

# ADVOCACY



MAP's advocacy efforts this year included working closely not only with legislators advancing planning and zoning bills, but also with state agencies through participation on workgroups where best land use and planning practices could be incorporated into state policy and plans.

The fiscal year started off with an incredible achievement: the unification of the state's three zoning enabling acts into a single act. Public Act 110, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, was enacted on July 1, 2006. MAP and its law committee worked tirelessly in 2005 and 2006 to draft language unifying the three acts, and subsequently provided technical expertise at countless stakeholder work groups to negotiate language and reach compromise on a bill acceptable to cities, villages, townships, and counties. Our efforts in 2006 and 2007 sought to redress the technical issues that can be expected with legislation of this magnitude through corrective amendments.

In another coup for planning, Senator Patricia Birkholz's (R, 105) Senate Bill 206, which sought to unify the state's three planning enabling acts into a single act, received full Senate approval February 27, 2007. MAP again provided sample bill language, which in turn was crafted into a bill by the Legislative Service Bureau (LSB). MAP's law committee participated as a leader throughout the fall and early winter in the work group meetings. MAP will continue to provide technical expertise as the bill moves through the Michigan House later in 2007.

MAP staff, together with our lobbyist Governmental Consultant Services, Inc, met regularly with legislators throughout the year, providing technical advice on pending bills and informing legislators and their staffs about the importance of best planning practices. MAP provided expert knowledge on myriad bills including commerce centers, wind energy, and joint municipal planning, and testified at several House and Senate Committee meetings.

In addition to legislative endeavors in the state capitol, MAP champions best planning practice at every turn, strengthening relationships with state agencies, other non-profit organizations, and with planning leaders in Michigan. MAP's presence has been requested by state agencies such as the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG), and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to serve as a planning expert on countless initiatives. MAP has worked collaboratively with other non-profits such as Michigan Suburbs Alliance (MSA), Community and Economic Development Association of Michigan (CEDAM), and the Land Information Access Association (LIAA), among others. MAP frequently calls upon planning leaders across the state to provide their expertise, advice and council, building our knowledge base and further enhancing our reputation and credibility by bringing in the experts. Advocacy is integral to everything we do.