Michigan Sense of Place Council

For more information, contact Nathalie Winans, Executive Coordinator, nw@publicpolicy.com

- American Institute of Architects - Michigan
- Collaborative Development Councils
- Community Economic Development Association of Michigan
- Creative Many Michigan
- Great Lakes Capital Fund
- Habitat for Humanity of Michigan
- Inner City Christian Federation
- Issue Media Group
- Land Policy Institute at Michigan State University
- LOCUS – Michigan
- Michigan Association of Land Banks
- Michigan Association of Planning
- Michigan Association of REALTORS
- Michigan Credit Union League
- Michigan Environmental Council
- Michigan Fitness Foundation
- Michigan Future Inc.
- Michigan Historic Preservation Network
- Michigan Humanities Council
- Michigan Municipal League
- Michigan Suburbs Alliance
- Michigan Townships Association
- President's Council, State Universities of Michigan
- Prima Civitas
- Small Business Association of Michigan
- Urban Land Institute

October 1, 2014

Members of the House Commerce Committee:

The Michigan Sense of Place Council was created to improve the state's quality of life and economic competitiveness by creating vibrant regions, downtowns, and neighborhoods where people want to live, work, and open businesses. The Sense of Place Council is a broad consortium of private and public sector leaders ranging from state agencies to municipal organizations and nonprofits. Each of the organizations represented works hard to accomplish the goal of the Sense of Place Council. One way local municipalities have been working on this concept for years is through tax increment financing (TIF).

TIF districts are a vital tool in helping local municipalities create vibrant, successful, destination type places where people want to live and work. If there are not places like this in Michigan, the ability to attract and retain talent becomes exceedingly difficult.

We understand there are some efforts underway to reform TIF districts, and the timing in which this could be accomplished is concerning to many of the Council's members (listed in the column to the left). This is a very complex issue and likely will result in a complex solution, one that should not be rushed to be accomplished before an arbitrary deadline. We firmly believe this reform should be thoroughly vetted so an end product that is effective, efficient and transparent can be created. A rushed product completed in a short, fast-passed time frame such as lame duck could result in an unworkable economic development tool and that would have a detrimental impact in communities across the state.

We sincerely hope the appropriate research and review time will be taken on this issue. The Sense of Place Council and its members look forward to being a potential resource for you as you move forward on this particular endeavor to continue the holistic discussion. We invite you to join us for our council meeting on November 21, 2014 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Michigan Municipal League, to further discuss this important issue.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Gilmartin

Dan Gilmartin
Executive Director and CEO, Michigan Municipal League
Co-Chair, Sense of Place Council, Representing Non-State Agency Members