



**Michigan Tourism
Strategic Plan**

“a plan for the industry, by the industry”

Presented by:
Gary Warnell
Project Specialist - Plan Coordination Team
Michigan State University

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1



**An industry strategic plan?
Why now?**

- Michigan tourism slow to recover from 9/11
- Overall economic condition of the state impacting industry growth and sustainability
- Realized need to take control of industry's future
- Desire to fulfill a **61** year old mandate

2



What's the reality?

- *We have no existing benchmark*
- *Unique set of circumstances*
- *Michigan's tourism industry is complex*
- *The plan will not be perfect*
- *Not everyone will agree with all aspects of the plan*
- *The plan is not intended to replace existing regional, local, sector or individual organization plans*

3



How do we do it?

Implement a process by which the ***industry comes together*** across all its businesses, sectors, and support organizations to:

- **Envision** its future
- **Discover** its “shared” strategic issues
- **Develop** an agenda for cooperation and partnership
- **Implement** strategies that promote and enhance the entire industry

4



What kind of plan is needed?

- **Comprehensive**
What we can do in the long term to grow this industry
- **Visionary**
Where we can be years from now and how to get there
- **Inclusive**
All regions, all sectors, profit and non-profit
- **Knowledge-driven**
Built on a foundation of facts

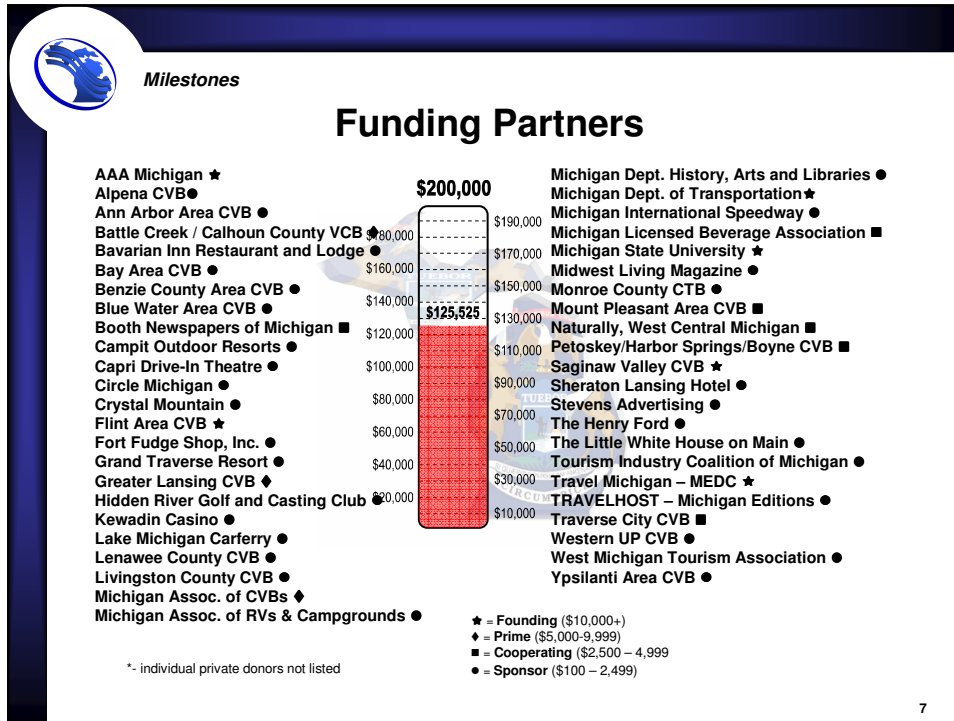
5



Milestones

- **October 2005:** MSU makes presentation to Travel Commission regarding need for a comprehensive strategic plan for the industry. Travel Commission *endorses* initiative.
- **November 2005:** MSU hosts meeting of representatives from over 40 major industry organizations to present plan concept and seek input regarding support to move forward. Consensus of group - *plan is a necessity*.
- **December 2005 - February 2006:** Fundraising efforts initiated to raise necessary resources to begin project.
- **March 2006:** Project officially launched even though funding goal not reached.

6



Milestones

May 2006

75 member Tourism Industry Planning Council convened and attends all-day Visioning Session in Lansing.

