

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN



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on behalf of the

2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan
Promotion, Marketing and Communications
Implementation Committee

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Table of Contents

Preface	1
Acknowledgements	1
Introduction and Rationale	3
Bicycle Tourism Defined	5
Types of Bicycle Tourist	6
Benefits of Bicycle Tourism	7
Bicycle Tourism Benefits From	8
The April 16 and October 24 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forums	9
Objective One: Partnerships and Strategic Alliances	12
Objective Two: Comprehensive Online Portal	14
Objective Three: Educational Initiatives	18
Appendix One. April 16 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum Agenda	21
Appendix Two. Input from April 16 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum	22
Appendix Three. October 24 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum Agenda	25
Appendix Four. Statewide Bicycle Groups in Michigan	26
Appendix Five. Major Michigan Bicycle Events	27
Appendix Six. Bicycle Tourism Resources	28

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Preface

The Promotion, Marketing and Communications Implementation Committee of the 2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan is pleased to present Michigan's first ever bicycle tourism marketing plan. With the recent passage of legislation enabling the designation of Pure Michigan Trails and Trail Towns, the naming of the Iron Belle (formerly the Governor's Showcase) Trail, the continued adoption of complete streets policies in communities across the state, and the publication of the Department of Transportation's *Community and Economic Benefits of Bicycling in Michigan* report, this is an exciting time for bicycling and bicycle tourism in Michigan. Michigan is blessed with a wide variety of high quality bicycling resources; the ultimate goal of this plan is to capitalize on those resources to even further increase and improve bicycle tourism opportunities. We therefore hope that this document and the process via which it was developed will contribute to the continued growth and increasing prominence of bicycle tourism throughout the state. Moreover, we hope that other niche activities will use this piece and the accompanying planning process template to develop their own marketing plan documents.

The 2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan Promotion, Marketing and Communications Implementation Committee

Co-Chairs

- Roger Curtis, President, Michigan International Speedway, and Chair, Michigan Travel Commission
- Barry Owens, General Manager, Treetops Resort

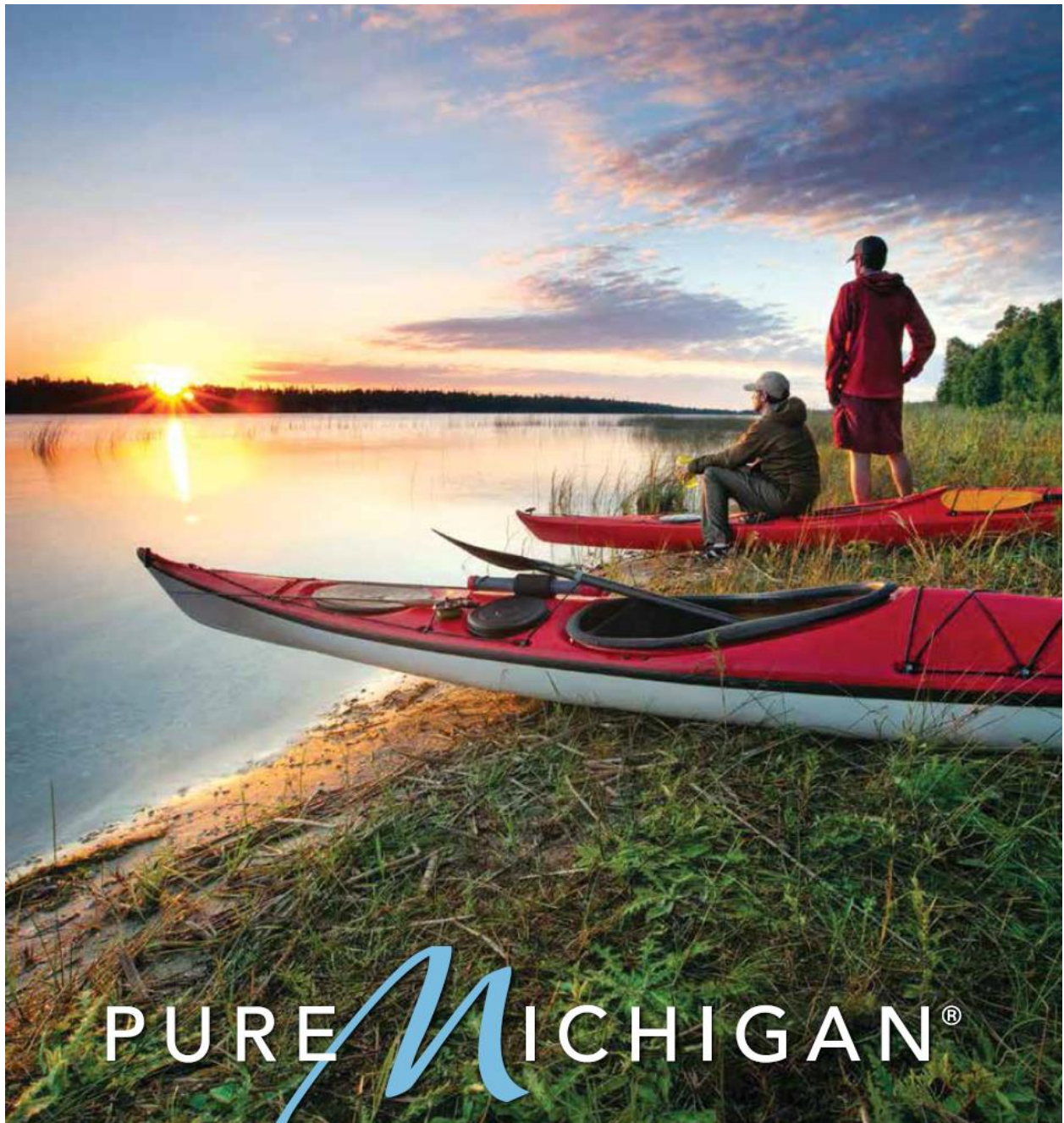
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- Camille Jourden-Mark, Vice President and General Manager, Michigan's Adventure, and Member, Michigan Travel Commission
- Stefanie Kulpe, Owner, Michigan Travels
- Sally Laukitis, Executive Director, Holland Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Member, Michigan Travel Commission
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- Jennifer Zieger, General Manager, Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Detroit Livonia and Area Manager, Hotel Investment Services, Inc.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who participated in one or both Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forums or otherwise contributed to the preparation of this document. Thank you also to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and to Treetops Resort for hosting forums.

