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A report by the
Michigan Tourist Council
and the Tourist and Resort
Advisory Committee of the
Michigan Planning Commission
(as revised at Tourist
Council meeting October 13)

PROBLEMS FACED BY THE MICHIGAN TOURIST INDUSTRY

This report is subdivided into three sections, (1) the care of the tourist, (2) protection and utilization of the state's natural resources and (3) miscellaneous aids to the development of Michigan's vacation appeal.

This outline does not set forth all of the problems as your Committees feel that the solving of those presented here and with the adoption in some form of the suggestions set forth, the others will be taken care of by the general upgrading of the industry and the resultant financial gain to the state.

The Care of the Tourist

The lack of adequate housing, protective health measures, and the servicing of the industry by untrained personnel, stand out as the most serious threat to the industry.

Housing — New tourist facility construction in every resort area in Michigan is essential. In order to encourage private capital as well as operators in the field at present, we recommend: (1) A campaign to encourage financial interests to make funds available to present and prospective operators; (2) The investigation of the possibility of obtaining assistance through the Federal Housing Authority now headed by a native of Michigan who is thoroughly familiar with the value of the industry to the state and its need for improved housing facilities; (3) Making available to private interests, by purchase, certain state lands which represent potential resort building sites; (4) The building by the state of a few model resorts in certain state parks for lease to private operators under competitive bids in order to demonstrate proper construction and operation for the benefit of present and prospective operators.

Health — We endorse the protective measures provided by the agencies charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the health of the state's citizens and its visitors and recommend an accelerated program. Sanitation, correct food preparation and handling, the control of insects and noxious weeds are of the utmost importance to the industry.

Personnel Training — Adequate housing and the protection of health requires trained personnel. Too often the ownership of land, the possession of sufficient finances and the desire to go into business or a combination of all three have been the determining factors in the decision to go into the tourist business. Each individual operator is either an asset to the state in the tourist field or a liability depending on his ability to render the type of service desired. Many of the tourist operators of tomorrow will be veterans of World War II. Having lived out-of-doors for the past two or three years, many of these men will not be content to pursue peace-time employment of a confining nature. To new operators as well as some of those already in the field, the successful completion of the programs underway for the training of personnel is of utmost importance. These are about thirty different and distinct vocations in connection with the operation of hotels, resorts, cabin groups, cafes, parks, golf courses and camping grounds which require trained personnel for successful operation. Short courses patterned after those provided industry and agriculture should be provided. Sanitation, sewage disposal, water supply, menus, business practices, courtesy and hospitality must be an integral part of the knowledge shared by both operators and employees of such facilities.

The Council and the advisory committee recommend that the four year college training course in hotel administration at Michigan State College be adequately supported and publicized to attract a sufficient number of desirable enrollees, and that the extension service now being started by Michigan State College and the Michigan Tourist Council be crystallized, if not on a county unit basis, then on a county group basis, for the purpose of furnishing technical advice and counsel to resort operators. Your Committees also recommend that short course training schools be instituted in every resort community in Michigan through the cooperation of the regional tourist bureaus, chambers of commerce, and resort associations through the vocational division of the state Department of Education. The appointment of a permanent tourist council subcommittee to act in an advisory capacity in connection with such educational programs is recommended.

Adequate Protection and Utilization of the State's Natural and Developed Resources

A tourist opinion poll taken in September 1944, revealed that the state's natural resources, its climate and its game and fish opportunities represent the three leading attractions with Michigan's natural resources number one.

Land Use — From 1937 to 1941 some work was done on recreational land use survey work in Gogebic, Delta, Dickinson and Isabella counties. The inventories included a complete survey of the diversified recreational resources within the counties accompanied by a narrative report and complete mapping. The completion of such a program on a state-wide basis would furnish constructive employment at this time and make available

complete and accurate data which would serve as a guide to local planning groups, county zoning committees and state departments and would be of great value to local community organizations in the promotion of recreational advantages. We recommend that plans be worked out for the completion of a recreational land use inventory of all northern counties.

Parks and Forests -- We enthusiastically endorse the park development program of the Conservation department and, in order to obtain the greatest benefit from such development, recommend that roads and trails be constructed, camping facilities be provided, that the health of visitors be protected by the assurance of a pure water supply, that adequate sanitary measures be provided, that trailer camp and playground facilities be erected and that, where practical, facilities be provided for winter sports. Your Committees further request earnest consideration of legislative revision if necessary to provide such facilities in order to assure continued development of the park improvement program.

Game and Fish -- An overwhelming majority of the inquiries concerning the recreational advantages of Michigan indicate interest in hunting wild game and fishing of all kinds. The value of the fisher-hunter-tourist to the state is enhanced by increased purchasing power used for equipment and license fees. We recommend that the agencies responsible for the maintenance of fish and game resources of the state be given continued cooperation and be provided with adequate finances for the maintenance of such resources. We endorse the Conservation department's program of stocking lakes and streams and the maintenance of food supply for the state's various species of fish. It is also recommended that lake levels be controlled, pollution of lake and stream waters be eliminated and that the fish and game laws which do so much to protect this valuable asset continue to be enforced.

