the “use it up and move on” mentality. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_historic_preservation_un_american](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_historic_preservation_un_american)

Creating successful retail streets  December 2, 2015 | Glenn Pape | The basic concepts and tools to create a successful retail street. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/creating_successful_retail_streets](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/creating_successful_retail_streets)


Designing streets for people  May 27, 2015 | Glenn Pape | Streets can be a place for both people and cars; it just requires looking at streets as a place. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/designing_streets_for_people](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/designing_streets_for_people)

Complete Streets provide concrete benefits to communities  March 27, 2015 | Glenn Pape | A new report from Smart Growth America shows benefits of complete streets. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/complete_streets_provide_concrete_benefits_to_communities](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/complete_streets_provide_concrete_benefits_to_communities)

Getting density right  December 16, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Design and planning are important considerations for attached housing to be successful and contribute to place. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting_density_right](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting_density_right)

Historic buildings: older, smaller and better  December 15, 2014 | Brad Neumann | A new study finds that neighborhoods with older buildings of mixed use and age perform better than districts with newer, more-similar buildings and uses. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/historic_buildings_older_smaller_and_better](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/historic_buildings_older_smaller_and_better)

How attached garages changed traditional neighborhoods  November 26, 2014 | Glenn Pape | The front porch was an anchor of social activity within the neighborhood and created social capital. Garages have replaced them as the primary design element of houses. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_attached_garages_changed_traditional_neighborhoods](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_attached_garages_changed_traditional_neighborhoods)

Creating safe neighborhoods through form  September 10, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Getting the form built right is the basis of five positive principles that create safe neighborhoods. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/creating_safe_neighborhoods_through_form](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/creating_safe_neighborhoods_through_form)

An argument for alleys  August 5, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Alleys can lead to a better integration of automobile and foot traffic in a neighborhood which creates improved access and walkability. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/an_argument_for_alleys](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/an_argument_for_alleys)

Getting enclosure right: creating a comfortable public room  April 21, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Creating public spaces that pedestrians want to occupy and feel comfortable in. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting_enclosure_right_creating_a_comfortable_public_room](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting_enclosure_right_creating_a_comfortable_public_room)

Getting a clear picture on façade transparency  February 24, 2014 | Glenn Pape | Communities can create welcoming places by setting clear transparency standards that are easy to understand. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting_a_clear_picture_on_facade_transparency](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting_a_clear_picture_on_facade_transparency)

Detroit's land use patterns date back to the 1940s  December 13, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Land use patterns from the 1940s show a preference for single-family residential development for the City of Detroit. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/detroit's_land_use_patterns_date_back_to_the_1940s](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/detroit's_land_use_patterns_date_back_to_the_1940s)

Putting up a good front  August 16, 2013 | Glenn Pape | More than a place to park, frontages of structures play a key role in community character and walkability. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/putting_up_a_good_front](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/putting_up_a_good_front)

Jane Jacobs' ideas on viable cities are more relevant than ever  May 27, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Jane Jacobs' ideas about walkable neighborhoods, diversity and mixed use development are consistent with prevailing planning principles of compact urban development and mixing land uses to create economically viable places.
Vendors (food trucks, and more)

- Food trucks: Serving street food with a side of placemaking March 18, 2014 | Brad Neumann | While placemaking is principally focused on creating public spaces with good form, where good form is lacking, attractions such as food trucks can contribute to place by attracting people, enlivening an area and stimulating other business activity.
  [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/food_trucks_serving_street_food_with_a_side_of_placemaking)

Water protection (ground water, surface water, wetland, flood)

- What is reasonable use of Michigan’s waters? November 22, 2016 | Brad Neumann | Reasonable use means one’s own use of water cannot unduly interfere with navigability or the rights of others to reasonably use the water, but what exactly does that mean?
  [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_reasonable_use_of_michigans_waters)

- Water use at perpendicular versus parallel roads: Where are public versus riparian rights? November 22, 2016 | Brad Neumann | Don’t let perpendicular versus parallel roads get crossed in your head. There are differences in public use and riparian rights.
  [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/water_use_at_perpendicular_versus_parallel_roads_where_are_public_versus_ri)

- What is reasonable use of Michigan’s waters? November 22, 2016 | Brad Neumann | Reasonable use means one’s own use of water cannot unduly interfere with navigability or the rights of others to reasonably use the water, but what exactly does that mean?
  [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_reasonable_use_of_michigans_waters)