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a plan FOR THE INDUSTRY BY THE INDUSTRY

2012–2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan

Prepared by Dr. Sarah Nicholls, Michigan State University

For more information about the MTSP: <http://tourismplan.anr.msu.edu/>

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Introduction and Rationale

The vision of Michigan's tourism industry – as identified in the 2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan (MTSP) – is that Michigan be recognized as one of America's favorite four seasons travel experiences. To help achieve that vision, the industry has set itself eight goals, each of which is associated with a series of at least two more specific objectives. The goals relate to the eight themes identified as most critical to the industry's continued expansion and enhancement and are as follows:

- **Collaboration, Cooperation and Partnerships:** Foster a culture of public-private collaboration, cooperation, and partnerships – across the state and beyond – to continue to unify the tourism industry and help grow Michigan's economy.
- **Funding:** Secure adequate and stable funding for all strategic plan initiatives.
- **Product Development:** Enhance infrastructure to support the delivery of a world class Pure Michigan travel experience.
- **Promotion, Marketing and Communications:** Strengthen and grow the Pure Michigan brand through effective mediums at the regional, national and international levels to attract first-time and repeat visitors.
- **Public Policy and Government Support:** Empower the industry to encourage policy-makers at all levels to support the travel industry.
- **Research and Technical Assistance:** Establish a central, easily accessible and inclusive information system to capture and share timely, relevant and reliable industry research.
- **Resources and Environment:** Be internationally recognized for our stewardship of – and rich opportunities to experience – our natural, cultural, and heritage resources.
- **Service Excellence:** Foster a culture of service excellence that allows us to deliver on the Pure Michigan promise.

To assist with the implementation of these eight goals, a committee of industry volunteers has been established to address each topic. Within the area of Promotion, Marketing and Communications (PMC), the committee has recognized the potential role of niche activities in the expansion and diversification of visitation and in the strengthening and growth of the Pure Michigan brand.

In the fall of 2013, in an attempt to better understand the existing and emerging niche markets throughout the state, the PMC committee commissioned a survey of 60 of the state's convention and visitors bureau (CVBs). Two questions were asked:

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- i. Please identify the 5-10 niche activities that have historically been most popular with visitors to your area, or for which your area has traditionally been best known;
- ii. Please identify the 5-10 niche activities that are currently emerging most rapidly in your area, or that your visitors are increasingly inquiring about. These might be activities that you already offer, but that receive relatively little use at present compared to the niches you listed in the previous question, or those activities that you are considering focusing on as a result of increasing popularity and demand.

