

Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan
Public Policy and Gov't Support Implementation Committee (PPGS)

MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, May 1, 2014, 9:30 AM-11:00 AM

Public Affairs Associates
One Michigan Avenue Bldg., 120 N. Washington Square, Suite 1050, Lansing.

Call-In Number: 877-846-6740 conference code: 6438614463

Welcome / Introductions

- I. Update on Other Relevant Implementation Committees' Activities
[This will be a regular agenda item at each one of our committee meetings]

(Sarah Nicholls)
- II. TICOM Legislative Toolkit Funding Request
 - Process (Next TC Meeting, June 27, Frankenmuth)
 - TICOM Proposal
Dennis Eade, Ex. Dir., MI Steelhead & Salmon Fishermen's Assoc., Chair,
TICOM Advocacy Committee
 - Committee Vote
- III. Update on Relevant State Budget Activity

(Bruce Ashley, Bret Marr,)
- IV. MI Road / Bridge Funding Discussion
- V. INTC Customs Plaza Discussion
- VI. Ontario Deep Geologic Repository Project
- VII. Other Business
- VII. Schedule Next Meeting

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan (MTSP)
Public Policy & Government Support (PPGS) Committee Meeting
Public Affairs Associates Offices, Lansing, May 1, 2014**

Meeting Notes

In attendance (in person): George Moroz (Co-Chair), Bruce Ashley, Roy Haworth, Bill Sheffer, Sarah Nicholls. Also present for portion of meeting: Dennis Eade, Executive Director, MI Steelhead & Salmon Fisherman's Association and Chair, Advocacy Committee, Tourism Industry Coalition of Michigan (TICOM) and Lance Binoniemi, Vice President of Government Affairs, Michigan Infrastructure & Transportation Association (MITA).

In attendance (on phone): Jon Nunn (Co-Chair), Andy Northrop.

Absent: Don Holecek, Bill Lobenherz, Dave Lorenz, Bret Marr, Tom Nemacheck, Barry Owens.

Update from Other MTSP Implementation Committees – Sarah Nicholls.

Of most relevance to PPGS:

- CCP identified the Michigan Restaurant Association and the Small Business Association of Michigan as the first two Michigan associations they feel it would be especially strategic for the tourism industry to get to know better and potentially partner with, e.g., on advocacy efforts. The Presidents/CEOs of these associations (Brian DeBano and Rob Fowler, respectively) attended the April CCP meeting and reacted positively to the suggestions for future collaboration/cooperation/partnerships discussed.
- Funding – The MI Tourism Plan Fund has been established as a 501(c)(6). Initial commitments of \$5,000 each from MIS, MLTA and Grand Hotel. See emails from Steve Yencich (MLTA) for information on how to contribute.
- PD is planning a day-long Tourism Investment Forum, potential date of Wednesday following 2015 Governor's Conference on Tourism (in Grand Rapids). This addresses PD Objective #4 Increase access to capital for travel-related businesses.
- PMC held a Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum in April and will be developing a Michigan Bicycle Tourism Marketing Plan for that niche.
- RE is prioritizing water-related issues based on the 556 responses to the survey designed to address the first part of RE Objective #2 Identify key issues facing and threats to the integrity of Michigan's tourism resources and raise awareness of and support for these issues. This focus includes aquatic invasive species, water quality and water levels/diversion. Discussion of a joint PPGS-RE meeting later in the summer, also suggested to invite Rep. Candice Miller (<http://candicemiller.house.gov/>).

Also discussed: March 11 meeting of all eight implementation committees.

Update on Relevant State Budget Recommendations – Bruce Ashley.

The Governor's proposed 2014-15 budget included an additional \$2 million for Pure Michigan. Also of relevance to tourism: \$6 million for invasive species, \$2.5 million for trails and \$254 million for MDOT. Bruce reported that road funding and education appear to be the top discussion items/priorities. On April 3 House Speaker Jase Bolger unveiled a House plan to "Build Better Michigan Roads," a proposal for structural changes in Michigan transportation funding that provides for increasing investment in Michigan's roadways to a minimum of \$500 million annually, almost entirely from current resources

(<http://gophouse.org/house-speaker-bolger-unveils-news-transportation-funding-plan-build-better-michigan-roads/>)

New International Trade Crossing (NITC) U.S. Federal Plaza – George Moroz.

