**Michigan State University Extension**

**Land Use Series**

**MSU Extension News articles tagged “planning”**

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(A PDF version of this document is here: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/planning/questions_and_answers](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](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/planning)

Ask an Expert: [http://www.extension.org/ask](http://www.extension.org/ask)

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“Thirty seven million acres is all the Michigan we will ever have”

William G. Milliken
This is a fact sheet developed by experts on the topic(s) covered within MSU Extension. Its intent and use is to assist Michigan communities making public policy decisions on these issues. This work refers to university-based peer reviewed research, when available and conclusive, and based on the parameters of the law as it relates to the topic(s) in Michigan. This document is written for use in Michigan and is based only on Michigan law and statute. One should not assume the concepts and rules for zoning or other regulation by Michigan municipalities and counties apply in other states. In most cases they do not. This is not original research or a study proposing new findings or conclusions.

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**Alternative Energy (solar, wind, biofuels, wood)**

**Planning and zoning for solar in Michigan** October 9, 2017 | Brad Neumann | The economics of solar have never been better and individuals, businesses, utilities and cooperatives are planning projects all over Michigan. Is your community ready?

**New wind energy resource for planning commissions** March 27, 2017, updated August 29, 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_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_wind_energy_resource_for_planning_commissions_1)

**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_be](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/not_all_proposed_large_wind_energy_farms_are_controversial_and_there_may_be)

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 though 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_commun](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_michigan_blight_elimination_guidebook_helps_communities_increase_commun)

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](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

Signed, sealed and delivered  August 24, 2017  |  Monica Day | One seemingly small detail can make a big difference when it comes to investing in infrastructure. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/signed_sealed_and_delivered](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/signed_sealed_and_delivered)

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](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_expenditure](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_forgotten_law_planning_commission_review_of_capital_expenditure)

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_fiscal](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/balancing_one_years_government_budget_is_just_the_start_to_long_term_fiscal)

- 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](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](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](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](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_communitys_capital_improvement_program](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/update_your_communitys_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_law](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/it_is_not_just_any_attorney_find_the_lawyer_that_has_a_focus_in_municipal_law)

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 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


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

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

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

- 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

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

“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_local_government

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/countygovernmentpowersareverylimited](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/countygovernmentpowersareverylimited)

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/courtcasesonlandusefocusedonmedicalmarijuanaandlocalzoningauthority](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/courtcasesonlandusefocusedonmedicalmarijuanaandlocalzoningauthority)

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/metrodetroitpublictransitauthoritywillbezoninglexempt](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/metrodetroitpublictransitauthoritywillbezoninglexempt)

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/planningcommissionsmaynothavejurisdictionbutcanstillhaveadvocacy](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planningcommissionsmaynothavejurisdictionbutcanstillhaveadvocacy)


- **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/arevillagepresidentandvillagemanagerincompatibleoffices](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/arevillagepresidentandvillagemanagerincompatibleoffices)
  - 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/incompatibleofficewhatdoesitmeanconflictofinterest](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/incompatibleofficewhatdoesitmeanconflictofinterest)
  - 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/conflictofinterestrulesapplytoallcommunitiesregardlessofsize](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/conflictofinterestrulesapplytoallcommunitiesregardlessofsize)
  - 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/codesofconductnowmorecommonforplanningcommissionszoningboardsof](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/codesofconductnowmorecommonforplanningcommissionszoningboardsof)
  - 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/avoids++++expartecontacttoensureimpartiality](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/avoids++++expartecontacttoensureimpartiality)
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](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_development](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigan_communities_are_considering_their_role_in_regulating_oil_and_gas_development)

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](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](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](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_this_spring](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigans_upper_peninsula_predicted_to_have_increased_wildfire_potential_this_spring)

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

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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/form-based_zoning_becoming_popular_for_its_difference_from_conventional_zoning](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/form-based_zoning_becoming_popular_for_its_difference_from_conventional_zoning)

### Housing

Making the math work November 15, 2017 | Andy Hayes | Housing issues big concern for growing communities. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/making_the_math_work](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/making_the_math_work)

