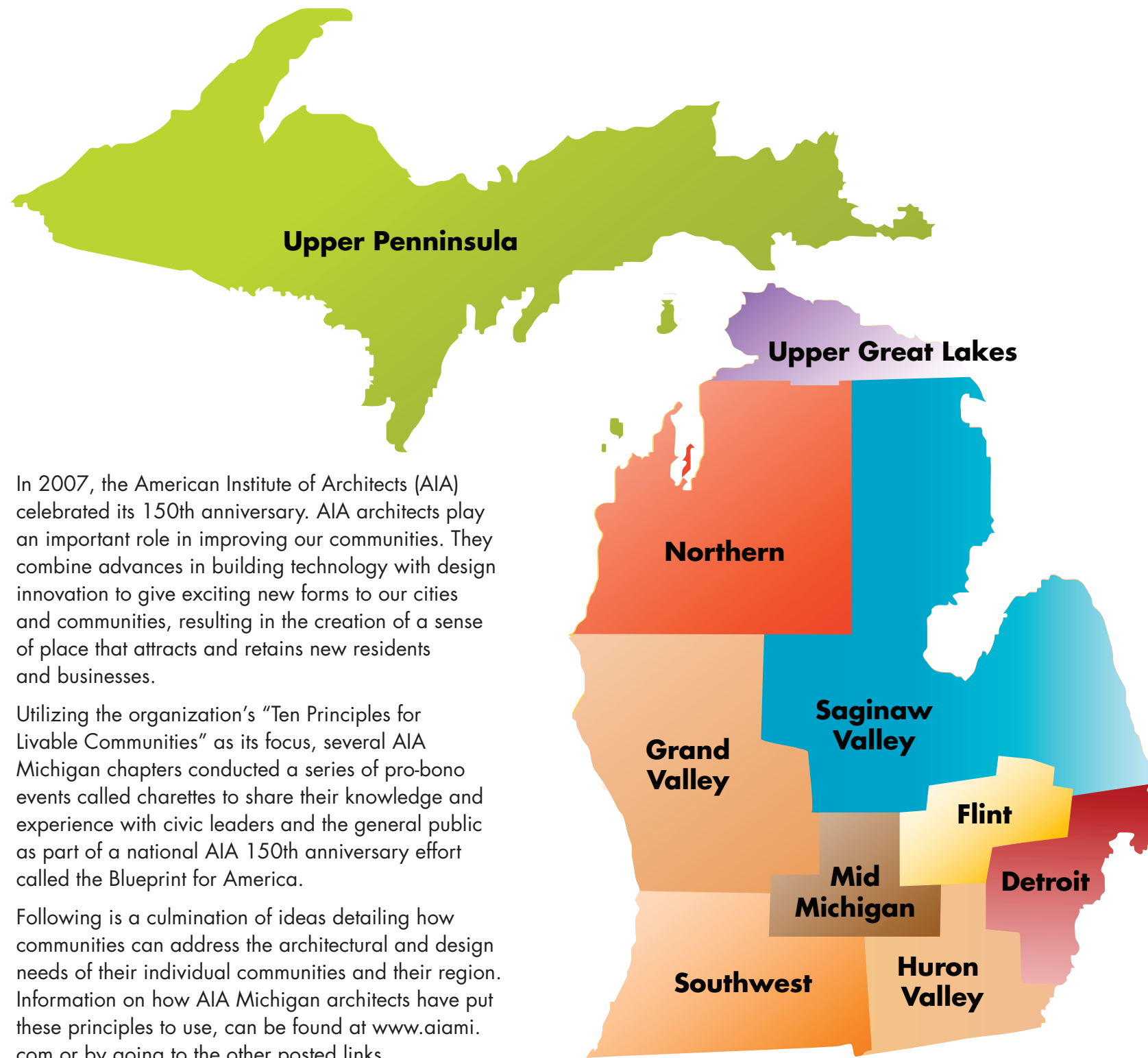


CREATING LIVABLE COMMUNITIES IN MICHIGAN

AIA MICHIGAN'S BLUEPRINT FOR SMART GROWTH



In 2007, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) celebrated its 150th anniversary. AIA architects play an important role in improving our communities. They combine advances in building technology with design innovation to give exciting new forms to our cities and communities, resulting in the creation of a sense of place that attracts and retains new residents and businesses.

Utilizing the organization's "Ten Principles for Livable Communities" as its focus, several AIA Michigan chapters conducted a series of pro-bono events called charrettes to share their knowledge and experience with civic leaders and the general public as part of a national AIA 150th anniversary effort called the Blueprint for America.

Following is a culmination of ideas detailing how communities can address the architectural and design needs of their individual communities and their region. Information on how AIA Michigan architects have put these principles to use, can be found at www.aiami.com or by going to the other posted links.

1. Design on a Human Scale (aiaflint.com)

Compact, pedestrian-friendly communities allow residents to walk to shops, services, cultural resources and jobs, and can reduce traffic congestion and benefit people's health.

2. Provide Choices (aia150.org/bl_150_aia_sw_michigan.php)

People want variety in housing, shopping, recreation, transportation and employment. Variety creates lively neighborhoods and accommodates residents in different stages of their lives.

3. Encourage Mixed-Use Development (aiagv.net/documents/217.html)

Integrating different land uses and varied building types creates vibrant, pedestrian-friendly diverse communities.

4. Preserve Urban Centers (aia150.org/bl_150_aia_huron_valley.php)

Restoring, revitalizing and infilling urban centers to take advantage of existing streets, services and buildings and avoid the need for new infrastructure. This helps curb sprawl and promote the stability for city neighborhoods.

5. Vary Transportation Options (aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek/07/0504/0504p_bike.cfm)

Giving people the option of walking, biking and using public transit, in addition to driving, reduces traffic congestion, protects the environment and encourages physical activity.

6. Build Vibrant Public Spaces (visitmanistique.com)

Citizens need welcoming, well-defined public places to stimulate face-to-face interaction, collectively celebrate and mourn, encourage civic participation, admire public art and gather for public events.

7. Create a Neighborhood Identity (aiadetroit.org)

A "sense of place" gives neighborhoods a unique character, enhances the walking environment and creates pride in the community.

8. Protect Environmental Resources (mecprotects.org)

A well-designed balance of nature and development preserves natural systems, protects waterways from pollution, reduces air pollution, and protects property values.

9. Conserve Landscapes (macd.org)

Open space, farms and wildlife habitat are essential for environmental, recreational and cultural reasons.

10. Design Matters (aia.org/liv_sdacities)

Design excellence is the foundation of successful and healthy communities.