Transportation -- Michigan is entering the third phase of its recreational industry. At the turn of the century visitors from the metropolitan areas visited certain sections of Michigan which were accessible by rail and water. These visitors were commonly referred to as "summer boarders" and "resorters". The second phase of the tourist business came about with the advent of good roads and the common ownership of automobiles. With the change in mode of transportation the term used in referring to the visitors changed to "tourists". The operator of tomorrow will be entertaining tourists arriving by air, rail, bus, water and highway. It is important, then, that transportation be as rapid as safety will allow, as comfortable as possible and adequate to properly serve a travel-hungry war-weary America. We recommend the recognition of the recreational industry in plans now being developed for highway improvement and construction in Michigan. Such arteries should provide for direct routes from the centers of population into the resort area with the elimination of all possible friction, adequate by-passes and a continuation of the program of humanizing the highways which has attracted national attention. Travel to and from resort areas is an important part of any vacation. Considerable time as well as much of the vacation budget is spent in travel. Distances shrink when transportation facilities are adequate and the travel portion of the vacation is

made as pleasant as possible.

We endorse the action taken by the Michigan Planning Commission in their September meeting concerning their recommendation of the state's participation with the federal government which would provide additional harbors of refuge on our Great Lakes. We recommend to the Michigan Aeronautics Commission, the Aviation Advisory Committee of the State Planning Commission and the Upper Peninsula Aviation Advisory Council their programs for adequate improvement to airports and landing fields for the servicing of the tourist and commercial traveler. After having reviewed plans being completed by those serving the mass transportation needs we enthusiastically endorse the programs now at an advanced stage by the railroads, bus lines and aviation interests. We recommend that, in so far as possible, municipalities located on the Great Lakes shore lines improve docks and yachting basins for the accommodation of small craft and, when such facilities are lacking, that provisions be made for their construction and that the Great Lakes transportation companies be urged to extend their schedules and expand and improve their equipment to take care of an increased number of passengers.

Miscellaneous Aids to the Development
of Michigan's Vacation Appeal

Lengthening the Seasonal Use of our Recreational Resources — The recreation season in Michigan, for the most part, is confined to the period from June 1 to Labor Day. The length of the season has been the prime reason for hesitancy on the part of investors to assist in the financing of facilities. The world's largest summer hotel located in Michigan is open on an average of 61 days each year. Without going into the advantages of what Michigan has to offer during the spring, fall and winter, we advocate the provision of facilities for all-year-round service and the revamping of the state's advertising and sales effort so as to feature the all-year-round vacation appeals of the state. As a further aid it is suggested that the chambers of commerce and municipalities in the northern part of the state encourage the development of winter sports, that the department of Conservation equip certain state parks for winter sports use, that the policy of snow removal from the trunk lines of the state be continued and that transportation companies be encouraged to provide adequate transportation facilities.

Economic Survey — The so-called tourist and resort industry is intangible and diversified in its economic aspect. The new money which it creates, the employment opportunities which it affords, the market demands which it stimulates, the increased tax revenues which it develops, if known, would have an important influence in creating state-wide interest in this growing industry and furnish a background of facts that would substantiate the investments necessary to its further development. No other business would think of an expansion program without taking inventory of the magnitude of their present operations, present stock and potential market, as a guide for further development.

Selling the Value of our Recreational Resources to the Citizens of Michigan — During the recent period of travel restriction the value of the recreation business derived from the citizens of Michigan was clearly illustrated. Many of the tourist operators were saved from financial disaster because of the accessibility of the state's recreational resources to its metropolitan centers. The advantage of impressing upon the citizens of Michigan the value of the recreational resources is important also from the standpoint of agriculture. Just as the state's visitors enjoy our natural resources so do they enjoy the products of our farms, gardens and orchards. The tourist business brings to Michigan agriculture a market within the state and this market should be furnished with the finest products. Much is yet to be done in the matter of the proper distribution of such products. Fresh fruits and vegetables produced in Michigan should find their way with as little delay as possible to the tables of those serving the industry. Your Committees therefore endorse the broad program undertaken by the Michigan Agricultural Marketing Council, the State Department of Agriculture and the educational institutions to the end that improved marketing conditions will be effected.

Service and Advertising — The dissemination of information through effective channels of distribution of all maps, folders, literature and other printed material published by the state, its tourist bureaus, the chambers of commerce so as to effectively reach prospective vacation-minded people before travel plans are made is essential to a continuous flow of travel and vacation dollars into and through Michigan. The market for vacation appeal has been limited in the past to Illinois, Ohio, Indiana and Canada. With the rapid development of all forms of transportation, Michigan, through the media of national advertising and more effective distribution of printed matter will be in a position to capture its share of this expanded market. Information offices strategically located are deemed necessary and essential. These should be properly equipped and manned by personnel who have sufficient knowledge of the product in order to thoroughly sell all of the state or any section.

We submit that the management of out-of-state and point of entrance information offices should be under the same supervision. Repetition of sales contact from the time vacation plans are in the formulative state until such plans have been carried out is essential. It is further recommended that personnel be qualified under civil service and provided with such training as may be deemed necessary. For such out-in-front sales service we recommend in addition to training courses that travel opportunities be provided for the purpose of acquainting such personnel in some detail with the state and its vacation appeal; that such personnel be limited to residents of Michigan and that a rotation system be effected between the various offices in order to further increase their efficiency and knowledge of the state.

Your Committees recommend a thorough analysis of the advertising programs of the Michigan Tourist Council and the regional tourist assoc-

iations for the purpose of determining the most efficient procedure for stimulating the tourist trade in the highly competitive period ahead. Michigan's promotional efforts in the past have often lacked in continuity and coordination because of the year-to-year basis on which the planning had to be done. In the past, the state's advertising appropriations were on an annual basis or at the most for two years. The creation of the Michigan Tourist Council has given impetus to such an analysis to the end that competent advertising counsel is being employed to determine the best media and the best methods for the coordination of the various programs.

This report was prepared by Harold J. Garrison of the Michigan Planning Commission staff for the advisory committee of the Commission and the Michigan Tourist Council.