Fifty responses were received; the most commonly mentioned activities are listed below.

CURRENT NICHES

Activity	n	%
Festivals/Events	19	38
Canoeing/Kayaking	17	34
Fishing	17	34
Hiking	14	28
Snowmobiling	14	28
Museums	13	26
Hunting	12	24
Shopping	12	24
Shows/Theater	11	22
Beaches	11	22
(Mountain) Biking	11	22

EMERGING NICHES

Activity	n	%
(Mountain) biking	24	48
Breweries	13	26
Dining	12	24
Canoeing/Kayaking	11	22

Given the appearance of (mountain) biking on both lists, and this activity's clear lead on the list of the most rapidly emerging niches, the PMC committee chose bicycle tourism as its first target activity. This document and the process used to develop it is intended to serve both as a tool for the bicycle tourism sector, and as a model for other niche activities to replicate.

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Bicycle Tourism Defined

Bicycling and bicycle tourism are multi-faceted activities. Bicycle trips can be:

- On- or off-road, the latter of which can involve a variety of trail surfaces and types;
- Linear or looped;
- Day trips or overnights;
- Competitive or recreational;
- Serious or casual;
- Individual or group;
- Independent or organized;
- The primary reason for the trip or an unplanned/secondary add-on activity.

This variety of ride(r) types presents both challenges and opportunities. The existence of multiple rider types – particularly when combined with a lack of good data about their relative prevalence – translates into sometimes widely varying preferences, needs and expectations regarding bicycling and other facilities. Conversely, the existence of these multiple rider types offers the potential for Michigan to appeal to a wider variety of visitors by actively marketing to the full spectrum of bicyclists. As such, this plan is broad in its attempt to encompass as wide a variety of bicycle tourism opportunities as possible.



Photo Credits: Traverse City Tourism

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Types of Bicycle Tourist

There are many ways to differentiate between different types of bicycle tourist. The three types often referenced in Michigan (per the Adventure Cycling Association) are shoestring, economy and comfort:

- The Shoestring Cyclist: is younger, rides 75-100 miles per day, spends no more than \$30 per day, prefers low-cost lodging options (e.g., camping), and spends the majority of his/her budget on food;
- The Economy Cyclist: can be any age, rides 50-90 miles per day, spends about \$50 per day, uses a variety of lodging options depending on weather and locale;
- The Comfort Cyclist: tends to be older (50-64), to be highly educated, have a high discretionary income, rides less than 50 miles per day, spends \$100 or more per day, prefers motels, hotels and B&Bs over camping, prioritizes historic preservation, unique sense of place and great customer service, and may extend a trip to visit area attractions and shopping.

Further analysis of Michigan bicycle tourists using valid and reliable survey techniques is desirable in order to better segment and then market to these visitors.



Photo Credit: Traverse City Tourism

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Benefits of Bicycle Tourism

There are many benefits of bicycle tourism, relating not only to economic impact but also to the environment, society/culture and health. The following listing is drawn from the variety of resources noted in Appendix Six.

- Bicycling – for leisure purposes as well as a means of transportation – is seeing a resurgence in popularity, i.e., bicycle tourism is a growing niche.
- The largest outbound bicycle tourism markets in Europe are Germany and the UK; these are also the two largest sources of inbound overseas international visitors to Michigan.
- Bicycle-based tourism appeals to travellers with an interest in reducing their environmental footprint.
- Bicycle-based tourism appeals to travellers with an interest in increasing their levels of physical activity and fitness/health.
- Bicycle-based tourism appeals to travellers looking to get off the beaten path and who seek to enjoy a more authentic experience that involves interaction with local people and immersion in the local environment.
- Bicycle-based tourism offers opportunities for tourism growth in smaller towns and more peripheral/rural regions that might not be easily accessible to or favored by auto-based travellers.
- Bicycle-based tourism offers opportunities for the development of rental and support services along trails and routes, e.g., lodging options, food and beverage outlets, bike repair shops. These facilities generate new income and create new jobs.
- Bicycle-based tourism offers opportunities for theming and for partnering with related activities or attractions along a route, e.g., wineries, craft breweries.
- Some studies have shown that bicycle tourists tend to have higher household incomes, to stay longer, to spend more and to have a higher propensity to make a return visit to an area than the average (typically auto-based) visitor.
- Multiple studies throughout the US have shown that properties located adjacent or near to greenways and trails sell for higher prices, and sell more quickly, than other properties, thereby increasing the property tax base for the local community.