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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/aging_in_place_implications_for_housing_and_community_development](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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/building_typology_for_housing_whats_missing_in_michigan](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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/suttons_bay_charrette_focuses_on_undeveloped_subdivisions](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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/federal_block_grant_funds_are_critical_to_housing_development_in_limited_income](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/federal_block_grant_funds_are_critical_to_housing_development_in_limited_income)

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_development)

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. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_can_and_cant_i_do_in_my_homeowners_association)

Land Division Act basics for landowners | September 22, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Current and prospective owners of land in Michigan will benefit from understanding some basics of the Land Division Act. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/land_division_act_basics_for_landowners)

**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. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_airborne_technology_has_many_more_uses_for_a_cost_similar_to_traditional)

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. [Link](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. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/making_the_most_of_geographic_information_systems_gis_in_your_community)

New map allows for an interesting look at Michigan communities | November 19, 2013 | Glenn Pape | Synthetic data map allows for a new, more complete look at the social and economic makeup of communities. [Link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_map_allows_for_an_interesting_look_at_michigan_communities)
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

Meetings: Open Meeting Act (Freedom of Information Act)


Can we correct those minutes later? September 5, 2017 | Bethany Prykucki | Different rules apply to different groups. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/can_we_correct_those_minutes_later

Public participation beyond public comment at open meetings July 26, 2017 | Eric Walcott | How can the public engage in government decision-making outside of public comment at open meetings? http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/public_participation_beyond_public_comment_at_open_meetings

Following the proper rules for a public hearing? July 10, 2017 | Bethany Prykucki | Is our township in proper compliance with the Open Meetings Act? http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/following_the_proper_rules_for_a_public_hearing

Why do we have public comment at open meetings? July 10, 2017 | Eric Walcott | The Open Meetings Act requires there be a public comment period at open meetings, but does it really matter? http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/why_do_we_have_public_comment_at_open_meetings

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

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

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

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

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


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)

Knowledge Workers

The evolution of the New Economy: The shared economy  July 31, 2017 | Crystal Wilson | What is life like in the digital shared economy?
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_evolution_of_the_new_economy_the_shared_economy

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

Access to the digital economy and the New Economy for everyone  June 6, 2017 | Crystal Wilson | The digital economy has revolutionized how we do business using New Economy principles.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/access_to_the_digital_economy_and_the_new_economy_for_everyone

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/prosperity_comes_from_a_focus_on_people_policy_and_place_on_a_regional_scale

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](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](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](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_challenges_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](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](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](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_strategy](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/community_leaders_has_waiting_for_the_phone_to_ring_been_a_successful_strategy)

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_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_medc_and_patronicitys_public_spaces_community_places_completes_successf_1)

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](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](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_your_community_ready_for_the_next_opportunity_part_1)
- Part two: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_your_community_ready_for_the_next_opportunity_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_your_community_ready_for_the_next_opportunity_part_2)

**Energize your community's efforts to attract and grow entrepreneurs** August 14, 2015 | Andy Hayes | Connecting Entrepreneurial Conference – Registration is open, teams are forming now. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/paint_is_cheap_walking_is_good](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/paint_is_cheap_walking_is_good)

**Ten trends affecting businesses today** November 24, 2014 | Kurt H. Schindler | 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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/ten_trends_affecting_businesses_today](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/ten_trends_affecting_businesses_today)

**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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/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)


**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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cultural_currents_creatives_and_cultural_entrepreneurs_build_community](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/cultural_currents_creatives_and_cultural_entrepreneurs_build_community)

**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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/mixed_use_walkable_communities_are_what_the_market_wants](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/mixed_use_walkable_communities_are_what_the_market_wants)

**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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_in_on_millennials_not_making_them_zone_out](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_in_on_millennials_not_making_them_zone_out)

**Community economic development: focusing the fundamental effort** July 23, 2013 | Mark Thomas | Communities are concerned about growing their local economy, whether they are doing this individually or as part of a regional approach. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/community_economic_development_focusing_the_fundamental_effort](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/community_economic_development_focusing_the_fundamental_effort)

