

Village Arts Factory redevelopment and community programming

- Anne outlined the site's history as part of the Henry Ford Village Industries and its later transition into an arts-focused destination.
- The redevelopment path included property acquisition, renovation, township involvement, nonprofit management, and a service agreement for programming and operations.
- The site now hosts exhibitions, classes, events, summer camps, outdoor activities, and other community programming, with plans for continued expansion.
- The conversation emphasized the role of arts in creating a sense of place, supporting local businesses, and connecting residents through shared experiences.

Census address updates and 2030 planning

- Chade explained the Local Update of Census Addresses process and why accurate address lists matter for the 2030 Census.
- The discussion stressed that communities have one chance each decade to review, add, delete, and modify census addresses.
- Participants asked how census tools might connect with geographic information systems and existing local data systems, and staff indicated that integration would be possible.
- Concerns were raised about immigrant residents being hesitant to share information, and the group asked for clear messaging about what data can and cannot be shared.

Legislative updates and policy changes - Nikki

- Federal updates included proposed changes to grant distribution rules, with participants directed to available reference materials and comment resources.
- The 21st Century Housing Act was highlighted as a bipartisan measure intended to support housing supply and streamline some project requirements.
- State budget updates covered overall funding levels, revenue sharing, and policy bills attached to the budget.
- Several state items were noted, including public safety funding, military leave provisions, and other changes affecting local governments.

Local government challenges and task force input

- Participants discussed staffing shortages, inflation, and the difficulty of filling specialized municipal jobs.
- Infrastructure concerns were a major focus, especially aging roads, subdivision maintenance, water and sewer systems, and rising utility costs. - Participants described the pressure created by unfunded mandates, tax increases, and the limits of local authority over revenue and service demands.
- Property tax issues included exemptions, large taxpayer assessments, and the challenge of balancing revenue needs with resident affordability. There was concern for legislation that seeks to exempt all seniors from property tax which would further erode local funds and ability to provide services.

Placemaking and district revitalization

- The discussion highlighted efforts to make business districts more walkable, active, and visually cohesive through storefront art, public spaces, and coordinated outreach.
- Examples from local communities showed how parks, plazas, farmer's markets, restaurants, and mixed-use redevelopment can increase activity and attract investment.
- Participants noted that infrastructure costs are often the main barrier to affordable housing and new development, even when housing construction itself is feasible.
- The group discussed the value of grants and development tools that can support downtown corridors, brownfield reuse, and neighborhood improvement.