Cultural tourism represented by:

- Mackinac State Historic Parks
- Michigan Department of History, Arts & Libraries
- Michigan Historical Museum
- Michigan Museums Association
- MotorCities National Heritage Area
- The Henry Ford

8



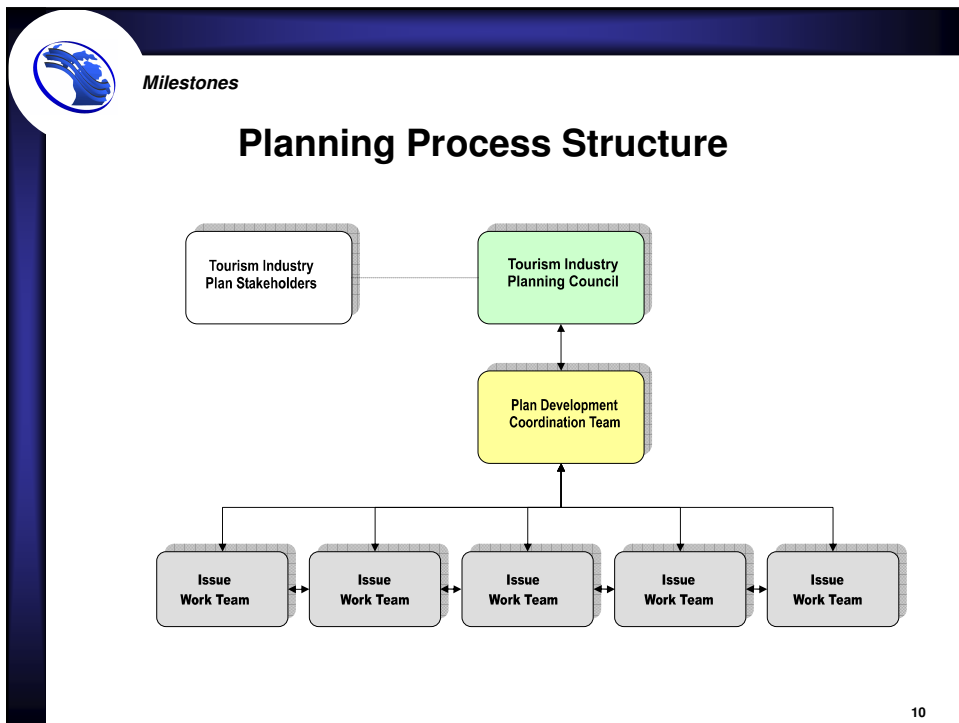
Milestones

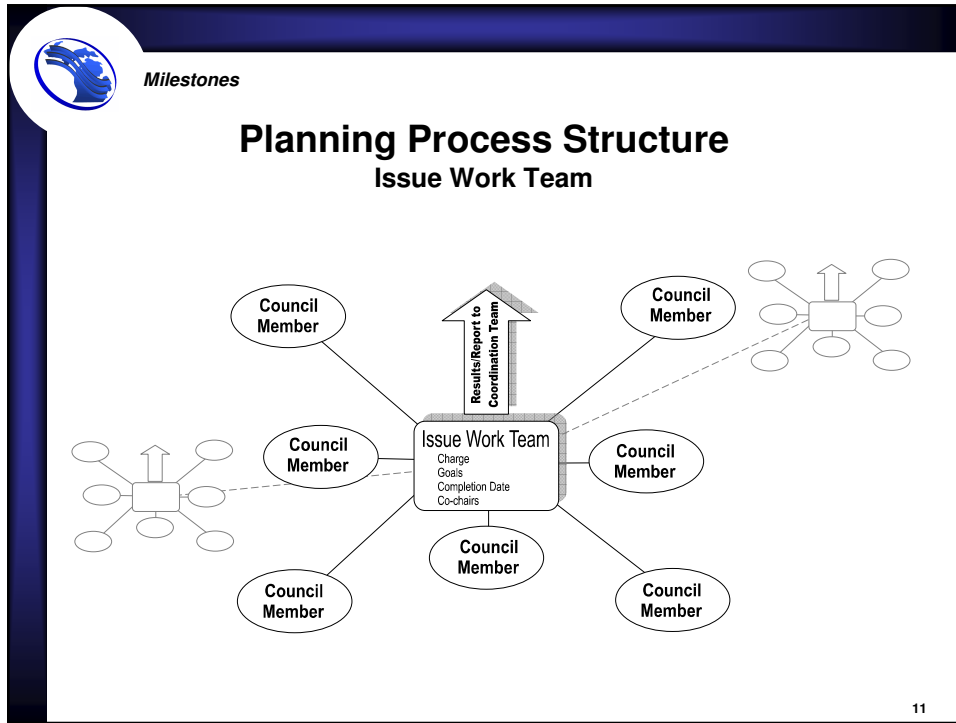
May 2006 (cont)

Tourism Industry Planning Council Visioning Session


- "Big Eight" critical issue areas identified:
 - **Collaboration and Partnerships**
 - **Funding**
 - **Hospitality Training**
 - **Promotion and Media**
 - **Public Policy and Government Relations**
 - **Research and Market Segmentation**
 - **Visitor Experience**
- Issue Work Teams (IWT) configured around each area

9





- Milestones**
- June - July 2006**
- Seven statewide Listening Sessions held to gather input from industry on the “Big Eight” issue areas.
 - Locations: *Iron Mountain, Sault Ste. Marie, Battle Creek, Dearborn, Frankenmuth, Alpena, Traverse City*
 - Attended by over 250 industry stakeholders.
- 12



Milestones

August - October 2006

- IWTs mobilized and work begins on analyzing information collected from previous sessions, professional experience, and other industry sources.
- Issue work **statements** and **report** framework created.
- Online web site set established to gather additional feedback from industry stakeholders.