**Economic development challenges facing older Michigan suburban communities** January 23, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Older suburban communities have experienced many of the economic challenges of their adjacent central cities in some instances the difference as been one of scale. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/economic_development_challenges_facing_older_michigan_suburban_communities](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/economic_development_challenges_facing_older_michigan_suburban_communities)
Placemaking is an economic development strategy December 31, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | Placemaking plays an important role in creating attractive communities which attract educated people, rich in talent and ideas. Such people are a vital part of a community's economic growth. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/placemaking_is_an_economic_development_strategy

Local government plays a leadership role in the "New Economy" December 7, 2012 | Brad Neumann | Research suggests local government policies must support and reinforce the 'New Economy' and include place-based strategies for successful economic development. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_plays_a_leadership_role_in_the_new_economy

The new economy is here and local governments are preparing for it July 25, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | The shift to the new, or global, economy has taken place. MSU Extension has a checklist of ideas for local governments to better prepare for success in the future economy. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_new_economy_is_here_and_local_governments_are_preparing_for_it

Local Government has a major role in revitalizing Michigan's economy March 20, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | MSU Extension’s training program is a great jump-start to Michigan’s economic recovery. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/local_government_has_a_major_role_in_revitalizing_michigans_economy

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

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

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

PARK(ing) day is September 18 August 19, 2015 | Glenn Pape | Create a temporary public park in your community on this year's parking day. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parking_day_is_september_18

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Walkability, quality of life and healthy, vibrant Communities all come together in one package November 21, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | Jeff Speck advocated creating walkable communities with his book Walkable City. Speck was a featured speaker at the Michigan Association of Planning conference in Kalamazoo, Mich.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 

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


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

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

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  


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

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


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
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

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_professionals

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

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

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 well as the professional education.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/should_your_professional_planning_staff_have_aicp_certification

Planning directors are multitaskers in small communities  
July 24, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Planning directors in small communities perform a variety of roles as both directors and staff.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_directors_are_multitaskers_in_small_communities

Requests for Proposals can help communities attract top redevelopment talent  
March 1, 2013 | Richard Wooten | While RFPs great at getting the word out, communities must ensure each RFP is of high quality.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/requests_for_proposals_can_help_communities_attract_top_redevelopment_talent

Knowledgeable support staff makes all the difference in planning offices  
September 25, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Good support staffs who understand the planning processes help local offices to run more efficiently.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/knowledgeable_support_staff_makes_all_the_difference_in_planning_offices

Planning and Zoning generally, and training (and critique)
Well-written policy aligns actions with the mission  
October 23, 2017 | John Amrhein | Good policy will drive successful actions that move organizations to solve long term issues.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/well_written_policy_aligns_actions_with_the_mission

History of Planning
- Principles and practices of urban planning: Part 1 colonial planning  October 23, 2017 | Crystal Wilson | Colonial plans made significant contributions to urban planning and design. [link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/principles_and_practices_of_urban_planning_part_1_colonial_planning)

- Can urban and rural communities be successful without collaboration? - History of planning Part 2  October 30, 2017 | Crystal Wilson | Regional cooperation dates back to colonial planning and explains why planning should not occur in a vacuum. [link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/can_urban_and_rural_communities_be_successful_without_collaboration_history)

**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. [link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/county_invests_in_local_citizen_planner_program)

**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. [link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/beware_of_zombie_planning_commissioners_this_halloween)

**Zoning density regulations results in segregation by wealth**  July 20, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Zoning regulations on density contributes to segregation of wealthy neighborhoods but not poor neighborhoods. The more complex zoning approval processes contribute to segregation in poor neighborhoods. [link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_density_regulations_results_in_segregation_by_wealth)

**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. [link](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. [link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/zoning_and_police_power_ordinances_are_not_the_same_and_should_not_be_mixed)

**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. [link](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/embarking_on_planning_and_zoning_for_the_first_time_think_it_thorough)

