

# Lifting Families out of Poverty: Maximizing the Capacities of City Hall



Kiran Cunningham and Hannah McKinney  
Kalamazoo College

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# The Problem

- High poverty rates in Michigan's core cities hurt the state's competitiveness.
- Michigan core cities lack financial resources to directly fund anti-poverty programs
- Need to find ways to leverage city hall resources to alleviate poverty
- What can Michigan cities do to maximize their capacity to effectively engage in this work?



# Methodology

- **Studied the Plans to End Homelessness in 13 urban core Michigan cities plus Indianapolis and Corpus Christi**
- **Focused on perceptions and realities of city hall involvement in creating and implementing the plan**
- **Analyzed plans themselves, city websites, and a survey of community partners for evidence of city hall involvement.**



# Thesis

- Cities have a broad range of municipal powers, capacities and resources that city officials can use to address many kinds of inequalities and disparities at the local level.
- City hall involvement lends weight to any community initiative and increases the likelihood of sustained action resulting from plans.



# City Hall Involvement with Plans to End Homelessness

	Impressions from analysis of the PEH	Impressions from analysis of the website	Community Partner's Impressions
Ann Arbor	High	Medium	Very
Battle Creek	Low	Medium	Very
Bay City	Low	Low	Somewhat
Dearborn	N/A	N/A	Very
Detroit	High	Low	Very
Flint	Low	Medium	Somewhat
Grand Rapids	Medium	High	Very
Jackson	Low	Low	Somewhat
Kalamazoo	Medium	Low	Very
Lansing	Low	Medium	Very
Muskegon	Low	Low	Very
Pontiac	Low	Low	Somewhat
Saginaw	Low	Low	Somewhat
Corpus Christi	High	High	
Indianapolis	High	High	



# Recommended Local Level Policies

## The mayor can be involved by...

- Using the bully pulpit
- Making speeches and writing news releases
- Being present at important events
- Writing the forward or preface to important community-created documents



# Recommended Local Level Policies (cont.)

## The city council can be involved by...

- Formally endorsing community and city hall initiatives
- Being present at important events
- Being present at community meetings
- Making poverty reduction a priority of the city



# Recommended Local Level Policies (cont.)

## Jointly, the mayor and city council can...

- Commit to implementation of endorsed plans to reduce poverty
- Align city hall resources to aid in the implementation of endorsed plans
- Request periodic scorecards showing progress



# Recommended Local Level Policies (cont.)

## City hall can embed the work into the way it does business by...

- Making poverty reduction programs, plans, and community partner initiatives visible on city website
- City staff participation in poverty-reduction initiatives on
- Using city hall resources to leverage community resources
- Creating accountability measures to record progress and diagnose shortcoming
- Reporting out to the council and community regularly
- Updating city's consolidated, strategic and comprehensive plans to include poverty reduction priorities
- Creating strong partnerships with affordable housing providers and funders



# Recommended State Level Policies

- Create tools for local jurisdictions to fund poverty reduction initiatives
- Allow dedicated funding sources identified for use in fighting poverty
- Eliminate obstacles to forming effective partnerships between jurisdictions (e.g. between cities and counties)
- Eliminate obstacles to forming effective partnerships between cities and community partners
- Create incentives for forming effective partnerships between jurisdictions
- Create incentives for forming effective partnerships between cities and community partners (e.g. housing trust fund)
- Allow city halls more of a formal role in workforce development and human service delivery
- Create state incentives for poverty reduction that city hall can leverage in their work with community partners



# For More Information:



**Contact:** Kiran Cunningham  
**Address** Kalamazoo College  
Dept. of Anthropology  
200 Academy Street  
Kalamazoo MI 49006  
**Phone** 269.337.7124  
**Email** kcunning@kzoo.edu

**Final reports online Jan. 1:**  
**[www.mihelp.org](http://www.mihelp.org) and [www.ced.msu.edu](http://www.ced.msu.edu)**

