

The Understanding Tourism for Michigan Communities Program: Spawning Sustainable Tourism Initiatives via Regional Collaboration



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- Introduction
- Overview of Understanding Tourism for Michigan Communities and its development
- Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan and Objectives
- UTMC partnership with Tourism Strategic Plan
 - Results
 - Impacts
- The future of the program

MSU Extension

Community, Food, Environment Institute

- Community Food Systems
- Entrepreneurship
- Finance & Homeownership
- Government/Public Policy
- Land Use
- Leadership
- Natural Resource Management
- **Tourism**





Tourism Development Programs

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MSU EXTENSION TOURISM RESOURCES:

msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/tourism



TARGET AUDIENCE:

Residents, elected officials, business owners, economic development practitioners, planners and organizations

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

MSU Extension's tourism team works statewide addressing community needs and interests in leveraging assets and resources for tourism development. A variety of programs exist to assist a community or region in becoming a destination or launch initiatives to strengthen existing tourism offerings. Programs are specifically designed to involve local leaders and stakeholders in a collaborative process for developing regional synergies and inclusiveness, exploring niche markets and/or capitalizing on the results of community assessments by first-time visitors. Ultimately, programs can form the basis for future development, spawn local leadership, and strengthen community vitality.

Goals of our tourism programs are to:

- Increase awareness of assets and opportunities.
- Increase knowledge of best practices, trends and changes.
- Develop new leadership roles, opportunities and action items.
- Foster new collaborations and plans among stakeholders to advance community-driven tourism.



Understanding Tourism for MI Communities (UTMC)

Objectives:

- *To demonstrate the magnitude and significance of the tourism industry*
- *To expose communities to relevant tourism trends and travelers' interests*
- *To highlight active niche tourism markets and strategies to help strengthen and sustain community tourism*
- *To provide a facilitated, open forum for innovative and collaborative exchange for developing tourism across your region*



Niche/Sustainable Tourism Markets

- Agricultural/Culinary Tourism
- Heritage & Cultural Tourism
- Nature-based Tourism
- Voluntourism





Agritourism/Culinary Tourism In your Community

What are tapped and untapped examples from your community?

- Agricultural Attractions
- Agricultural Activities or events
- What local businesses or organizations connect to this theme?
- What specific food, recipes, ag-industry are unique to your area?

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Agricultural Tourism

Agritourism, is an agriculturally-based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch and includes a wide variety of activities. – Michigan Agritourism Association

Entertainment
 Special Events
 Educational Programs
 Authentic Experience



Suttons Bay, MI



Agritourism/Culinary Tourism In your Community

What are known & unknown examples from your community?

- Agricultural Attractions
- Agricultural Activities or events
- What local businesses or organizations connect to this theme?
- What specific food, recipes, ag-industry are unique to your area?





Document known and unknown assets as a group of regional stakeholders



One-by-one, groups present a variety of assets after engaging in group discussions on niche tourism themes.



Program Evolution:

- Informal and informational to highly interactive
 - Began as a way to educate communities on tourism development and sustainability
 - Evolved into an interactive asset identification workshop focused on niche tourism and highlighting tourism marketing strategies focused on place-based attributes
- 

About the plan

Tourism is one of the largest industries in Michigan, generating \$17.7 billion of direct spending, \$995 million in state taxes and 200,000 jobs in 2011. In addition to the attraction of more visitors, an engaging and enjoyable travel experience can also be a critical first step in attracting new residents, entrepreneurs, and businesses to move to Michigan. The intent of the 2012–2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan is to lay the foundation upon which tourism will continue to grow and prosper over the next five years, further contributing to the overall economic development of the state.

While awareness of the Pure Michigan campaign, and Michigan as a national travel destination, has grown—especially with the introduction of Michigan’s first ever national advertising effort—the vast majority of tourism business still comes from residents here in the state. In 2011, 67 percent of tourists were Michigan residents and 33 percent of visitors came from outside the state. The fact that increases in visitor spending over the past several years have been primarily a result of increased out-of-state expenditure is a positive indication that the industry is on the right path. Further supporting this are record hotel occupancy rates in 2012 and continuing into 2013.

Michigan’s tourism industry is at an important crossroads. By coming together as a united industry there is a tremendous opportunity to achieve the future envisioned in this strategic plan. The power of the plan is that it is “for the industry, by the industry.” Hundreds of people have already claimed a stake in the success of this plan—by participating in sessions, responding to online surveys and by sharing their feedback on how best to work together to grow tourism in Michigan. After more than a year of preparation, the next chapter begins to achieve the vision that Michigan is one of America’s favorite four season travel experiences.

The fundamental purpose of the 2012–2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan is to define the Michigan tourism industry’s desired future state and identify the actions necessary to make the desired state a reality.