**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. [link](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. [link](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

MSU Extension performance audits can help local government improve their operations July 22, 2013 | Kurt H. Schindler | There is always room for improvement, and in the new economy being at one’s best is paramount. A series of tools are available to help improve planning and zoning programs in Michigan. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/msu_extension_performance_audits_can_help_local_government_improve_their_operations

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 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

Code of conduct for planning commissioners and zoning board of appeals members January 28, 2016 | Kurt Schindler | Use of a code of conduct/oath of office is recommended for planning commissioner and zoning board of appeals members. It helps underscore a person’s role, expected behavior, and differences between elected officials and members of administrative bodies.

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 more important.
- 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](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_program](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/your_planning_commission_prepares_an_annual_report_but_what_about_a_work_program)

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_work_program](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/your_planning_commission_prepares_an_annual_report_but_what_about_a_work_program)

- 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](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](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](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_governing_bylaws](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_and_zoning_board_of_appeals_are_required_to_have_governing_bylaws)

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](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commission_is_much_more_than_zoning)

Planning, Cooperation and Joint Planning


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

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 1: 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)


### 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

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_should_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

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

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

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 that new growth.
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

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_municipality

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_officials

Using sector planning to strengthen master plans

July 29, 2013 | Glenn Pape
Sector plans provide a means of directing growth without the use of land use categories in the near future.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/using_sector_planning_to_strengthen_master_plans
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.


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.

[http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_can_turn_opposition_into_support_by_planning_ahead](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_commissions_can_turn_opposition_into_support_by_planning_ahead)

Climate change and planning: Where should local officials begin?  
May 16, 2012 | Dean Solomon | Local planning and zoning officials can access many sources of reliable information when deciding how to address climate change.

[http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/climate_change_and_planning_where_should_local_officials_begin](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/climate_change_and_planning_where_should_local_officials_begin)

Why our communities still need master plans  
February 7, 2012 | Richard Wooten | With declining populations, revenues, communities should still develop long-term plans


Most local governments need to update their Master Plan  
February 4, 2012 | Kurt H. Schindler | New legal requirements have added to the required content of a municipal master plans in Michigan. Thus a vast majority of master plans in Michigan need to be updated by amendment or preparing a whole new plan.

[http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/most_local_governments_need_to_update_their_master_plan](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/most_local_governments_need_to_update_their_master_plan)

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: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/simple_steps_to_a_strategic_plan_part_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/simple_steps_to_a_strategic_plan_part_1)
- Part two: [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/simple_steps_to_a_strategic_plan_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/simple_steps_to_a_strategic_plan_part_2)

Public Participation; visioning, Charrette, hearing, and more

When to mingle with trail-makers  
October 3, 2017 | Monica Day |
When to mingle with trail-makers and influence your town’s future

Attend monthly meetings and events of the Jackson Walkable Communities Coalition.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/when_to_mingle_with_trail_makers_and_influence_your_towns_future

Why mingle with trail-makers?
Attending multiuse trail planning meetings can benefit you and your community.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/why_mingle_with_trail_makers

Engaging the public in local government decisions: Eric Walcott

- Involve August 21, 2017 | How can government better engage the public in decision-making processes?
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/engaging_the_public_in_local_government_decisions_involve
- Consult August 10, 2017 | How can the public engage in government decision making outside of public comment at open meetings?
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/engaging_the_public_in_local_government_decisions_consult
- Inform July 31, 2017 | Each step on the Public Participation Spectrum can be viewed as a commitment a level of public participation.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/engaging_the_public_in_local_government_decisions
- Collaborate September 5, 2017 | How can government better engaged the public in decision-making processes?
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/engaging_the_public_in_local_government_decisions_collaborate
- Empower

What did you say? - The Importance of being an active listener
August 29, 2017 | Emily Proctor
Tools to increase your active listening skills.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_did_you_say_the_importance_of_being_an_active_listener

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 pubic 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.