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Bicycle Tourism Benefits From

- Locations with diverse landscapes and terrain that can offer a variety of ride types, lengths and difficulty levels, especially when in picturesque (e.g., rural and coastal) settings.
- Widespread bicycle-friendliness, especially on roads and at food/beverage outlets and retail stores.



Photo Credit: Traverse City Tourism

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The April 16 and October 24 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forums

The first Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum was held April 16 2014 in Lansing with more than thirty MTSP implementation committee members, CVB representatives, bike event organizers, bike tour operators and bike shop owners in attendance (see Appendix One for the full agenda). Participants were introduced to the MTSP and to the PMC goal/objectives, and then engaged in three activities based around the following series of questions/prompts:

Activity One – Assets And Strengths: What are Michigan’s strengths as a bicycle tourism destination? What people/partnerships/places/brands/stores/events, etc. do we have in Michigan that are unique, that no other destination has or can offer, that have been recognized as ‘the best of’ in the region or the country or the world? Why would or should someone choose to come to Michigan to bicycle?

Activity Two – Who Does It Best? Which cities/states/countries do bicycle tourism best, are bicycle tourism leaders? Which cities/states/countries would we most like to be compared to, or to be considered even better than? What assets do these places have that make them great (people, agencies/organizations, partnerships, plans, etc.)?

Activity Three – How Do We Get There From Here? What do we need to do to improve Michigan’s bicycle tourism offerings? Who should be involved? Who or what is missing? Who could help (who else should have been here today)? What data or research do we need? What opportunities do you see for growth or improvement in Michigan? Who would we need to partner with to achieve this growth?

The full set of responses to each activity is summarised in Appendix Two. The most commonly cited responses are highlighted below:

Activity One – Assets and Strengths: A wide variety of assets and strengths were identified, many of which related to the natural characteristics of the state, the existence of complementary activities, and particular locations and events. Items mentioned by one-quarter or more of participants included:

- The weather/climate/existence of four seasons (47%);
- The Great Lakes and other water/rivers/streams (47%);
- The proliferation of craft breweries/beer across the state (44%);
- The number of different rides/events offered (41%);
- Mackinac Island (31%);
- The miles of trails available (including the most rail-trails of any state) (31%);
- The diversity of trail settings (28%);
- The diversity of trail types/terrains (25%);
- The number of quiet roads through country/agricultural areas (25%); and
- Michigan’s scenery (25%).

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Activity Two – Who Does It Best? By far the most commonly cited responses were the Netherlands (by 46% of participants), Oregon (31%) and Portland, OR (31%). Colorado, Minnesota and Moab, UT were each mentioned by 18% of participants. Travel Oregon's Ride Oregon website was frequently cited during the afternoon's discussions: <http://rideoregonride.com/>.

Activity Three – How Do We Get There From Here? Suggestions mentioned by more than one-fifth of participants were as follows:

- More/better collaboration/coordination (45%);
- A single/central website (41%);
- More/better promotion/advertising (31%);
- An economic impact study (21%) (*such a study, sponsored by MDOT, is in progress*);
- A signature ride/event for the state (21%);
- Packaging of bicycle routes/trails with destinations (21%).

Based on all of the input received at the April 16 forum, the PMC committee identified the following four objectives as most critical for the growth and enhancement of bicycle tourism throughout the state:

- i. Identification of partnerships and strategic alliances to help support, promote and educate the community about bicycling and associated amenities;
- ii. Creation of a comprehensive online portal to gather and display content/information;
- iii. Organization of content into consumable product that all riders – from novice to expert – can search and review at ease to help them access appropriate bicycling opportunities; and,
- iv. Development of initiatives to educate communities and the tourism industry about the importance of bicycling and bicycle tourism.

Items ii and iii were subsequently combined since item iii should be considered an essential characteristic of item ii. A preliminary set of tactics related to the three resulting objectives were identified and shared with April 16 participants and other interested parties.

The second Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum was held October 24 2014 in Gaylord. The event was attended by approximately thirty individuals and focused on expanding upon the preliminary set of tactics aforementioned (see Appendix Three for the full agenda). Specifically, attendees were asked:

- i. Related to Partnerships and Strategic Alliances: Who will/should do what? Which brands, beer companies, agencies/associations, shops, tour companies, and events should be targeted? What other types of organization should be targeted? Which destinations would be the best places to start on itineraries?

