

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan  
Product Development (PD) Committee Meeting  
Lake Lansing Room, MEDC Offices, 10am - 4pm, May 13 2014**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions – All
2. Review of January 31 2014 Meeting Notes – All
3. Review of March 11 Annual MTSP Meeting – All
4. Objective One: Support the improvement and increased awareness of the quality, connectivity and diversity of tourist transportation options into and throughout the state.
  - a. Report from PPGS implementation committee – Sarah Nicholls
5. Objective Two: Support the establishment and showcasing of Michigan as a state with a diverse, extensive and high quality network of motorized, non-motorized and water-based routes and trails.
  - a. Report on trails session at 2014 Governor’s Conference – Nancy Krupiarz, Jim Radabaugh and Sarah Nicholls
  - b. Report on Pure Michigan Trails legislation – Nancy Krupiarz and Jim Radabaugh
  - c. Follow-up on alltrails.com – Nancy Krupiarz
  - d. Report on Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum – Nancy Krupiarz, Jim Radabaugh, Bobbi Welke and Sarah Nicholls
  - e. Report on discussions with Doug Lansky – Chris MacInnes, Nancy Krupiarz and Jim Radabaugh
6. Objective Four: Increase access to capital for travel-related businesses.
  - a. 2015 Tourism Investment Forum – Chris MacInnes, AJ Singh and Sarah Nicholls
7. Development of a Michigan Tourism Competitiveness Index – Sarah Nicholls
8. Next Steps and Next Meeting

*A working, box lunch will be delivered at 12:30pm.*

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan  
Product Development (PD) Committee Meeting  
MEDC Offices, Lansing, 10am – 3pm, May 13 2014**

**Meeting Notes**

**In attendance:** Mike Busley (Co-Chair), Chris MacInnes (Co-Chair), Gordon Mackay, Michelle Plawecki, Jim Radabaugh, AJ Singh (joined in afternoon), Bobbi Welke, Sarah Nicholls, Louise Smith.

**Absent:** Debbie Alexander, Nancy Krupiarz, Larry Schuler.

**Introductions** – Made by all. Noted that Patricia Mooradian has stepped off committee.

**Review of January 31 Meeting Notes** – Notes reviewed and approved, no changes or additions made.

**Review of March 11 Annual MTSP Meeting** – Meeting was attended by 100+ individuals and was well-received. Timing was not ideal (after final lunch, with no reminder of the meeting provided at that lunch); room was too large. Proposed that next year's meeting be held immediately following the TC meeting on the Sunday afternoon of the Governor's Conference (so March 22 in Grand Rapids).

**Objective One: Support the improvement and increased awareness of the quality, connectivity and diversity of tourist transportation options into and throughout the state** –

Report on activities of PPGS implementation committee: PPGS committee members George Moroz and Bill Sheffer provided testimony regarding the importance of road quality to the tourism industry at the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation on February 18. At its May 1 meeting the committee met with Lance Binoniemi, Vice President of Government Affairs, Michigan Infrastructure & Transportation Association (MITA); Lance encouraged members of the industry to consider joining the Michigan Transportation Team (MTT), a partnership of nearly 80 businesses, associations and citizens linked with the common goal of improving Michigan's transportation infrastructure (<http://justfixtheroads.com/>). Sarah posted this information on the CCP LinkedIn page.

General discussion of transportation-related developments and issues including how to get between DTW and downtown Detroit; the new Service Animal Relief Area at McNamara Terminal; the Onboard with Autism and Paws With A Cause programs at DTW; and, how to transport bicycles on public/mass transit.