The planning process focused on three key questions:

1. Where is the industry and how is the industry performing at the present time?
2. Where and how would the industry like to be by 2017?
3. How can the industry achieve this desired future state?

The Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan lays the foundation upon which tourism will continue to grow and prosper over the next five years, further contributing to the overall economic development of the state.

Evaluation of the 2007–2011 Strategic Plan was a critical first step in the process. During the evaluation process, reoccurring themes were identified, which ultimately led to the eight goals outlined in the following pages. The growth in scope of the strategic plan—from three goal areas in 2007 to eight in 2012—is reflective of progress made in the past five years and the continued engagement of the industry in defining its own destiny.

Like the previous plan, the 2012–2017 Strategic Plan serves as a guide to address problems and create opportunities for collective action. It is not the solution in and of itself. The responsibility remains with the industry, with guidance from the Travel Commission and support from Travel Michigan, to implement and execute the objectives and strategies presented in the plan to achieve the eight goals. The plan offers a wide range of options for co-operative action, so everyone can find one or more action items to rally around that will benefit them while moving the industry forward as a whole.

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Objective 1
 Improve understanding of the value of tourism and support for the tourism industry among state legislators, county and local officials, businesses and residents.

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Partnership with Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan (MTSP)

- MSUE Tourism Team received funding from MTSP
- Up to 10 UTMC workshops across the state in partnership with Regional Prosperity Initiatives
- MTSP offset cost of programs for regions (\$700

Objective 1

Improve understanding of the value of tourism and support for the tourism industry among state legislators, county and local officials, businesses and residents.

Understanding Tourism for MI Communities (UTMC)

2017

1. September - Iron River, Region 1
2. October - Marquette, Region 1
3. October - Greenville, Region 4

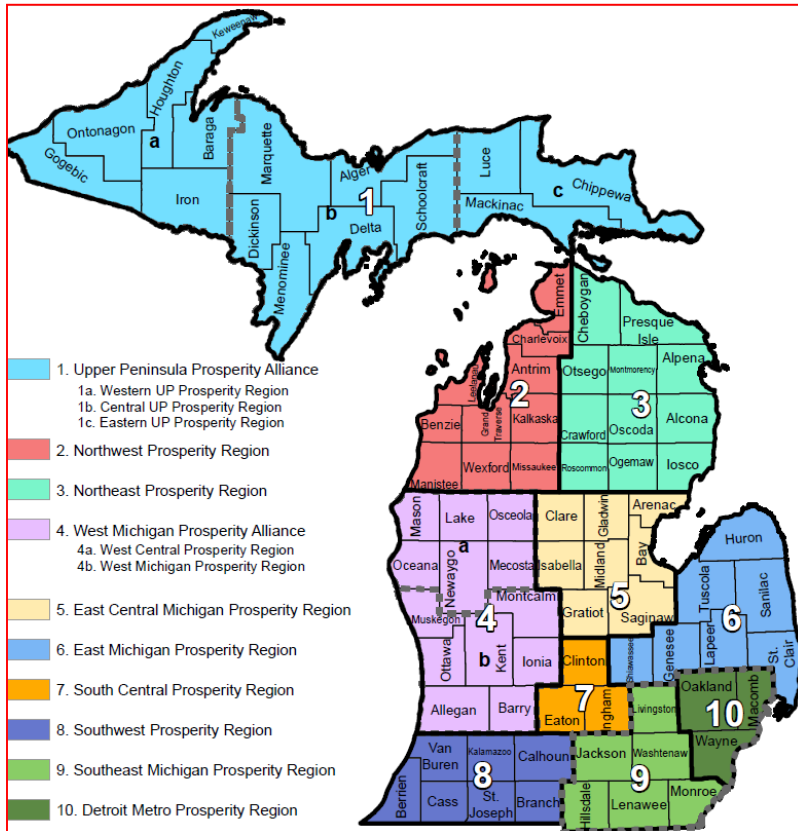
2018 –

1. January - Dundee, Region 9
2. March - Grayling, Region 3
3. May - Brownstown, Region 10
4. June - Lawrence, Region 8

150 attendees across 7 programs

Attendees Included:

- Local business owners
- State and Federal agency partners
- Local Chambers, CVBs/DMOs
- Economic Development professionals



Knowledge Statement	% Agree/Strongly Agree Before	% Agree/Strongly Agree After	% Change
1. I am aware of the importance of tourism in Michigan	95%	98%	3%
2. I am informed of tourism trends and statistics	53%	98%	45%
3. I see tourism as a community economic development strategy	87%	99%	12%
4. I was/am aware of assets and opportunities through this workshop	48%	93%	45%
5. I am aware of how niche markets can be used to maximize assets of a tourist destination.	62%	98%	36%
6. I can identify community assets that could be used to develop tourism in my community and/or region.	69%	94%	25%
7. I understand the value of working with a variety of community members when pursuing tourism development.	88%	99%	11%
8. I pursue tourism leadership opportunities in my community and/or region	59%	86%	27%

Program Impacts – Building Awareness and Community Connections

- Participants increased awareness of existing community/regional tourism assets
- Built connections with each other and intended to follow up
- Creating opportunities for collaboration and building community leadership in tourism
- Exposing communities to additional tourism resources and programs

Program Impacts—Results from Western

U.P. Post workshop next steps

- Find a way to advertise assets that were identified during the workshop
 - Create a web-based calendar for the Western U.P. that shows events, festivals, important regional meetings, etc.
- Possible ad revenue?