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- ii. Related to a Comprehensive Online Portal: What databases already exist? What fields/categories should be included in/added to the database? Using what terms should consumers be able to search? What sites or apps could we model the portal on? Who could/should host the portal (besides Travel Michigan)?
- iii. Related to Educational Initiatives: What other materials should be incorporated into the summary presentation? Who is willing to help develop the summary presentation? And who is willing to present it, and to whom? What other Michigan-based videos exist, or could be made?

The following three sections outline the objectives and associated tactics developed based on the input received at both the April 16 and October 24 forums.

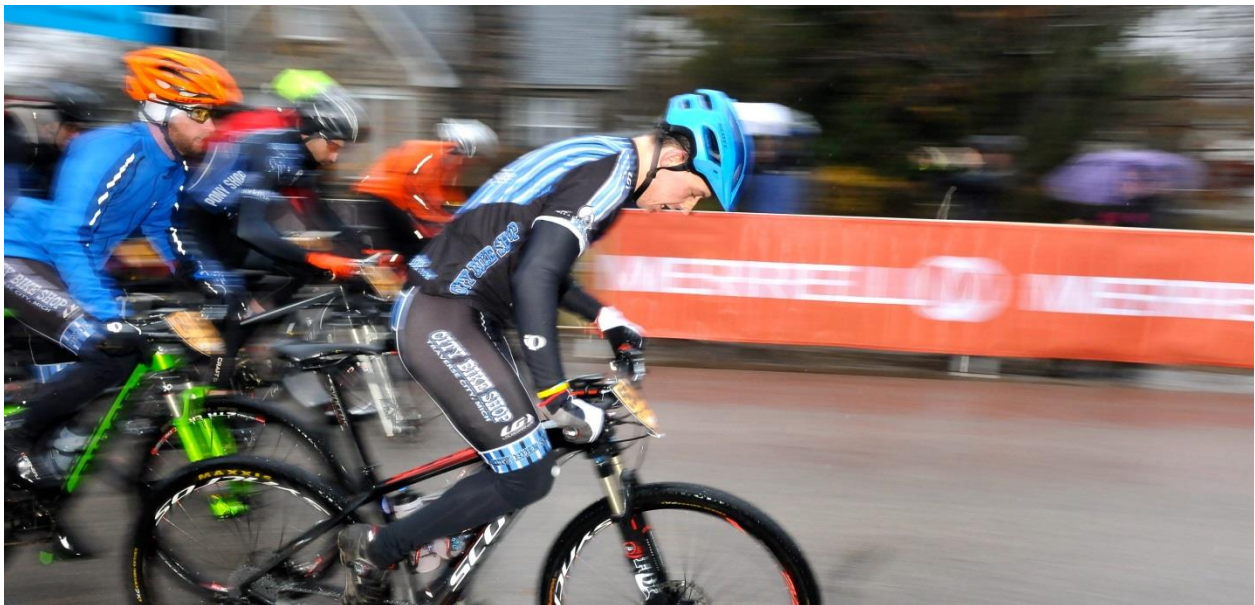


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Objective One: Partnerships and Strategic Alliances

Objective: Identification of partnerships and strategic alliances to help support, promote and educate the community about bicycling, bicycle tourism and associated amenities.

Potential Tactics:

Develop an outline of potential recognition and sponsorship plans for each of these groups: bicycle brands, craft beer companies and wineries, tourism/bicycling agencies/associations, bicycle shops, bicycle-based tour companies, and bicycling events. The plan should include multiple levels of recognition along with opportunities and ideas for involvement in bicycling promotion both at the state and the city/region level.

- Bicycle brands and accessories, e.g., Trek, Giant, Cervelo, Shinola: These organizations would be utilized primarily for sponsorships (cash or in-kind). Outreach should be led by the shop owners who have the largest volume of sales or those who have long-time relationships with brand sales representatives. The goal would be to have product or sponsorship dollars to utilize for future promotion.
- Craft beer companies, e.g., Bells, New Holland, Founders (for a fuller list of Michigan craft breweries and brewpubs go here: <http://www.mibeer.com/breweries-and-brewpubs>): These organizations would be utilized for sponsorships (cash or in-kind). They would also be leveraged for promotional assistance with their product or at their physical location. Outreach to these groups should ideally come from a bicycling/(bicycle) tourism representative who has experience working with these organizations. Possible tie-ins could include ride recognition and promotion on product labels or on-site at the brewpub. The same strategy could be applied to other groups, e.g., Michigan's wineries (<http://www.michiganwines.com/wineries-and-vineyards#sthash.f4KRbOFq.dpbs>). Other natural pairings (of bicycling and some other activity) should also be identified and exploited.
- Tourism/bicycling agencies/associations, e.g., Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Transportation, Travel Michigan, the League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB), Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance (MTGA), Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA), CVBs (see Appendix Four for a listing and description of state-level Michigan bicycle associations, see this site for a list of most of Michigan's CVBs: http://visitmichigan.org/member_info.html): These organizations would be primarily utilized for promotional support, though they may also help with cash sponsorships. Outreach should include working with the tourism organizations for opportunities that extend promotional efforts including via printed literature, visitor guides and web sites. Other opportunities could also include listings of rides, trails, routes, etc.