13



Milestones

November 2006

IWT reports complete. Reviewed and discussed by full Council at meeting in Flint at the Flint Institute of Arts.



14



Milestones

The “Big Eight” Issue Work Team Reports

Summary of Recommendations

(full reports available at tourismplan.msu.edu)

15




IWT Recommendations

Collaboration and Partnerships

- Establish a Tourism Collaboration Task Force
- Infuse collaboration in the Annual Michigan Tourism Conference
- Raise industry awareness to possibilities for collaboration on multiple levels (e.g., between individual organizations, government agencies, geographic regions, other states, etc.)
- Train front line staff to both welcome visitors and expose them to the full range of experiences Michigan has to offer
- Build public support for the industry

16



IWT Recommendations

Funding

Call for broad industry participation in a private sector-based, industry-wide effort to increase tourism promotion funding to \$30 million annually, utilizing appropriations from the state's General Fund, and to secure such funding without tax, fee assessment or surcharge increase.

17



IWT Recommendations

Hospitality Training

- Develop a “fundamental” *Michigan Hospitality Certificate Program* for front line staff
- Develop *Owner/Manager Certificate Programs*,
- Manage both programs through a central organization within the industry itself
- Develop training components through a statewide Regional Skills Alliance

18



IWT Recommendations

Industry Organization and Leadership

- Membership of the Travel Commission should be strengthened and more representative of this broad industry
- Industry trade associations should be engaged in the gubernatorial appointment process
- The Travel Commission should convene an annual meeting of HAL, MDA, MDOT, MDNR, MEDC, to discuss common issues and response strategies

19




IWT Recommendations

Promotion and Media

- Develop strategies to market together
- Conduct research to identify current and prospective markets and their perception of the Michigan travel product
- Establish research-based criteria for setting promotional priorities and for measuring results
- Review programs in other states
- Create a balanced strategy around both “paid” and “earned” components

20



IWT Recommendations

Public Policy and Government Relations

- Identify revenue sources to support recommendations
- Develop a Tourism Caucus to anticipate a tourism agenda that includes: funding, transportation, environment and return on investment research
- Examine roles of Travel Michigan & the Travel Commission with MEDC
- Move into a political action mode of operation
- Establish a long-term funding mechanism necessary to continue the efforts of the plan

21




IWT Recommendations

Research & Market Segmentation

Develop a central system for gathering and providing critical information to all levels of the tourism industry involved in investment and marketing decisions.

Travel Michigan should have a primary leadership role in creating this system.

22




IWT Recommendations

Visitor Experience

- Establish a culture of exceptional customer service
- Achieve the actualization of a superior service model
- Make the visitor experience more engaging and memorable
- Establish a best practice website
- Enhance the natural, built and institutional environments

23



Milestones

November 2006 (cont)

Council members surveyed with follow-up "Next Steps" questionnaire.

- 1) Move forward with drafting the first version of the plan, based on recommendations as submitted by the Issue Work Teams at the Flint meeting. *Result: 2:1 YES*
- 2) How the plan is to be implemented, and who is going to be responsible are the two most critical questions that remain unanswered. *Result: 9:1 YES*
- 3) If the Travel Commission's role could be strengthened and returned to its original authority as provided in the 1945 legislation, the Travel Commission should be responsible for the plan and its implementation. *Result: 4:1 YES*

24



What are the next steps?

- *Move forward with first draft of Plan using the IWT reports as a foundation*
- *Confirm ownership of the Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan and the responsibility for its implementation*
- *Plan finalized for presentation at March 2007 industry conference in Traverse City*

25



For more information

Visit the Plan website:
<http://tourismplan.msu.edu>

Attend the 2007 industry conference:



**Driving
Tourism 2007**

MICHIGAN LODGING & TOURISM CONFERENCE | MARCH 26-27, 2007
AT THE GRAND TRAVERSE RESORT AND SPA, ACME MI

26



Thank You!

**Tourism Strategic Plan Project Office
CARRS Tourism Resource Center
Michigan State University
172 Natural Resources Bldg.
East Lansing, MI 48824**

**Phone: 517-353-0793
tourismplan.msu.edu**

27