- Water use at perpendicular versus parallel roads: Where are public versus riparian rights? November 22, 2016 | Brad Neumann | Don’t let perpendicular versus parallel roads get crossed in your head. There are differences in public use and riparian rights.
  [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/water_use_at_perpendicular_versus_parallel_roads_where_are_public_versus_ri)

- Engaging community stakeholders for water quality in lakes October 10, 2016 | Ryan Coffey | When conducting water quality studies on local lakes, it is important to have sound scientific methods guiding the investigative process. Equally important is the need to reach out to community members who have a vested interest in the health of the lake.
  [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/engaging_community_stakeholders_for_water_quality_in_lakes)
• Local government strategies to protect groundwater January 25, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Groundwater can, and in some places has, become contaminated. Local government is best-suited to prevent contamination from occurring but seldom uses these 11 zoning tools at their disposal to do so. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_strategies_to_protect_groundwater](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_strategies_to_protect_groundwater)

• Au Gres develops a new vision for a premier waterfront December 23, 2015 | Mark Breederland | Project team helps community to plan for Au Gres 2035. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/au_gres_develops_a_new_vision_for_a_premier_waterfront_breederland15](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/au_gres_develops_a_new_vision_for_a_premier_waterfront_breederland15)

• A history of wetlands in Michigan: December 22, 2015 | Katy Hintzen
  - Part 1, How we came to better understand and appreciate one of the world’s most productive ecosystems. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_history_of_wetlands_in_michigan_part_1_hintzen15](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_history_of_wetlands_in_michigan_part_1_hintzen15)
  - Part 3, Early state settlers thought wetlands were teeming with disease. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_history_of_wetlands_in_michigan_part_3_hintzen15](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_history_of_wetlands_in_michigan_part_3_hintzen15)

• Regulating keyhole development December 21, 2015 | Brad Neumann | Riparian lots that grant keyhole access to others may create impacts that threaten health, safety, and welfare. Local governments have the legal basis to regulate such activities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regulating_keyhole_development](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/regulating_keyhole_development)


• The Village of Ontonagon plans for future sustainability of their harbor community November 30, 2015 | Brad Neumann | The Sustainable Small Harbors project seeks to build physical and economic resilience through economic development and placemaking strategies.

• Got water? Time of sale septic inspections can protect water quality | Brad Neumann | Counties, townships can protect surface and groundwater by adopting time of sale septic inspection ordinances.

• Local government has an important role for water quality protection | Kurt Schindler | State and federal regulations help protect water resources but does not do the whole job. Local government has an important role also
  - Part 1, May, 2015: often the proactive preventative function. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_has_an_important_role_for_water_quality_protection](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_has_an_important_role_for_water_quality_protection)
  - Part 2, June 19, 2015: key to retaining important habitat on lake’s and river’s edge. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_has_an_important_role_for_water_quality_protection_part_two](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_has_an_important_role_for_water_quality_protection_part_two)
  - Part 3, July 17, 2015: buffers and greenbelts are enforceable and are not property takings. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_has_an_important_role_for_water_quality_protection_part_3](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_has_an_important_role_for_water_quality_protection_part_3)


• With higher Great Lakes, review zoning for coastal resiliency November 21, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Coastal hazards affecting public and private property change as weather, seasons, and climate change. With such a dynamic system, zoning regulations along the Great Lakes may need to be amended in order to protect property and Great Lakes access.
  - Part one: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/with_higher_great_lakes_review_zoning_for_coastal_resiliency_part_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/with_higher_great_lakes_review_zoning_for_coastal_resiliency_part_1)
Lake Charlevoix leaders and residents learn about shoreline protection August 8, 2014 | Dean Solomon | Inland lake shoreline owners and local governments have important roles to protect water quality. Lake Charlevoix is an excellent example where both groups are learning about these issues.

Local government and climate change: Assess your community's flood resilience July 22, 2014 | Brad Neumann | With rainfall intensification predicted in the Midwest, a new checklist guides communities in developing policies and standards to improve flood resilience.

Local government and climate change: Planning for rainfall intensification in the Midwest May 29, 2014 | Brad Neumann | The Third National Climate Assessment predicts increased rainfall events and flooding in the Midwest. Communities that plan ahead and adapt to predicted conditions stand to ‘weather the storm’.

