

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session**

This document contains a summary of the notes recorded by participants at the March 27 2012 vision and goal-setting session. Eight sets of materials are presented, one for each of the eight goal themes.

The eight goal theme areas were identified based on evaluation of the previous plan and preliminary discussion with a subset of the Travel Commission. The eight theme areas are (in alphabetical order):

1. Collaboration, Cooperation and Partnerships
2. Funding and Financing
3. Natural Resources and the Environment
4. Product Development
5. Promotion, Marketing, and Communications
6. Public Policy and Government Support
7. Research and Technical Assistance
8. Service Excellence

Discussion was led by a team of trained MSU facilitators. There were three main activities, focusing on: (i) defining the theme and understanding its significance to Michigan's tourism industry; (ii) defining the future of the theme, i.e., how it would look in an ideal future state; and (iii) first drafts, or elements of a first draft, of a goal statement.

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session: Collaboration, Cooperation and Partnerships**

### **Defining the Theme and its Significance**

MEDC, Pure MI = great partnership opportunity – everybody happy with Pure MI  
MLTA, MEDC, MACVB have great collaboration  
But, less collaboration/discussion between e.g., downtown associations, DDA's, MML, chambers, especially with smaller communities in rural areas  
Moving in a great direction with industry partnerships, especially those offered by Travel MI.  
However, we sometimes highlight our state's best known destinations rather than introduce new locations to current/potential visitors. Sometimes territorial (geographically)  
Good start. Still have regional rivalries/competition. Some have stepped up to the plate in a big way others are not engaged  
Regional partnerships strong, but partnerships outside region still not common  
Need to fund partnerships based on verticals/interests rather than geography  
Lots of concentration on SE MI needs to incorporate more areas  
Haven't identified many of the possible collaborators  
Potential is much greater than the accomplished

### **Defining the Future of the Theme**

Every group is well connected  
Communication is open  
The industry has a clear leadership  
There are no losers in the industry  
Themed tours/trails by interest, not geography  
Infrastructure which is consistent throughout state (quality of roads, signage)  
Destinations talk outside of region on regular basis to see what is working  
All destinations are connected (including urban/business with rural/leisure)

### **Elements of a Goal Statement**

Public/private partnerships  
Common understanding of mission  
Multi-dimensional partnerships  
Reduce fragmentation and duplication among promotional entities  
Encourage public and private, state and federal organization to work together and maximize their resources  
Collaboration statewide with manufacturers, tourism, and agriculture- common industry goals to promote state at business and consumer level. Common messaging (not competitive)  
True synergy, work as one  
Identify and categorize all potential parties of interest who could be part of the collaborative process - Identify the barriers to these potential parties becoming part of the collaborative process - Identify means to tear down the barriers

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session: Funding and Financing**

### **Defining the Theme and its Significance**

Today: adequate for promotion, inadequate for capital/infrastructure investment  
Positive (more than before) but not long term  
Non stable

### **Defining the Future of the Theme**

PM funded at \$60 million/year  
PM international at \$5 million/year + in kind + match  
220K tourism jobs  
Permanent (with indexing for inflation)  
"State funded" hospitality training  
PM campaign is known worldwide  
MI has great roads  
The full legislature understands and supports investment in promoting MI tourism product  
MI is the envy of other states  
Sustainable  
Legislative priority  
Promotion funding has increased to move MI from 14<sup>th</sup> in total spending to 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>  
Funding for industry research is now available from private sector or an industry foundation

### **Elements of a Goal Statement**

Measureable improvements/results  
Create sustainable increases in total tourism spending (move MI from 14<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>)  
Create 55-65,000 new tourism jobs by 2017  
Achieve \$29 billion in tourism spending  
Obtain legislative support for funding  
Receive adequate funding to effectively promote MI  
Employ more people in tourism industry  
Generate measurable, verifiable data  
Consistent, competitive funding  
A commitment to grow the tourism industry  
Sustainability  
Adequate, secure, permanent funding for all strategic plan initiatives

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session: Natural Resources and Environment**

