

Your Place is an on-line magazine about community development and change in northwest lower Michigan with a focus on our *sense of place*. Our mission is to engage people from throughout the region in articulating our values about place for consideration by the citizens, civic leaders and public officials who craft the plans and policies that shape regional land use. The partner/publishers of ***Your Place Magazine*** include: **Interlochen Public Radio, Land Information Access Association (LIAA), Michigan Writers, Inc., Northwestern Michigan College, and the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce.**

Each issue of ***Your Place Magazine*** offers unique photographs and graphics, engaging articles and interviews, sound clips and maps, and links to a broad array of community information. The magazine is published monthly, but the discussion is continuous. Everyone is invited to comment on or add to the articles and essays posted – at any time. Every week, we publish a selection of *place pictures* and one of the *favorite places* nominated by our readers.

Our Audience

Your Place Magazine is an experimental web-based publication available free of charge to all citizens and public officials who care about the future of the Grand Traverse Region – its cities and villages, people and cultural heritage, natural resources and landscapes. We want to encourage and support a community-wide discussion about the choices we all make that effect the places in which we live, worship, work, learn, and play.

What We Are Looking For

We are looking for compelling creative nonfiction, well-informed essays, engaging interviews, and thought-provoking points of view on the present and future character of the Grand Traverse Region. Do you have a compelling story to tell about the people or cultures of this region? Can you share a unique experience or understanding of the natural resources we treasure in the Grand Traverse Region? What do you believe are the most important aspects of community and our experience of place? Please consider submitting an article, essay, interview, photograph, or sound recording for consideration by our editors and possible publication. We are seeking submissions in any of the following categories:

Feature Articles – These are longer articles (e.g., 1,500 – 2,500 words) with illustrations and/or graphics. We see these as descriptive and factual discussions concerning larger or overarching characteristics of our community.

Reflections on Place – These are longer *creative nonfiction* pieces (e.g., 1,500 – 3,000 words) written by individuals relating a particular point of view, some unique experience, a historical perspective, or a strong connection to some place in the Grand Traverse Area. These pieces will include illustrations and/or graphics and challenge our thinking about the present, past and future of our place.

Interviews on Place – Interviews are conversational pieces involving one or more people with unusual stories to tell and/or unusual perspectives on place. These interviews should be recorded with care, transcribed and edited to reflect an engaging conversation. These recordings may be included in IPR presentations. Clips may also be included on the web site.

Points of View – We invite short commentaries or statements about an issue or concern for the Grand Traverse Region. Limited to 1,000 words, these short pieces may be illustrated with photographs, graphics, and maps.

Submission Standards

If you are uncertain about the topic, scope, size or any other aspect of the piece you wish to submit, please e-mail your questions to us before submitting your work. We ask that all submissions be provided in digital format. They should be submitted by e-mail to:

yourplace@liaa.org

Photographs should be high resolution digital images (e.g., minimum 600 x 800 pixels), color or black and white in any of the standard formats (e.g., tif, eps, jpg).

Articles and essays should also be submitted in digital format only. We prefer *Microsoft Word*, but will accept *Word Perfect*. Adobe Acrobat documents will suffice for review, but we will need the word processor document before publication. Please format your documents using at least one-inch margins and 12 point font.

Assignment of Rights

Each issue of ***Your Place Magazine*** is copyrighted. If your submission is accepted for publication, you will be asked to share some rights to your work. We will ask for electronic rights and First North American Serial Rights. Serial rights will be reserved for one year following the first month of publication.

What You Get

If selected, your photos and/or writings are published for all to appreciate through ***Your Place Magazine***. We also hope to compile many of the best pieces into a book-length hard-copy publication within about one year (your work could be included). For the time being, we are not paying for works submitted and used. However, we will select at least ***four award-winning “best works”*** to receive monetary prizes in December 2006. Of course, you will also receive our sincere and heartfelt appreciation for participating in this unique publication.

Project Coordinator: Land Information Access Association, 324 Munson Ave., Traverse City, MI 49686
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Why Does “Sense of Place” Matter?

Sense of place is a highly integrative term linking a wide array of subjects such as city planning and architectural design, literature and story-telling, environmental protection and bioregionalism, cultural heritage and historic preservation, communication technologies and networking, gaming and virtual reality, and economics and society. We can find extensive information and research published on the meaning and importance of *place* under each of these subject headings. However, this is not simply an academic exercise. All of these subjects are part of the on-going discussion about development and change in northwest Lower Michigan. These subjects are like facets of the same jewel, reflecting our community’s unique strengths, flaws and opportunities.

On a very practical level, our *sense of place* can be protected and enhanced. For example, some of the elements that compose a *sense of place* may require preservation and protection (e.g., historic structures, scenic vistas). Some of these elements may be enhanced through human intervention (e.g., design standards to assure thematically consistent development). In some cases, communication and education can both preserve and enhance those elements that contribute to our *sense of place* (e.g., locally produced foods, story-telling). In all of these examples, local governments play key roles through the process of land use planning and regulation, capital improvement programs, and public safety services.