Web-based tools for shoreline assessments March 21, 2014 | Dean Solomon | Online mapping sites offer excellent information to help local officials develop effective shoreline zoning regulations.

Zoning to protect lakeshore areas? Do an assessment first December 20, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Doing an assessment of the current resources and trends before developing standards is the best way to come up with practical, effective and enforceable regulations.

Northeast Michigan local officials learn how to protect lake quality December 20, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Planning and zoning for shoreline areas present both opportunities and challenge for local officials, as participants learned during a recent workshop in northeast Michigan.

Porous pavement: A not-so-new low-impact design technique November 17, 2013 | Terry Gibb | That childhood saying ‘when it rains, it pours’ may be getting an update to ‘when it rains, it’s porous.’ Using low-impact design techniques can reduce stormwater runoff and protect local water resources.

Local officials can learn advanced shoreline planning and zoning techniques November 14, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Protecting inland lake and stream shorelines is challenging for local officials. A December 2013 workshop will help planning and zoning officials design effective ordinances for their community.

Local officials work together to protect Lake Charlevoix October 16, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Watershed protection is indeed a team sport – as local officials, agency representatives and organizations demonstrated at a recent meeting in Charlevoix County.

Planning your lakefront dream home? October 7, 2013 | Jane Herbert | Minimizing vegetation disturbance on your shoreline property saves time and money both now and in the future. It’s also a smart way to protect your lake’s water quality.

Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool can help local planning officials plan for the future May 27, 2013 | Dean Solomon | Michigan’s web-based Water Withdrawal Assessment tool provides valuable information that planners can use to prevent water availability issues.

Low impact Development: Putting the LID on flooding May 15, 2013 | Jane Herbert | Recent flooding serves as a reminder that upstream stormwater management efforts can reduce impacts at home and downstream.

New guidebook suggests planning and zoning essentials to protecting water quality April 27, 2013 | Dean Solomon |
Inclusion of six essential elements in master plans and zoning ordinances can help protect Michigan’s water quality. New water quality protection guidebook can help rural communities understand and include those provisions in their plans and regulations.

New rural water quality protection guidebook prepared by Michigan State University April 13, 2013 | Brad Neumann | New guidebook is a ‘must have’ that details best management practices that lower the impact of land use activities on water bodies and provides sample language for community master plans and zoning ordinances.

Ottawa County groundwater has quality and quantity concerns November 27, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Some groundwater in Ottawa County has become impaired with wells pulling up salty water. Concerns also center on quantity, with overall lowering of groundwater levels.

Modifying your shoreline property? Check local regulations first April 25, 2012 | Dean Solomon | Checking local zoning regulations is the first step for shoreline property owners considering major landscaping projects.

Zoning, Adoption and Amendments

Document every step in zoning ordinance adoption November 28, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | It is important to document, in writing, every step when adopting or amending a zoning ordinance. Do not trust memory, or the ability to go back at a later date to find needed documentation.

The one question every municipality should ask itself before adopting an ordinance October 11, 2016 | Ryan Coffey | There are many considerations when developing and adopting a new ordinance, but perhaps the most important of all is determining whether the municipality has the will to enforce the new zoning regulations.

Difference between a zoning ordinance and a master plan, August 23, 2016 | Kurt H. Schindler | The zoning ordinance is a law with penalties and consequence for not following it. A master plan is a policy document that expresses intent. It is not an enforceable document and is not law.

Zoning petitions: What are citizens’ options? June 22, 2016 | Brad Neumann | Zoning ordinances or zoning amendments are approved by local bodies of elected officials. However, citizens of municipalities in Michigan can submit petitions to challenge new zoning laws.

How to spot a spot zoning June 17, 2016 | Brad Neumann | When considering a rezoning, remember four key criteria to avoid creating a spot zone.

Overlay zoning districts can be a valuable tool December 15, 2015 | Kurt Schindler | Overlay zoning districts is a valid tool in some conditions. But be careful not to overuse it when more traditional zoning techniques can do the job.

Common problems we observe in local zoning:

- Part 1 October 22, 2015 | Kurt Schindler | MSU Extension land use specialists are often reading zoning from many different communities. Doing so shows us that many communities have items completely or partially missing from their zoning that a community might consider adding to its zoning.