### **Defining the Theme and its Significance**

Spectacular background, endless recreation. It helps us reconnect to what is important  
Stressed- low budgets for promotions and preservation  
Our natural resources are a major contributor to our tourism  
Great Lakes freshwater capital  
They are being used, but not all showcased  
Michigan wouldn't be the same with polluted air and water. We need to take care of the environment  
Slowly people are realizing the importance and starting to do things to help  
Natural resources and environment are the foundation of what make the MI experience unique or pure. There needs to be an effective way to increase knowledge and understanding of natural resources  
Not enough awareness. Tourists don't cherish the resources. They don't know to recycle  
MI's parks, trails, harbors, and boating access sites provide access to experiences in outdoor adventure, while improving quality of life and supporting local economies  
A balance between protection and preservation and exploitation and marketing  
Future land use planning essential  
Intact ecosystems are essential to the tourism business  
People are looking for clean air + water, beautiful scenery, healthy and wildlife  
Great deal of beautiful and relatively healthy ecosystem  
Asian carp, invasive species  
The change in seasons is magnificent  
Year round opportunities  
Need better promotion of nat res, need more funding for management and enforcement

### **Defining the Future of the Theme**

People socially responsible  
Every public place has "green" items  
People having taken pride in their natural surrounding and have an awareness.  
The culture in MI is one that appreciates and utilizes natural resources  
Local communities have collaborated on regional assets to promote  
Visitors have gained an appreciation for MI's natural resources  
DNR and DEQ MDARD quality of life group have developed mutually beneficial public policies to protect and preserve MI's NR  
The industry (including its partners) have been outstanding stewards of the state's natural and cultural heritage  
The industry is a model of the best sustainable practices  
Control of invasive species  
Sustainable tourism leader and residents practice it  
World-class parks

Active state  
Farm to table is common practice  
People take pride in their resources  
Recognized as the nation's leader in eco/environmental tourism practices and visitors  
Recognized as having the greatest value and accessibility to its NR in the US  
People love so much that they keep it clean and spread the knowledge  
Add NR to curriculum  
Increased usage appreciation by locals and visitors  
Award winning sustainable eco-recycling programs/systems  
Keep it local (agriculture/wine/beer)  
International recognition as a destination  
Resurrection of family farms/agriculture

### **Elements of a Goal Statement**

Preservation  
Accessibility  
Stewardship  
Acquire/foster/develop statewide awareness of the place  
Natural resources and the environment play in our ID as a state  
Educate, discover, inspire  
Historic and cultural resources  
Raise awareness  
Protect and preserve  
Outstanding stewards of natural and cultural resources (heritage)  
Model of sustainable practice  
Preservation  
Heritage  
Cultural  
Sustainable  
Increased emphasis on or between agriculture and tourism  
Majestic-magnificent- unspoiled- Michigan will be recognized  
To be recognized as an international steward in preserving sustainable natural and agricultural resources

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session: Product Development**

### **Defining the Theme and its Significance**

PD is important especially the way technology is changing the way we travel  
New products mean new opportunities to attract visitors and get regulars to come back again  
There are great products in MI- need to find ways to collaborate and cross promote  
Themed itineraries, immersive experiences, take what we have and repackage it  
Transportation systems  
Food, art, golf, wine, beach/water, beer, outdoor, festivals and events  
Encourage people to post video experiences  
Ultimately, the industry is sustained by the attractiveness of the MI product offering  
If we want to be a global player, we need globally attractive product  
MI is the product  
People- ambassadors  
We need to continue to invest back into the state to build year round value  
Getting much better, but need to work better together throughout the state

### **Defining the Future of the Theme**

All hotels and restaurants have charging stations  
Businesses have properly trained employees in customer service  
Real life, unique experiences  
Simple/clear/consistent products and message  
Cutting edge technology  
I can take rapid transit anywhere and connect to remote places via green transport systems  
Michigan citizens are excited and happy to speak positively of their state  
Multilingual  
Pure MI a way of life

### **Elements of a Goal Statement**

Creating a tech savvy and eco friendly MI with ease of access for visitors to our state (and the Michiganders will be proud to call home)  
Deliver enhanced visitor expectations  
Improve/focus on Pure MI's most important, or first, product: people  
To create a unique and diverse program of experiences for tourists  
Advocate for statewide transportation that services all tourists  
Leader, eco focused, tech friendly, energetic, systematic, forward thinking  
Enthusiastic and living attitude of pride in Pure MI  
Educate diversity- ready for global communication

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session: Promotion, Marketing, Communications**

### **Defining the Theme and its Significance**

Pure MI advertising campaign - national recognition + player in Brand USA

It is a core focus to truly create economic impact with a call to action focus

Very collaborative and broad

People want to experience uniqueness

It is how we communicate our brand. It sets the stage for the visitor

Pure MI has helped unify our industry and residents

The brand is out and people love the campaign. Now we need to share and communicate with those individuals less familiar with MI and the state's offerings. Travelers are focused on experience travel. There are so many experiences to share about MI

Communication among the org and all tourism industry people seems a little lacking- could be better; we need to communicate better with the infrastructure (CVB directors, hoteliers, etc.)

