



Al Hansen, Director of Parks and Recreation
City of Petoskey, Michigan
231-347-2500 | ahansen@petoskey.us

What is Placemaking?

Definitions Found Online:

- Creating a sense of place
- Creating a sense of belonging
- Capitalizing on community assets
- Branding
- A multifaceted approach to planning, designing, and managing your public places...



My Definition

- Placemaking is the art of creating or instilling a lasting positive impressions or memories of your community in the minds of your residents and visitors.
 - Instant reflection in the minds of residents and visitors.
- Example: Disney World, Yellowstone National Park, and Mount Rushmore.
 - Mental image of the place and memory recall of previous visits.



How to create Placemaking?

- Self-examination of your community.
 - What makes your community special? What image, memory, or impression do you want to create?
 - Do you want to promote your natural resources, history, art or cultural assets, park(s), sports, educational facility, industry, medical facilities, shopping area or other unique features that highlights your community's strong points?
- Once your placemaking goal is identified, how do you proceed?
 - Develop a Community Development Plan that works toward your placemaking goal;
 - Develop community buy in – get consensus;
 - Develop a Master Plan (vision);
 - Develop detailed plans – construction or promotion;
 - Secure funding based on vision and plan;
 - Proceed to construction or promotion.

Promote:

- Community publications, etc. should contain placemaking slogan or images What makes your community special? What image, memory, or impression do you want to create?
 - Create and promote your image.



Review:

- Is the image and memory or impression being created in the minds of your visitors and residents, if not identify obstacles and redeploy.



History: Placemaking in Petoskey



- From the 1850's to the 1870's the economic driver of the Petoskey community was based on its natural resources that included hydropower of the Bear River, timber assets, and the limestone.
- The natural beauty and mild summer climate of the area was discovered and tourists from downstate areas soon flocked to the Petoskey area by passenger train and steamship and tourism soon became a significant driver of the summer economy of the area. As the tourism economy grew entrepreneurs soon began to develop attractions that would extend visitor stays and longer stays translated into dollars spent.

Petoskey Today:

- Petoskey and the Little Traverse Bay area is heavily dependent upon its seasonal residents and tourism based economy. The area is now a four season resort destination which hosts world class golf, boating, marinas, resorts, ski areas, art and cultural facilities, music venues, historical facilities, and quaint shopping areas, all contributing to the vitality of the area.
- To compete for these tourism dollars and to attract and retain businesses and residents in our community, the City realized that our parks, streetscapes, and attractions must create lasting positive impressions on our visitors, residents, and retail businesses.

The City's Role

- In developing each of these areas the City not only provided highly functional park areas for its residents, they also serve as attractions for visitors to utilize and extend their stays. The development of these areas also resulted in neighborhoods upgrading their properties and new homes and condo units were developed. The ultimate images we wanted our placemaking to create was that Petoskey is not just a place to visit, it is a community you want to return to, move to, or retire to. A small town with big city amenities that include parks, schools, medical facilities, shopping, arts and culture and year-round activities centered around the area's scenic landscapes.

Recent Development:

- In the late 1980's the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Citywide Development Plans were drafted to help guide our community in development, including its park areas, business corridor, and redevelopment of the downtown shopping districts. The efforts included:
 - 1988 - 2010 Bay Front Park
 - 1995 - 2009 Downtown streetscape Improvements
 - 1990 Petoskey Winter Sports Park Improvements
 - 1990 - 2014 Network of non-motorized trails
 - 2010 Bear River Valley Recreation Area
 - 2012 - Marina Enhancements
 - 2014 Downtown Greenway Corridor Phase I



Bayfront Park & Marina



Marina Expansion Attracts Visitors



Bear River Recreation Area



Bear River



Bear River (Whitewater)



Fun in the River



Little Traverse Wheelway



Downtown Views



Wayfinding and Lighting



Memorable Locations



Downtown: Blend with Parks



Clear Entrance Points



Walkability



Winter Fun



Pedestrian and Bike Friendly



Connectivity of Parks



Programming:

- The development of park areas were part of the placemaking equation but equally important was programming and event creation and promotion designed to involve our local residents as well as visitors. A Downtown Event Coordinator was hired that works collaboratively with our Chamber of Commerce, the Crooked Tree Art Center and others to put on various downtown events such as:
 - Christmas Open House & Christmas Parade
 - Winter Blues Festival
 - Spring Open House
 - Friday Night Rocks – Summer event on Fridays
 - Art Fairs
 - Gallery Walks
 - Sidewalk Sales
 - Farmers Market
 - Movies in the Park
 - Concerts in the Park
 - Festival on the Bay

Year Round Events



Local Talent for Events



Programming:



- The Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Works and the Department of Public Safety help provide logistical support for these events and the Department of Parks and Recreation and its staff also program for and staff the following events:
 - Winter Carnival Events
 - Softball, Baseball, Soccer, Sand Volleyball and Tennis Tournaments
 - Trail Days
 - Running and Triathlon Events
 - Little Traverse Historical Society's Taste of the North and historical walks and programs

Summary:

- Petoskey is like many of your communities, it was blessed with natural beauty and much of its economy is based on tourism and we compete each day for tourism dollars. Placemaking or image creation is a very important element that assists in attracting tourists and residents to our area.
- I will leave you with this brief chart called “Rules of Tourism” and how it applied to our area’s non-motorized trail development and how it can assist in placemaking decisions.

Rules of Tourism:

In a tourism driven economy, you must:

1. Attract or bring the tourism (consumer) to your area:
 - a. Through advertising and promotion of area facilities and amenities.
2. Provide opportunities to outlay cash (products):
 - a. Retail
 - b. Restaurants
 - c. Entertainment
 - d. Recreation
 - e. Etc.
3. Retain the tourist
 - a. Capitalize on length of stay (longer stays equate to more dollars expended)
4. Repeat Customer
 - a. Attract them back.



How Tourism Rules Work for Trails:

Attract: Trails need to be a visual and prominent part of your community and, if possible, abutting or connecting other recreational facilities, natural resource features and your downtown area. Promote trails through a website, the local chamber, and the local trails councils.

Provide: Trail users need to know locations of area, retail shops, restaurants, entertainment, etc. Link your trails to shopping areas, parks, and restaurants and use way finding signs and include literature or brochures about the trail and local attractions and amenities close by – Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Center, campgrounds, and memorials are excellent places to make this information available.

How Tourism Rules Work for Trails:

Retain: Trails need to be of sufficient length to encourage a non-motorized user to stay and spend one or two partial days of trail riding. Ideally, trails should have parks or other attractions along the bike routes to prolong the experience and provide destinations.

Repeat Customer: Trails need to be well maintained, well signed, and have points of interest. Create a positive impression so that they return again to relive the experience or explore other trails or attractions in your area.

They may not remember the score, but they will remember the place.