- Part 2 October 22, 2015 | Kurt Schindler | MSU Extension land use specialists are often reading zoning from many different communities. Doing so shows us some common problems which should be corrected in zoning.
All zoning does not have to include everything in the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act August 19, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Local governments are provided with several zoning tools and techniques. But they all do not have to be used in every zoning ordinance. Local governments can choose to use certain tools, or not. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/all_zoning_does_not_have_to_include_everything_in_the_michigan_zoning_enabling]

Amending a zoning ordinance requires adopting an ordinance March 4, 2015 | Brad Neumann | Communities with zoning must regularly update their ordinance to reduce legal risk. The process for doing so is not difficult, but it is detailed and requires adopting an amending ordinance. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/amending_a_zoning_ordinance_requires_adopting_an_ordinance]

Top six techniques for streamlining the zoning ordinance | January 29, 2015 | Dean Solomon | Zoning ordinances can be confusing, but don’t have to be. Planning officials identified the six top techniques for streamlining zoning ordinances during a 2014 workshop. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/top_six_techniques_for_streamlining_the_zoning_ordinance]

There are multiple ways to style a zoning ordinance | July 21, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | Zoning can be written, or prepared, several different ways. Most common is to think of zoning as traditional, conventional, performance-based, form-based or a mix of each of these. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/there_are_multiple_ways_to_style_a_zoning_ordinance]

No state oversight of planning, zoning; no central depository of plans and zoning ordinances | July 21, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | There is no state oversight of planning and zoning. There is no statewide library of all master plans and zoning ordinances. Thus, trying to find out who has zoning, and what it covers, and what type of regulations exist is very difficult. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/no_state_oversight_of_planning_zoning_no_central_depository_of_plans_and_zoning_ordinances]

Be deliberate with zoning code amendments | August 23, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Changes to your zoning code should be a focused, thoughtful process and should not be made on a whim. Some research should be conducted especially if you are proposing changes that will significantly change the way your community regulates land. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/be_deliberate_with_zoning_code_amendments]

Zoning moratoriums should only be done with caution | April 17, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Local governments might adopt a moratorium to prevent development until after rules are established. This can be perilous and some may question if moratoriums are legal. Do so with caution and make sure the municipal attorney is directly involved. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_moratoriums_should_only_be_done_with_caution]

Zoning district, tax assessor classifications not the same thing | March 24, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Some use tax assessor classifications as an indicator of zoning district. They are not the same and one should never base zoning decisions on property tax classifications. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_district_tax_assessor_classifications_not_the_same_thing]

Changes to Michigan law result in clearer understanding of the “zoning plan” and its requirements | April 30, 2012 | Brad Neumann | Recent changes to Michigan statutes related to planning and zoning clarify the requirement for communities with an adopted zoning ordinance to also have an adopted ‘zoning plan.’ [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/changes_to_michigan_law_result_in_clearer_understanding_of_the_zoning_plan]

All rezonings are not good rezonings | February 7, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Local officials should always review rezoning applications closely to ensure they are consistent with a community's master plan. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/all_rezonings_are_not_good_rezonings]

Zoning, Administrative Structure

Zoning approvals should be prompt | October 24, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | A zoning decision should be prompt and without any undue delay. Incorporating deadlines for decisions into a zoning ordinance, or office policy, is a best practice. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_approvals_should_be_prompt]

Do not underfund a planning and zoning program | March 29, 2016 | Kurt H. Schindler | Under budgeting for
planning and zoning may result in a poorly run planning and zoning program which may do more harm than good. Cost savings can be realized by use of joint planning, sharing zoning administrator services, and other cooperative efforts. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/do_not_underfund_a_planning_and_zoning_program](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/do_not_underfund_a_planning_and_zoning_program)