Marketing and promotion can deliver a packaged idea, image, call to action, invitation, frame an experience in ways communication cannot do

Ability to draw tourists is only as good as marketing that drives them here

Voice of the state

Using all available resources to communicate to the public about Michigan's product

It means communicating with audience sharing our "secrets" so they're not secrets anymore - they're things/experiences/adventures to be discovered

Putting a visual and story telling aspect to our state

Creating, participating in and being the focus of conversation

Creating interest and spurring the desires in people to explore MI and turning that into action

### **Defining the Future of the Theme**

Embrace the use of peer recommendations (Social Media and Brand Ambassadors)

Pillars themes (one of a kind) used to build brand

Win more awards

More to spend nationally and internationally

Easy, cool and interactive website to plan from (Michigan.org)

Awesome video content

Place to read amazing stories of other Michigan travelers

Stronger national and international reach/media coverage

Delivering on Pure MI brand

Different regions and destinations are part of PMC, but have distinct identities

Detroit does not drive the image of MI outside of MI

There is a tremendous mix of international travelers

The huge influx of travelers has not only increased travel economic impact but led to new business development

Theme (art, beer, music, food, et.)  
Employees are delivering the best customer service I've ever had  
Everyone around the state talks about how great MI is because the collective self esteem of the state is awesome!  
Service people and industry leaders are highly aware of everything MI has to offer  
MI products are famous worldwide, MI is known worldwide  
State speaks with one voice  
Welcoming and friendly residents  
MI is ranked in the top 3 summer tourism destinations in America  
All businesses are actively promoting the products and services in a positive way working with their communities  
Social media real people's experience shaping much of the industry  
Cohesive industry- awareness and reinforcement of state's brand/image  
Visitors are more aware of statewide offerings as a result of a consistent campaign and connected messaging  
No county is left behind

### **Elements of a Goal Statement**

Deliver the Pure MI brand to all visitors  
Promoting the Pure MI brand with innovative energy in all channels. Nationally and internationally  
Build collaboration through creative funding and partnerships with a unified Pure MI focus  
Enhance, create, develop, and deliver  
Grow the brand and deliver the promise  
Create and develop experiences, ambassadors, passionate, collaborative, diversification, uniqueness, education  
Emphasizing the diverse assets from culture to urban  
Welcoming travelers from around the world  
Inspire residents - everyone to communicate and to proclaim the best of MI to the world, nation, state, and community  
Inspire everyone to communicate the Pure MI experience  
Explode myths (weather and accessibility)  
Empower, educate our residents to all become advocates for our state  
Full implementation of the Pure MI brand throughout all counties, regions, and governmental agencies for tourism, economic development, and natural resources  
Translate our web info into Chinese, Hindu and Portuguese  
Create a marketing/promotions/communication plan which meets the customer's need and inspires the Pure MI experience

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session: Public Policy and Government Support**

### **Defining the Theme and its Significance**

Public officials are starting to get economic significance of tourism, but need more info; also fluid due to term limits  
Good public policy can help the industry advance and grow. Bad public policy can inhibit and diminish the industry's advancement and growth  
Involve native Michiganders. Government should be offering incentives to Indian Tribes to invest into tourism (non gaming) infrastructure + facilities  
Creating and introducing policies that allow MI's natural resources to be accessible to all  
Current elected officials seemed to be embracing the fact that tourism is an economic driver. On the other hand state agencies are lagging in reducing unnecessary rules and regulations that deter tourists from engaging in outdoor activities  
Not enough movement on Asian carp  
Government must commit and be held accountable for all levels to achieve agreed objectives

### **Defining the Future of the Theme**

Improved roads and pathways  
Improved culture of hospitality with ambassador certification  
Inclusive pricing of all goods  
Visitors are king- everyone recognizes the value on tourism spending  
Full state department of tourism with a cabinet level head  
The state has significantly increased its financial investments in the industry (promotion, research, experience development)  
The state has taken an active and leadership role in attracting international visitors  
Tourism representatives accompany all economic development missions overseas  
A central agency for all industry statistics (all sectors)  
Tourism promotion funding is totally funded by revenue generated by all industry segments  
Regulations and taxes that hinder investment and job growth ruthlessly eliminated  
Natural and cultural resources supported and enhanced  
Michigan's sense of place the envy of all other American destinations