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

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

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

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

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

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

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. [Link to article](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. [Link to article](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. [Link to article](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. [Link to article](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/before_settling_for_a_public_hearing_consider_the_continuum_of_public_invol)]

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. [Link to article](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/rethinking_the_role_of_collaboration_in_communityFocused_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. [Link to article](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), Food Systems, Right to Forest Act**

What is food systems planning? [October 2, 2017 | Kendra Wills | Local governments across the country are starting to engage in this activity to build their community's food system. [Link to article](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/what_is_food_systems_planning)]

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 to article](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/urban_agriculture_and_agriculture_like_sample_zoning_text_available_to_local)]

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 to article](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 to article](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/right_to_farm_act_can_preempt_local_regulation_authority_but_not_all_local)]
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.
  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_right_to_farm_act_siting_gaamp_now_in_effect](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?
  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/changes_to_site_selection_gaamp_mean_communities_have_greater_opportunity_to_plan_for_food_systems](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.
  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_right_to_farm_site_selection_gaamps_needs_local_government_attention](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.
  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/changes_to_the_right_to_farm_2014_site_selection_gaamps](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.
  [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/existing_livestock_farms_in_primary_residential_areas_can_continue](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.
[http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/court_clarification_on_right_to_farm_and_local_regulation](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.
[http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigans_right_to_forest_act_protects_forestland_owners_from_nuisance_complaints](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.**

- **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.**

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
cooperative business environment for food-oriented businesses.

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?

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.

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.

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.

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:

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.

Outdoor recreation is a key component of placemaking

March 4, 2014 | Andy Hayes | Public outdoor recreation grants available for communities.

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.

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.

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.

Coastal communities in Michigan: Economic opportunities and Great Lakes responsibilities February 7, 2012 | Mark Breederland | Michigan coastal communities must cope emergency measures for access to harbors with no federal funding in 2012.

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.

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.

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
- Part two.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/sign_regulation_guidebook_helps_communities_find_their_way_part_2
Towers (cell, phone, wireless, etc.)

New requirements for local government regulation of wireless communication February 18, 2015 | Kurt H. Schindler | The Federal Communication Commission issued new rules on regulation of wireless communication facilities. The rules continue to restrict local government's ability to regulate wireless antenna and tower placement.

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.

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

Transportation, transit, bike, Complete Streets

Deliver programs that are social and attractive: October 2, 2017 | Monica Day | This article summarizes the findings of a walkability study in Melbourne, Australia that compared programs using the EAST framework: “easy, attractive, social and timely.”
- Part 1: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/deliver_programs_that_are_social_and_attractive_part_1
- Part 2: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/deliver_programs_that_are_social_and_attractive_part_2

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

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

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

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

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
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

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

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

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


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

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

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_citizen’s_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

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
Urban Design (see also Placemaking and Rural Small Town)

Open spaces are not just green splotches on a land use map  
October 18, 2017 | Crystal Wilson | Open Space Planning Using the Five Landscape Development Types  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/open_spaces_are_not_just_green_splotches_on_a_land_use_map

Engaging in collective purpose - 2017 National Urban Extension Conference  
June 6, 2017 | Crystal Wilson | The 2017 National Urban Extension Conference addressed the needs of urban, suburban, and peri-urban populations as well as urban-rural inter-dependencies.  

Using New Urbanism principles to create community and reduce social isolation  
June 6, 2017 | Crystal Wilson | New Urbanism principles can be used to intentionally design communities that support community engagement and person interaction in growing urban areas.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/using_new_urbanism_principles_to_create_community_and_reduce_social_isolation

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design  
July 7, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | Crime Prevention Though Environmental Design (CPTED) is a planning and public safety design strategy used to deter crime in the built environment.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/crime_prevention_through_environmental_design

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

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

Manage parking rather than laying more pavement in your downtown  
October 5, 2015 | Glenn Pape | Parking management can save municipalities money and make parking more efficient in your downtown.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/manage_parking_rather_than_laying_more_pavement_in_your_downtown

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 people place first.  
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