- **Separation of powers improves decision-making** April 15, 2015 | Glenn Pape | Administrative decisions made by the right government body can improve approval time and reduce risk. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/separation_of_powers_improves_decision_making](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/separation_of_powers_improves_decision_making)
- **Who should decide if a zoning permit is issued?** February 24, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Michigan law provides three options for who decides to issue zoning permits. There is a way to determine which option is best for a local government to use. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/who_should_decide_if_a_zoning_permit_is_issued](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/who_should_decide_if_a_zoning_permit_is_issued)
- **Legislative body involvement in zoning administrative decisions can raise important questions** February 24, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Michigan zoning is set up to mimic the three branches of federal government with separation of powers. But it is not done perfectly, and requires some careful consideration when thinking about how things are done in your community. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/legislative_body_involvement_in_zoning_administrative_decisions_can_raise_i](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/legislative_body_involvement_in_zoning_administrative_decisions_can_raise_i)
- **Substantive Due Process places limits on government regulation** August 21, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | In planning and zoning, substantive due process is about the substance (topic) of regulation, that the regulation is directly related to its purpose, and is the least amount of regulation to do the job. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/substantive_due_process_places_limits_on_government_regulation](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/substantive_due_process_places_limits_on_government_regulation)
- **Zoning decisions travel with the land and are not temporary** February 26, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Zoning administrative decisions are permanent, not temporary. Zoning decisions are specific for the parcel of land and not to an individual person who sought the zoning permit/approval. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_decisions_travel_with_the_land_and_are_not_temporary](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_decisions_travel_with_the_land_and_are_not_temporary)
- **Planning commissions need a good paper trail** September 28, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Effective planning commissions do a very good of documenting their decision making process. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_need_a_good_paper_trail](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_need_a_good_paper_trail)

### Zoning Administrator and enforcement

- **Planning staff reports can be better and should be.** June 24, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Staff reports for planning and zoning cases are often poorly done and missing critical information. A recent study recommends ways to improve staff reports. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_staff_reports_can_be_better_and_should_be](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_staff_reports_can_be_better_and_should_be)
- **Vague or subjective ordinance standards: In the court’s opinion they stink!** April 14, 2016 | Brad Neumann | A recent Court of Appeals case reinforces that government regulations must be clear and specific. Previous cases provide principles helpful in reviewing an ordinance for vagueness.
  - Part 1: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/vague_or_subjective_ordinance_standards_in_the_courts_opinion_they_stink](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/vague_or_subjective_ordinance_standards_in_the_courts_opinion_they_stink)
  - Part 2: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/vague_or_subjective_ordinance_standards_in_the_courts_opinion_they_stink_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/vague_or_subjective_ordinance_standards_in_the_courts_opinion_they_stink_part_2)
- **Administrative decisions require careful application to ordinance standards** February 9, 2016 | Brad Neumann | Base decisions only on explicit standards in the ordinance to avoid a challenge of being unreasonable, arbitrary or capricious.
  - Part 2: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/administrative_decisions_require_careful_application_to_ordinance_standard2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/administrative_decisions_require_careful_application_to_ordinance_standard2)
- **Time to require training and certification of your zoning administrator** August 26, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | Zoning has become more complex. The zoning administrator, responsible for the day-to-day operation of a zoning ordinance, should have a higher degree of skill and training. This article suggests ways to accomplish that. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/time_to_require_training_and_certification_of_your_zoning_administrator](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/time_to_require_training_and_certification_of_your_zoning_administrator)
- **The uncompromising zoning administrator is not a bad guy** March 24, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Zoning
administrators are sticklers for rules, and may seem uncompromising. They have a job to do, and not doing their job can result in serious personal liability for a zoning administrator. 

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_uncompromising_zoning_administrator_is_not_a_bad_guy

- Zoning permit approvals should not happen in a vacuum January 17, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | You apply for a zoning permit. What happens between application and getting, or not, the permit? It should be a set step-by-step process. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_permit_approvals_should_not_happen_in_a_vacuum

### Zoning, Nonconformity

- Nonconformities in zoning is the source of much confusion September 24, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Zoning cannot be retroactive, and has to grandfather existing land uses. Those are called nonconformities which take on many characteristics and are different than zoning violations. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/nonconformities_in_zoning_is_the_source_of_much_confusion

- Understanding nonconformity: Are you 'granfathered' in? April 4, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | Properties that qualify as nonconforming often have particular regulations that affect how an owner can make changes to the property. Understanding these regulations is important in order to avoid potential conflict with local government. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/understanding_nonconformity_are_you_granfathered_in

### Zoning, Planned Unit Development

- Planned unit development provides flexibility in local zoning January 26, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | Zoning ordinances are often not very flexible, requiring neighborhoods or commercial areas to appear the same. Planned unit development is one tool which can provide more flexibility and innovation for development. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planned_unit_development_provides_flexibility_in_local_zoning

### Zoning permits, site plan reviews

- Starting a home occupation can be quick and easy through minimized regulation October 31, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | A community can make starting a home occupation easy to do by minimizing regulation. Changing zoning to allow home occupations to automatically be part of a dwelling can help economic development. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/starting_a_home_occupation_can_be_quick_and_easy_through_minimized_regulation