### **Elements of a Goal Statement**

A concise description of the economic and social power of tourism that serves as a benchmark for public policy decisions  
The state should take tangible steps to strengthen and grow the industry through investments in tourism. Promotions, tourism research, and visitor experience development and regulatory reform  
Involve everyone  
Knowledge of the Pure MI brand by legislators  
Be a business friendly state

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session: Research and Technical Assistance**

### **Defining the Theme and its Significance**

Need for statewide database with ability to model and project; statewide and county level

Data driven decisions, neutral party, funded, database of visitors/motives

Provable metrics

Now - weak, accessible only to those who have resources

Research needs include things like where tourism employees see future needs and what types of education are needed for jobs that may be available. What do international and domestic travelers want/expect of our tourism brand. Funding a model or stats that benefit all industry

Research/tech vital because technology is one of the primary ways people use to plan and integrate trips. This means seeking out and using emerging tech to help people help themselves

Individually businesses maintain info but need statewide consolidation/dissemination

Better metrics and key performance indicators (current ones not reliable)

Ability to capture info that helps increase tourism to MI

I believe research is one of the most important aspects of tourism programming, planning and advocacy. Research defines our audience, their needs and desires, and substantiates our work.

It also gives us benchmarks for future planning and allows us to effectively explain tourism's benefits to our elected officials

Should be central reporting for state and county research, provide economic impact numbers

### **Defining the Future of the Theme**

Publicly accessible, sustainable, used at all levels (state, county, local), inclusive

Clear understanding of the state's tourism assets

Provable, consistent, reliable

Clear statewide understanding of what success looks like-metrics understood by all

Local communities have info that is relevant, recent, and accessible for them to make more sound business decisions

As a state we know our visitors and are able to better communicate with them based on that data from a state perspective as well as on local levels

Public/private funded and centrally located somewhere, online, one portal

Data is dynamic, changing with emerging trends and shifting demographics

### **Elements of a Goal Statement**

Funded, accessible, online system that has accurate data about travel to MI. Also set and monitor aligned statewide tourism goals/metrics for success

Develop a statewide repository of research data through a public/private funding source

Inclusive, dynamic, accurate, accessible, reliable, valid, current; informs decision making

Establish a set of balanced leading and lagging indicators, a set of processes and systems to capture and report this info

Includes both qualitative trend and consumer behaviour info as well as quantitative data

## **Summary of Notes from March 27 Visioning and Goal-Setting Session: Service Excellence**

### **Defining the Theme and its Significance**

Making Michigan a “Welcome” state; customer service should be a priority  
In 5 years... being more welcome to international travel guests  
Refers to all interactions the visitor has with people in the state – gas stations, welcome centers and hotels, law enforcement, residents  
Imperative. Pure MI will get them in the door. SE will get them in the drawer  
Very average, variable. Improving but have much more to improve  
Service excellence means first impression should be consistent. Only strong as weakest link.  
Excellent service brings repeat visitors. Demonstrates pride  
Service excellence can/should/will set us apart from all other states. It carries through on the tone and feeling set in the Pure MI commercials  
If I say I’m great, that’s advertising. If someone else says I’m great, that’s the truth

### **Defining the Future of the Theme**

There is consistency in the way that our cities in Michigan are delivering on the Pure Michigan promise. Michigan is recognized as one of the friendliest states in the country.  
Full time program- statewide. Consistent- workbooks- certificates- national recognition program.  
Funded state \$250,000/ year- full time staff  
All employees that come in contact with guests are well educated on their area. All travelers are welcomed to the state and thanked for visiting. A positive attitude is evident by MI resident  
Places of business - tourism and non-tourism - display certificates of custom service training.  
All people/businesses are truly welcoming to visitors – ambassadors, promoting their state  
Put the money in the area of training and development of awareness starting with high school students, college, and all public works; seek companies for sponsorships  
Multi-lingual  
Consistency around the state has been established within service and hospitality. Employees within the hospitality industry are proud of their state as a travel destination  
Customize PowerPoint presentation supported by video vignettes for small business orientation.  
Pure MI rating system. Pure MI service excellence manifesto of service standards

### **Elements of a Goal Statement**

Michigan Service Excellence can be obtained through a consistent desire to improve on delivering excellent service to those visiting Michigan  
Funded, full time, statewide program adopted and implemented by industry. Trained trainers.  
10,000 people per year trained via certified program  
Genuine welcoming spirit, infectious enthusiasm, culture of extreme hospitality, diversity, pride in Pure MI  
Yes, I can! What can I do for you? How can I add value? Experience beyond expectations  
Consistency, not cookie-cutter, not just front line, create a welcome that is “Pure”  
Commitment to service excellence to deliver the Pure Michigan Promise