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

- Bicycle retail stores in/near high bicycle-use areas: These organizations would be utilized for sponsorship (cash or in-kind) and could also be leveraged for promotional assistance at their physical locations.
- Bicycle tour companies, e.g., Motor City Brew Tours, Bike Tour Vacations: These organizations would primarily be utilized for promotional support through the leveraging of their current databases and promotional reach.
- Bicycling events (see Appendix Five for a sample listing of Michigan bicycle events, the League of Michigan Bicyclists maintains a Michigan Ride Calendar at http://www.lmb.org/index.php?option=com_eventlist&view=eventlist&Itemid=22): These events would be primarily utilized for promotional support through leveraging of their current databases and promotional reach.

Identify the communities that are currently most bicycle tourism friendly, especially those with convenient and efficient inbound transportation linkages (e.g., Amtrak lines with bicycle racks, ferry ports), those on/near US Bicycle Routes 10, 20 and 35 (Route 10 is approximately 200 miles and connects St. Ignace to Iron Mountain; Route 20 runs east-west route for more than 300 miles between Marine City and Ludington; Route 35 runs for 500 miles from Indiana to Sault Ste. Marie, mostly along the Lake Michigan shoreline). Work with these communities' CVBs and bicycle (tourism) companies/groups to develop a series of sample itineraries catering to a variety of rider types. Host familiarization tours for media and other relevant groups to promote these itineraries. Identify and recruit any local notables who bicycle to assist with this promotion. Also encourage communities along the new Iron Belle Trail to fully embrace and integrate bicycles and bicycle tourists.



Image Credit: Adventure Cycling Association



Image Credit: Michigan Department of Transportation

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Objective Two: Comprehensive Online Portal

Primary Objective: Creation of a comprehensive online portal to gather and display content/information.

Potential Tactics:

Create or partner with a central depository for all bicycle-related content:

Travel Michigan is about to enter into the process of redeveloping its website (with a greater focus on activities) and the opportunity might exist to place considerably more, higher quality and better organized bicycle content on the new site; or, encourage a consortium of bicycle-related entities (e.g., LMB, MMBA and MTGA) to develop a stand-alone portal. In either case, start by determining which organization possesses the most complete database – or compile one new database from multiple existing ones. In the meantime, continue to exploit the many cost-free opportunities to partner with Travel Michigan, e.g., by posting events, trails, tours and shops on michigan.org (there is no cost associated with these postings). E.g., to add an event go to <http://www.michigan.org/add-event/>, similar links to add a property or a deal/package can be found in the bottom right corner of the main michigan.org site, under ‘Quick Links.’

Work with entities such as CVBs and event organizers to ensure that up-to-date content is consistently supplied to the main outlet/portal. For event organizers, always be sure to send information about upcoming events to the appropriate CVB(s) and to Travel Michigan.

Work with statewide entities such as the LMB, MMBA and MTGA to continue to gather accurate content in a timely manner.

Consider how to integrate/partner with existing resources such as the MTB Project (‘The next generation of mountain bike trail maps,’ <http://www.mtbproject.com/>) and National Geographic’s All Trails project <http://alltrails.com/>

Related Objective: Organization of content into consumable product that all riders – from novice to expert – can search and review at ease to help them access appropriate bicycling opportunities.

Potential Tactics:

Create an online directory that would be searchable by niche or interest – mountain biking, road cycling, trail riding, family rides, etc. Include the ability for consumers to search by level of expertise – novice, proficient, expert, etc.