George shared his correspondence with Roy Norton, former Consul General, Consulate General of Canada – Detroit regarding the need for federal funding for the U.S. Federal Plaza at the NITC. Those present agreed that it would be timely and appropriate for Michigan's tourism industry to comment on/support this issue. TICOM was identified as the most suitable voice – not appropriate for Travel Commission (TC), though both TC and Governor's Office should be kept informed/sent draft of letter. Both members and non-members of TICOM could be signatories to the letter. TICOM next meets May 16.

About the NITC (Presidential Permit Application, June 2012): <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/194997.pdf>

Customs plaza for new Detroit bridge hits a roadblock on federal funding, Detroit Free Press, March 9, 2014: <http://www.freep.com/article/20140309/NEWS01/303090062/detroit-bridge-international-trade-crossing-customs-plaza>

Ontario Power Generation Deep Geologic Repository (OPGDGR) – George Moroz.

This is a proposed nuclear repository less than one mile from the shores of Lake Huron. A similar site in the US leaked. Public comment on the proposal (note: only a single site was proposed) has closed but those who participated in that comment period can continue to add additional thoughts. So the tourism industry could still comment via Senator Hopgood. TICOM has already done that. There has been little media coverage of this in the US press. Sarah will post an item about the proposal on the CCP LinkedIn.

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission page on OPGDGR:
<http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/resources/status-of-new-nuclear-projects/deep-geologic-repository/index.cfm>

Scientist's letter raises question about Ontario nuclear depository, The Detroit News, March 17, 2014: <http://www.detroitnews.com/article/20140317/METRO06/303170099>

Planned nuclear waste facility raises fears for Great Lakes, Detroit Free Press, April 13, 2014: <http://www.freep.com/article/20140413/NEWS06/304130074/great-lakes-nuclear-waste>

TICOM Legislative Toolkit Funding Request – George Moroz and Dennis Eade.

TICOM's proposed request for \$1,950 to support development of a legislative toolkit was discussed. Voted by the five PPGS members present (Haworth, Moroz, Northrop, Nunn, Sheffer) to submit funding request in time for June 27 TC meeting. George will revise request and forward to Sarah by June 23 (*received May 6*).

Road/Bridge Funding – Lance Binoniemi.

Lance described the membership and purpose of MITA and its efforts in support of increased funding for road/bridge repairs. There has not been an increase in road/bridge funding since 1997 (gas tax is 19 cents per gallon, 15 cents per gallon for diesel). It has been estimated that no less than \$2 billion/annum is required to maintain the state's road/bridge system. MITA believes that the state is as close as it has ever been to identifying/implementing a solution. The most recent winter has exposed the severity of this issue and has bolstered public awareness/support.

The Michigan Transportation Team (MTT) is a partnership of nearly 80 businesses, associations and citizens linked with the common goal of improving Michigan's transportation infrastructure. According to their website (<http://justfixtheroads.com/>):

“Despite comprehensive studies and recommendations that Michigan needs to raise our annual road funding by more than \$1.5 billion annually, and warnings from the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) that our roads are deteriorating faster than they can be repaired or replaced, past legislatures have failed to increase the user fees that fund our roads and bridges. Road condition data reported to the TAMC by state and local road agencies reveals that Michigan roads are deteriorating at a rate of \$3 million daily – more than \$1 billion annually. In 2004, the cost of returning all roads to good condition was \$3.68 billion. By 2011, TAMC estimated the cost had ballooned to \$11.5 billion.”

MITA/MTT support House Speaker Bolger's “Build Better Michigan Roads” plan, though this would only address about ¼ of the current need.

Sarah posted the MTT information on the CCP LinkedIn and encouraged members to join. Several Chambers of Commerce are members (Ann Arbor Ypsilanti, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Midland, Traverse City) as are MI Association of Recreation Vehicles & Campgrounds and Tourism Improving Michigan's Economy (TIME) Alliance, Inc.