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

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

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

**Witches and werewolves know the elements of great neighborhood form**

October 2, 2014 | Brad Neumann | Each Halloween, the scariest of ghouls and goblins invade the streets of every town. Watch where they stalk, for those neighborhoods crawling with the most monsters will demonstrate the best characteristics of traditional neighborhood design. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/witches-and-werewolves-know-the-elements-of-great-neighborhood-form](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/witches-and-werewolves-know-the-elements-of-great-neighborhood-form)

**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**


**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-façade-transparency](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/getting-a-clear-picture-on-façade-transparency)

**Detroit’s land use patterns date back to the 1940s**


**Putting up a good front**


**Jane Jacobs’ ideas on viable cities are more relevant than ever**


**Highland Park: A community in transition**


**Detroit City Future plan lays out 50-year vision; but what are key elements of a successful plan?**

February 23, 2013 | Richard Wooten | Planning is critical to development. It answers the how, why, what, when and how much questions of community and economic development. However, what are the key elements that allow some plans to be successful. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/detroit-city-future-plan-lays-out-50-year-vision-but-what-are-key-elements](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/detroit-city-future-plan-lays-out-50-year-vision-but-what-are-key-elements)

**Businesses, community need to join up care for trees and plants in commercial districts**

December 18, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Attractive landscaping with plantings, flowers, and street trees is important
in the creation of vibrant urban spaces. With city budgets dwindling communities and business groups must work together to ensure plants and trees are well maintained.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/businesses_community_need_to_join_up_care_for_trees_and_plants_in_commercia

Federal Block Grant Funding has played a major role in urban redevelopment December 12, 2012 | Richard Wooten | The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has funded development and redevelopment activities in urban communities across the nation since 1974.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/federal_block_grant_funding_has_played_a_major_role_in_urban_redevelopment

A new way of thinking about development needed March 5, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Population decline in cities such as Detroit will challenge planners to create unconventional redevelopment strategies.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/a_new_way_of_thinking_about_development_needed

Venders (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.  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/food_trucks_serving_street_food_with_a_side_of_placemaking

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

Planning with water in mind: October 20, 2017 | Monica Day | Communities can help insure water availability

- Part One  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_with_water_in_mind_part_one
- Part Two  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/planning_with_water_in_mind_part_two

Michigan Sea Grant storm project seeks to help communities prepare for future extreme storms June 26, 2017 | Kip Cronk | Mid-Michigan’s 2017 storm reminiscent of the 1986 Great Flood  
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigan_sea_grant_storm_project_seeks_to_assist_communities_msg17_cronk17

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?  
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.  
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?  
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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/water_use_at_perpendicular_versus_parallel_roads_where_are_public_versus_ri](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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/engaging_community_stakeholders_for_water_quality_in_lakes](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)


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.
Part 1, October 6, 2015:
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/got_water_time_of_sale_septic_inspections_can_protect_water_quality_part_1

Part 2, October 9, 2015:
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/got_water_time_of_sale_septic_inspections_can_protect_water_quality_part_2

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

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_2

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

Protecting the Detroit River: New shoreline design manual discusses shoreline protection options
December 5, 2014 | Mary Bohling | Traditional and alternative shoreline design options explored in new manual released by ERCA.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/protectiong_the_detroit_river_new_shoreline_design_manual_discusses_shorelin

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

Part two:
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/with_higher_great_lakes_review_zoning_for_coastal_resiliency_part_2

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

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

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

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. 

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

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. 

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

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. 

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

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. 

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

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. 

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

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. 

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

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. 

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

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. 