**Objective Two: Support the establishment and showcasing of Michigan as a state with a diverse, extensive and high quality network of motorized, non-motorized and water-based routes and trails –**

- a. Report on trails session at 2014 Governor's Conference – PD committee members Nancy Krupiarz and Jim Radabaugh, in addition to Jonathan Campbell from Lake Effect Digital Marketing (creator of Experience 231) served as panelists; Sarah Nicholls moderated. Approximately 70-80 people attended; 52 completed evaluations were received, responses were very positive. Good opportunity for MDNR and MTGA to mingle with the tourism industry, and vice versa. MLTA and MTGA have now joined each other's organizations.
- b. Report on Pure Michigan Trails legislation –Amends Part 721 (MI Trailways) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. Recognises the importance of land- and water-based trails to Michigan. Allows for the designation of Pure Michigan Trails and Trail Towns (by the Director of MDNR). Passed through the Senate unanimously. But – there is no money associated with the legislation. MTGA very active in this process.
- c. Follow-up on alltrails.com – Nancy not in attendance, hold until next meeting.
- d. Report on Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum – The Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum was held April 16 in Lansing with more than thirty MTSP implementation committee members, CVB representatives and bike event organisers/bike tour operators/bike shop owners in attendance. Included three major activities focusing on Michigan's bicycle tourism assets/strengths, other cities/states/countries that excel at bicycle tourism, and what MI needs to do to improve its bicycle tourism offering. Based on this input, Sarah will work with Dave Serino (on PMC committee) to prep a Michigan Bicycle Tourism Marketing Plan. The final plan – in combination with documentation of the process of plan development – will serve as a model for other activities to replicate (several activity representatives have already expressed interest in this possibility).
- e. Report on discussions with Doug Lansky (one of the key note speakers at the Governor's Conference) – Chris, Nancy and Jim had follow-up conversations with Doug regarding some kind of product/experience evaluation/audit. Doug's work emphasizes the importance of unique products that excite, delight and surprise the visitor. His audits involve traveling to a place incognito and assessing the entire experience, arrival through departure, including transportation, lodging and attractions. He also meets with local businesses and then develops storylines for communities/destinations. Funding for something like this could come from the MI Tourism Plan Fund (requests for funding reviewed quarterly by the TC). Discussion of value of a single perspective vs. a larger/broader survey of visitors. Overarching question = are we delivering on the Pure Michigan brand promise? Idea to develop a case study of a successful destination trail, e.g., North Country, Iron Ore Heritage. Idea to develop an awards/recognition program. Importance of looking beyond trail infrastructure to the entire visitor experience as well as other factors such as community collaboration, marketing, etc. Sarah volunteered her incoming Master's student who could use a case study like this as her Plan B project.

## Objective Four: Increase access to capital for travel-related businesses –

Proposed 2015 Tourism Investment Forum: A way to link investors with providers (“meet the money”), whether to add new, or increase/improve current, product. Governor’s Conference attracts the providers (attendance of 1000+ in 2014), is there a way to integrate a new track/add on a whole new day focused on investment? Would be a way to potentially increase attendance at the conference too. Should partner with MEDC (two current hotel developments in Detroit received seed money from MEDC). So incentives and public-private partnerships are also a part of this.

## US/Michigan Tourism Competitiveness Index –

Sarah worked with an undergraduate student to develop a US/Michigan Tourism Competitiveness Index. The current version of the index incorporates the items listed below; Michigan ranks 9<sup>th</sup> based on these items. Next steps are to recalculate on a per capita basis, and to identify any relationships between these items and actual visitation. Would be useful to update the numbers every five years (not all data are updated yearly). Ideas re. additional items to include still welcome.

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| Number of public use airports                               |
| Number of amusement parks and theme parks                   |
| Number of commercial casinos                                |
| Average annual fuel price in U.S. dollars (\$)              |
| Number of golf courses                                      |
| Number of guest rooms at lodging properties                 |
| Square miles of lakeshore/coastline                         |
| Number of lodging properties                                |
| Number of museums   |
| Number of national parks                                    |
| Miles of trail  |
| Number of public coastal beaches                            |
| Number of "eating and drinking places"                      |
| Percent (%) tax of U.S. dollars (\$)                        |
| Visitor satisfaction rating                                 |
| Number of ski resort properties                             |
| Number of sports stadiums                                   |
| Number of state parks                                       |
| Number of awards received during 2006-2013                  |
| State tourism campaign budget in millions U.S. dollars (\$) |
| Number of World Heritage Sites                              |
| Number of accredited zoos                                   |

**Next Meeting** – Meet after Marquette trip.

## Action Items –

- Plan Marquette field trip – Bobbi/MDOT will take lead.