- Zoning approvals are limited as to what conditions can be imposed July 20, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Local government does not have free reign for imposing conditions. An imposed condition should relate back to the zoning ordinance standards for approval. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_approvals_are_limited_as_to_what_conditions_can_be_imposed

- Thorough application reviews are critical for local planning processes July 1, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Poor reviews of applications can result inaccurate zoning reviews and interpretations. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/thorough_application_reviews_are_critical_for_local_planning_processes

- Pre-development meetings can improve the overall efficiency of the site plan review process April 21, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Site plan reviews for local communities can be improved by adding pre-development meetings. These meetings allow developers to address important issues before plan submittal. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/pre_development_meetings_can_improve_the_overall_efficiency_of_the_site_pla

- The challenging process of site plan review January 28, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Site plan review of proposed developments and projects can seem like a daunting task, especially to new commissioners. However, a well-written code explaining the requirements and procedures is the best approach to address such issues. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_challenging_process_of_site_plan_review

- Difference between special use permits and variances March 22, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | Special use permits and
variances are zoning tools that protect communities and properties while providing flexibility to landowners and municipalities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/difference_between_special_use_permits_and_variances](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/difference_between_special_use_permits_and_variances)

- **Should site plan review be required for shoreline residential development?** Dean Solomon | Requiring site plan review for shoreline residential development in some communities may reduce zoning violations and misunderstandings.
  - Part Two: September 27, 2012, outlines specific options for the site plan review process. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_site_plan_review_be_required_for_shoreline_residential_development](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_site_plan_review_be_required_for_shoreline_residential_development)

**Zoning, Zoning Board of Appeals and Variances**

- **How to handle appeals of administrative decisions** December 22, 2016 | Brad Neumann | The zoning board of appeals is the only entity authorized to hear appeals on the administration and enforcement of the zoning ordinance at the local level. When doing so, careful considerations must be made. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_to_handle_appeals_of_administrative_decisions](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_to_handle_appeals_of_administrative_decisions)

- **Planning commissions and zoning board of appeals required to have three year staggered terms** December 19, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Michigan statute requires three-year staggered terms of office. But many communities have gotten off that pattern. It is a problem that needs correcting. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_three_year_staggered_terms](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_three_year_staggered_terms)

- **Joint zoning board of appeals can be done** November 22, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | The Michigan Municipal Joint Planning Act allows for joint planning commissions but overlooks joint zoning board of appeals. It can still be done but takes considerable finesse to accomplish. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/joint_zoning_board_of_appeals_can_be_done](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/joint_zoning_board_of_appeals_can_be_done)

- **Proving a practical difficulty for a dimensional variance request** October 27, 2014 | Brad Neumann | While inherently rigid, there are mechanisms in zoning to allow for flexibility. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/proving_a_practical_difficulty_for_a_dimensional_variance_request](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/proving_a_practical_difficulty_for_a_dimensional_variance_request)


- **What is the status of my zoning board of appeals?** December 31, 2013 | Ryan Coffey | For many rural townships in Michigan, the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) may see sparse and irregular action, often with a year or more between meetings. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_the_status_of_my_zoning_board_of_ appealing](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_the_status_of_my_zoning_board_of_ appealing)

- **The importance of your Zoning Board of Appeals** November 15, 2012 | Ryan Coffey | Maintaining a properly organized and functioning Zoning Board of Appeals is critical to ensure the integrity of the board’s decisions and to avoid potentially serious and costly legal issues. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_importance_of_your_zoning_board_of_appeals](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_importance_of_your_zoning_board_of_appeals)

- **Planning commissions and zoning board of appeals are required to have governing bylaws** April 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | There is a minimum content for bylaws, but normally there is much more, including specifying which parliamentary authority is used. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_bylaw](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_bylaw)

**Other, miscellaneous**


- **The real Detroit – “The paper watch dog”** July 7, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | The Detroit Master Plan was used as a proactive, long term planning tool to guide Detroit’s development.

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**MSU Extension News articles tagged "planning"**

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**Ask an Expert**

Ask a land use question in the form below and a member of the MSU Extension Land Use Team will send you a reply. Be sure to let us know what community and county you come from - it helps us route your question to the team member best able to answer. http://www.extension.org/ask

To find an expert within MSU Extension: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/experts