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/low_impact_development_putting_the_lid_on_flooding
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.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_guidebook_suggests_planning_and_zoning_essentials_to_protecting_water_q

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

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

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.
• Part One, outlines shoreline zoning ordinance goals and common provisions.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/modifying_your_shoreline_property_check_local_regulations_first_part_1
• Part Two, outlines additional shoreline buffer provisions and sources of information.
  http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/modifying_your_shoreline_property_check_local_regulations_first_part_2

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

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

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

**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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_to_spot_a_spot_zoning](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/how_to_spot_a_spot_zoning)

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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/overlay_zoning_districts_can_be_a_valuable_tool](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/overlay_zoning_districts_can_be_a_valuable_tool)

**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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/common_problems_we_observe_in_local_zoning_part_1](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/common_problems_we_observe_in_local_zoning_part_1)
- 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. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/common_problems_we_observe_in_local_zoning_part_2](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/common_problems_we_observe_in_local_zoning_part_2)

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](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](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](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/top_six_techniques_for_streamlining_the_zoning_ordinance)

Streamlining the zoning ordinance Kurt H. Schindler | Zoning can be confusing and hard to understand. There are several zoning streamlining techniques to make zoning easier to understand and use.


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](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. [Read More](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/no_state_oversight_of_planning_zoning_no_central_depository_of_plans_and_zo)

**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. [Read More](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. [Read More](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. [Read More](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.’ [Read More](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. [Read More](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. [Read More](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. [Read More](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. [Read More](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. [Read More](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

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

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

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

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

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_the_y_stink
- Part 2: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/vague_or_subjective_ordinance_standards_in_the_courts_opinion_the_y_stink_pa

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 1: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/administrative_decisions_require_careful_application_to_ordinance_s_tandards
- Part 2: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/administrative_decisions_require_careful_application_to_ordinance_s_tandards2

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. [Link](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. [Link](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. [Link](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. [Link](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. [Link](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. [Link](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. [Link](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. [Link](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 in 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]

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_devel_opnt_p]

Zoning, Zoning Board of Appeals and Variances


When your zoning board of appeals is not the last stop on the road to a zoning ordinance determination. [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/circuit_court_review_of_zba_decisions]

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]

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]

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]
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


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_appeals

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

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

Other, miscellaneous

October is National Planning Month October 2, 2017 | Brad Neumann | National Community Planning Month is a time to celebrate your community, learn about local planning initiatives, and get involved in making your community even better place to live, work, learn, and play http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/october_is_national_planning_month


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

Northland Shopping Center turns 60 and prepares to retire July 7, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | The rise and fall of suburban indoor malls such as Northland Center. http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/northland_shopping_center_turns_60_and_prepares_to_retire


Northland Shopping Center: Proactive blight elimination and economic redevelopment July 7, 2016 | Crystal Wilson | The City of Southfield, Michigan was very proactive in preparing a redevelopment and blight elimination plan for Northland Shopping Center.
Why bike to work? The more appropriate question seems to be why not? May 16, 2016 | Brad Neumann | The benefits of biking for transportation are overwhelming and opportunities abound for choosing this form of active transportation for better personal and community health.

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

Hop on your bike, it's National Bike Month! May 8, 2015 | Brad Neumann | This spring, consider joining others in National Bike Month activities and events and swap your car for your bike to get to work, school or run errands.

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

Can giving your downtown building a face lift qualify your business for a liquor license? November 19, 2014 | Andy Hayes | Legislation passed earlier this year qualifies more communities to take advantage of the Redevelopment Liquor License.

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

Communities should not be discouraged from challenging financial times August 14, 2014 | Richard Wooten | Communities should continue to effectively plan despite financial hardships. Master Planning is a long-term process, even during difficult times.

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

University interns and urban redevelopment July 23, 2014 | Richard Wooten | University students can play important roles for urban non-profit organizations.

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

May is bike month: Support health and reinforce place by becoming a Bicycle Friendly Community May 12, 2013 | Brad Neumann | Whether biking to commute or for recreation; to maintain health or the environment, celebrate May as National Bike Month and help your community become a Bicycle Friendly Community.

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

University outreach programs can play a key role in urban redevelopment December 18, 2012 | Richard Wooten | Universities such as MSU, UM and Wayne State have active outreach programs that can help in community redevelopment and other areas.

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

"Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities" released August 14, 2012 | Brad Neumann | The partnership between four federal agencies seeks to align spending, policies and programs to support rural communities’ efforts to be vibrant, thriving places.


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
Author

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