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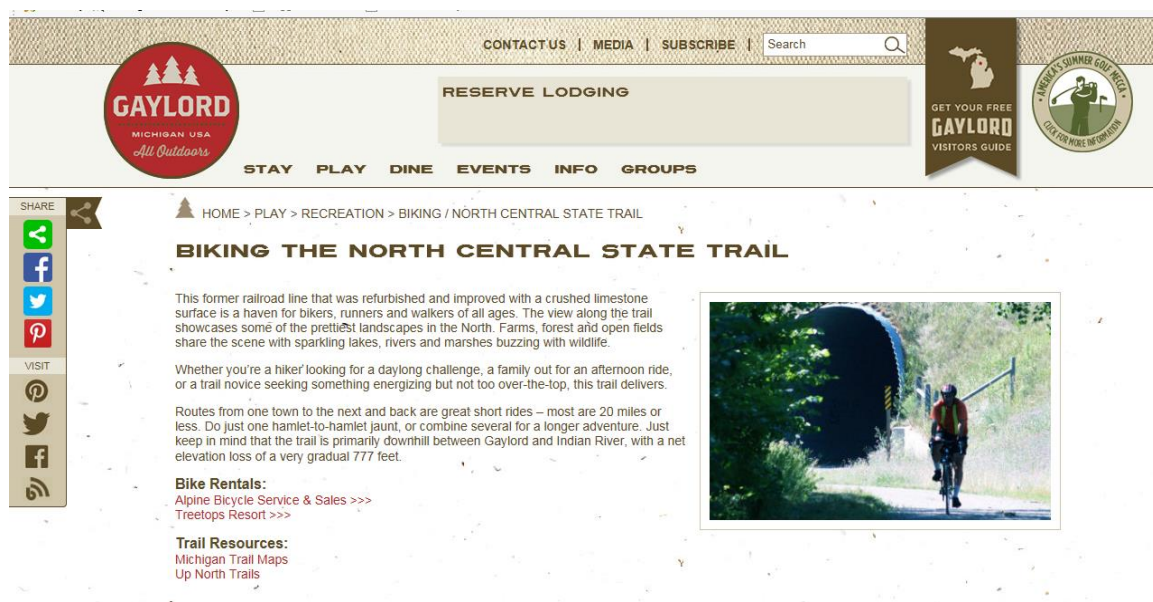
Identify other useful criteria via which to allow search, e.g., locations of trail heads and other entry/exit points, locations of parking areas, route/trail surface, amenities on/near route/trail, distance/time of ride, themes or nearby/complementary activities (breweries, wineries, etc.).

Map and GoPro trails and rides by region. Identify other critical activities/services to be identified in database/on map, e.g., lodging options (by type and cost), bicycle repair shops, etc. Look to the MDNR's forthcoming trails database, MDOT and the regional Councils of Governments as sources of GIS layers.

Work with CVBs to develop a series of sample itineraries catering to a variety of rider types (by age, group size and composition, level of difficulty, length of stay (day trip and overnight), etc.).

Sample Itineraries:

Gaylord Area Convention & Tourism Bureau maintains a 'Biking' page that includes information about the North Central State Trail, three 'Fun Half-Day Excursions' and three 'Paved Bicycle Tours' <http://www.gaylordmichigan.net/biking-94/>



Muskegon County CVB maintains a 'Biking & Hiking in Muskegon County' page (<http://www.visitmuskegon.org/biking-and-hiking>) that includes information about the Lakeshore, Musketawa and Hart-Montague Trails as well as a link to a 'Biking and Breweries' itinerary that highlights attractions and breweries along the Lakeshore Trail: http://www.visitmuskegon.org/files/s5MMg3K1NjgFaMj4/d5M6ElbPjfl6yvdp/CVB_bikes_NBrewsItinerary2014.pdf

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Biking and Breweries

This itinerary highlights attractions and breweries along the Lakeshore Trail, a 12-mile, paved trail with sections running on or along the road from Pere Marquette Park and Beach to the Muskegon Lake Nature Preserve, with views of Lake Muskegon, Muskegon Lake, dunes, parks and the city of Muskegon. Muskegon County is also home to three other trails, the Musketawa Trail, the Hart-Montague Trail and the Fred Meijer Berry Junction Trail. Bike rentals are available at the Muskegon CVB through BeanBox Bike Rental or at CityHub Cyclery.