- Identify sources of fundi

Program Impacts – Gateway to Additional MSUE Tourism Work

The Village of Dundee








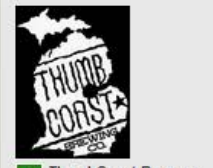




- Hosted UTMC - January 2018
- Contracted MSUE First Impressions for Tourism (FIT) Program - Spring 2018
- Concluded FIT Program - Fall 2018
- Ongoing impacts from FIT Program

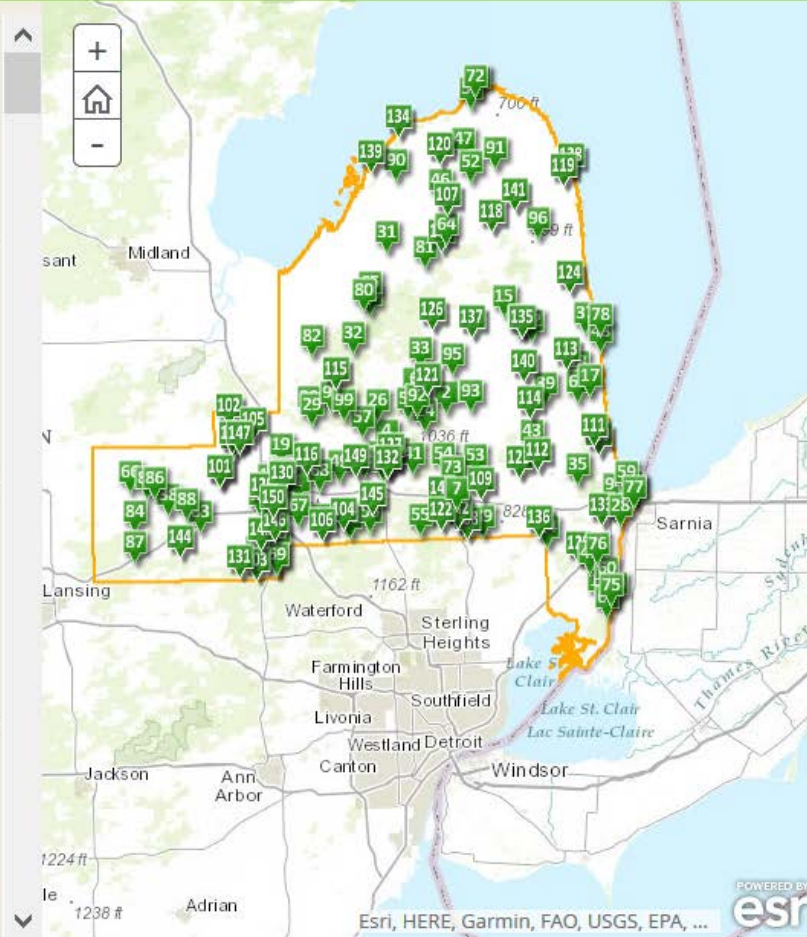




I-69 Thumb Region
A SEVEN COUNTY MICHIGAN PARTNERSHIP

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- Brewery/Winery
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- Orchard
- Speciality
- County Zoom ▾
- Meat/Poultry
- Store
- Contact Us

 1 Red Baron Burton, Michigan	 2 Brower Farms	 3 Crooked Creek Farm Crooked Creek Farm 10000 Crooked Creek Rd 667-9324
 4 Fick Farms	 5 Nelson Wood Products	 6 Law Family Farms
 7 Country Smoke House GOURMET & SPECIALTY MEATS	 8 ThumbCoast Brewery Company	 9 Bird Creek Farms THE TAP ROOM AT BIRD CREEK FARMS
 10 Abbott's Meat, Inc. West style Coney Sauce	 11 Pure Michigan Country Market 1111 11th Ave East Tawas, MI 49829	 12 Helena's Country Market



Interested in joining the directory? Contact the I-69 Thumb Region at 810.766.6540 or dcompton@co.genesee.mi.us.

<http://i-69thumbregion.org/>

Future of UTMC Program

- Continuing to update program presentation with newest tourism impact information and new marketing strategies
- Looking for additional partnerships to bring the program to Michigan communities
- Investigating more options for program participation that provide lower cost barriers and remote learning opportunities.

Questions?

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