



About the Author

Leslie E. Kettren, AICP, PCP, is a professional community planner with an extensive background in Downtown and Pedestrian Planning and Economic Development. She has worked in the towns of Milford, Ferndale, Clawson, East Lansing and Imlay City, Michigan and in Sellersburg, Indiana and Claremont, New Hampshire.

As a manager, Leslie has supervised staff, prepared and analyzed reports, managed budgets and coordinated with project teams and intergovernmental agencies to implement various community planning projects. In addition, she has performed downtown revitalization, walkable communities initiatives, streetscape construction, master planning, ordinance writing, site plan review, code enforcement and building inspection, to name a few.

As a leader, Leslie has been elected to public office, served on the planning commission and also on many national, state and local boards and committees. She is past president of the Michigan Association of Planning and served a 4-year elected term on the American Planning Association's national Board of Directors.

Leslie often speaks at conferences and has published many planning articles and reports. She is a site visitor for the Planning Accreditation Board, having most recently evaluated the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Masters Degree of Urban Planning program for reaccreditation. In 2003, she formed Kettren & Associates, Incorporated, a planning consulting firm. In her spare time, she teaches Planning for Walkability at Eastern Michigan University as adjunct faculty. Leslie and her husband, Lee reside in Milford with their two cats.

“In this important writing, Leslie gives us a thump or two, as well as gentle and not so gentle footsteps and paths to follow.”

— **DAN BURDEN**, founder-executive director of Walkable Communities, Inc.

“This book is written in a simple and easy style...a must read for all decision-makers in Michigan.”

— **MARK WYCKOFF**, founder-president of The Planning & Zoning Center

“The photos tell the story—simply for all to understand. A great read with an important message.”

RUSS SOYRING, City of Traverse City Planning Director and past president of the Michigan Association of Planning

...A Story About Community

Have you ever visited a town that you just knew was special? Maybe you weren't even aware of why you felt that way—you just knew you never wanted to leave.

These special places always had a welcoming feel about them with their tree-lined streets, children playing on the sidewalk and neighbors sharing gossip on the front porch. I bet it even had a lovely little downtown where shoppers could spend all day wandering around looking through the brightly decorated windows of the shops there. You didn't need a car to get around, your feet worked just fine, and after all, what would be the sense of driving when everything was so close? While it seems that in this day and age towns like this can only be found on television, there are still places in this world where they exist.

Five years ago, I began to research and find out more about the sense of place that makes some towns in Michigan so wonderful, and why others remain in a state of deep failing and fatigue. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and so keeping this in mind, I've written this book to show you how we can turn our sometimes forbidding and hostile urban landscapes into the types of welcoming places in which we all wish we could live.