

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan
Research and Technical Assistance (RTA) Committee Meeting
MEDC Offices, Lansing, 1-2pm, March 6, 2015**

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions – All
2. Review of September 17 2014 Meeting Notes – All
3. Review of RTA Goal/Objectives – Sarah Nicholls
4. Meeting with Travel Michigan VP David West – All
5. Next Steps and Next Meeting – All

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Meeting Notes

In attendance: John Madigan (Co-Chair), Melisa Thom-Brown (Co-Chair), Sarah Nicholls.
Also present: Travel MI VP David West.

Absent: Greg Ayers, Linda Freybler, Heather Khan, Dan Sippel.

Welcome and Introductions – Made by all.

Review of September 17 2014 Meeting Notes – Notes were not reviewed due to low number of committee members in attendance, to be reviewed/approved at next meeting.

Review of RTA Goal/Objectives – Sarah provided an overview of the RTA objectives to provide context for the meeting to David. Noted that with the Travel Commission's development of a funding/governance structure for the implementation of the MTSP in spring 2014, the RTA committee's role relative to *Objective One Define and prioritize the research and technical needs of the other seven plan goals* has essentially been shifted to the TC. This leaves *Objective 2 Develop a financially sustainable online information system to capture and share relevant industry research*. Key elements of useful data/research as identified during the MTSP development process and as confirmed by the 2014 RTA committee survey of CVB research activities/needs include timely, reliable, accurate, at an appropriate spatial resolution, and market (place + activity) specific.

Meeting with Travel Michigan VP David West – David summarised the three state level datasets that Travel Michigan has historically purchased: D.K. Shifflet for spending, volume, traveler profiles, satisfaction, value for money; Longwoods for campaign awareness and ROI; and, Smith Travel for hotel metrics. Since joining MEDC David has also contracted with Tourism Economics to generate an overall economic impact figure for Michigan tourism (to include not just direct spending but also indirect and induced effects); this number will be comparable with agriculture's figure of \$91 billion. The impact figure will be based on four key segments – transportation, lodging, food and beverage, and recreation. Noted that the direct spending figure historically quoted (\$18.7 billion in 2013) has not included Canadian or other international travelers – the new figure will include international expenditures. Tourism Economics will also generate figures regarding tourism employment. David plans to present the state-wide figures at the 2015 Governor's Conference; data for MEDC's prosperity regions and individual counties will follow. It is anticipated that these data will be publicly available; potential of storing them on the new B2B website which will be a part of the TM website redevelopment (this goes to bid in the next few months).

Next Steps and Next Meeting –

- Co-Chairs John and Melisa will make the RTA presentation at the annual meeting of all eight MTSP implementation committees, scheduled to take place immediately following the Travel Commission meeting at the Governor's Conference (so 3-5pm Sunday March 22 at the Amway Plaza in Grand Rapids). This meeting provides an opportunity for each pair of co-chairs to share their activities in 2014 and plans for 2015. Each pair of Co-Chairs is asked to submit three slides to Sarah by 5pm Weds Mar 18 that highlight: (slide 1) Prioritization of objectives; (slide 2) Progress made in 2014; (slide 3) Plans for 2015. These slides will be included in the annual progress report that will be posted on the MTSP website in late March/April.

- The MTSP has also been allotted two one-hour breakout sessions to focus on selected elements of the MTSP in more detail during the Governor's Conference. Days/times and topics are as follows:

Monday Mar 23 3:15-4:15pm

20-25 mins – Service Excellence – outline of proposed statewide Pure Michigan Promise hospitality training program

15-20 mins – Product Development (obj. 2 trails) – update on trails-related developments

15-20 mins – Promotions, Marketing & Communications – Michigan Bicycle Tourism Marketing Plan

Tuesday Mar 24 10:45-11:45am

Product Development (obj. 1 transportation) – presentation on/by "Safe Roads YES" coalition (note: both TICOM and MLTA have pledged their support for this effort)

- Sarah will send Doodle with proposed dates/times for next meeting in April/May. Proposed focus: Given new figures to be provided by Travel Michigan, which address one of the most commonly mentioned needs/desires on the part of the industry, what are the remaining/is the next tier of data/research needs? Possibilities include: (i) visitor origin (to help drive advertising buys); (ii) visitor satisfaction. David also mentioned his desire to interact more/obtain more data from the Indian reservations re. their travel/tourism activities (primarily their casinos and lodging).