- With two new craft breweries downtown and one in Whitehall, Muskegon County is rapidly becoming a craft brew lover's paradise! First, try **Pigeon Hill Brewing Company** located in the old Noble Building in Muskegon's downtown historic district. They combine beer drinking and brewing with a passion for the community. The brand plays off the famed local sand dune, Pigeon Hill, which was the largest sand dune on the Lake Michigan shoreline before it was mined away. Their dream is to bring back the magic of the old Muskegon Brewing Co., which opened in 1876 on Muskegon Lake. It produced what some considered the finest beers in the Midwest until Prohibition ended the fun. www.pigeonhillbrew.com
- Enjoy a wonderful lunch at one of our popular eateries like the all new **Smash Wine Bar & Bistro!** This farm-to-table,

small-plate restaurant is located on the lower level of the beautiful Frauenthal Theater. Smash offers over 40 glass pours for those still on the hunt for the wine that rocks their world. They also feature Michigan brewed beers, a full selection of cocktails, and great specialty martinis! www.smashwinebar.com

- Visit the new **Unruly Brewing Company!** Located in the Russell Block Market, Unruly is the first brewery to brew beer in Muskegon since 1957. They offer a wide range of craft beer styles as well as an outdoor beer garden, live music and free brewery tours anytime! www.unrulybrewing.com
- Be sure to check out Muskegon County's newest brewery, **Fetch Brewing Company!** This 6,000 sq. ft. space has a full bar, two levels of table space, and a vault which

has been transformed into a seating area which owner, Dan Hain, refers to as the "Penny Lounge," as its floor is made entirely of pennies. They feature seven beers ranging from 3.5 to 6 percent. www.fetchbrewing.com

- Have dinner at **Dockers Fish House & Lounge!** From Sweet Maine Lobster Fondue to their Signature Perch Sliders, their delicious menu is rivaled only by the breathtaking views. Dockers is located near Pere Marquette Beach, tucked into the Harbor Town Marina, overlooking Muskegon Lake. They have an indoor bar and main dining area surrounded by floor-to-ceiling windows, along with three amazing outdoor patio areas. Everybody's favorite is the famous Tiki Bar where you can enjoy great craft beers and live, local music every Saturday and Sunday. www.dockersfishhouse.com

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN



Biking and Breweries

As you enjoy exploring the craft brewing scene in Muskegon, be sure to check out all of the great downtown attractions along and near the Lakeshore Trail!

- The **USS Silversides Submarine Museum** is a wonderful opportunity to experience what it was really like to sail a sub trolling the dangerous waters of the South Pacific 60-plus years ago. Walk the deck topside as well as the major internal compartments below deck. Tour passes also include access to the Coast Guard Cutter McLane, a rare prohibition era vessel from 1927 and the Naval Museum. www.silversidesmuseum.org

- The **Hackley & Hume Historic Site** preserves the homes of Muskegon's most famous lumber baron, Charles H. Hackley, and his business partner, Thomas Hume. Varied rooflines, elaborate chimneys, and the variety of materials used by the builders make the buildings some of the best examples of Queen Anne residential style architecture in the country! www.lakeshoremuseum.org

- Visit the **USS LST 393 Veterans Museum** and "walk where heroes have walked!"

The USS LST 393 earned three battle stars in World War II and is one of only two Landing Ship Tanks that remain in existence in the United States. Tour a nationally renowned veterans' museum with artifacts and displays honoring those who served America and fought for the freedoms we enjoy today. www.lst393.org

- The **Lakeshore Museum Center** preserves and interprets through exhibits, education, and programs the natural and cultural history of Muskegon County. www.lakeshoremuseum.org

- From 1941 until 1970, the **Milwaukee Clipper** carried untold thousands of passengers and automobiles between Muskegon and Milwaukee! By 1983, she was listed on the National Register of Historic Sites, and in May 1989, she was designated a National Historic Landmark. The Great Lakes Clipper Preservation Association has been formed to preserve

"The Queen of the Great Lakes" and she's now open for tours!
www.milwaukeeclipper.com

- The **Muskegon Museum of Art** is one of the most highly respected art museums in the Midwest and offers a full schedule of permanent collection displays, traveling exhibits and a museum gift shop. www.muskegonartmuseum.org

- The **Muskegon Heritage Museum** is dedicated to the preservation of Muskegon's industrial heritage. Exhibits include an operating antique machine shop, a working Corlis Valve Steam Engine, a fully functional 100-year-old printing press, photos and information about Muskegon's heritage homes, historic buildings and more! www.muskegonheritage.org

Call today and create a customized itinerary for your group's preferences.

Muskegon County Convention & Visitors Bureau 1-800-250-9283 | Muskegon, Michigan | www.visitmuskegon.org

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Objective Three: Educational Initiatives

Objective: Development of initiatives to educate communities and the tourism industry about the importance of bicycling and bicycle tourism, and the opportunities to participate.

Potential Tactics:

Develop a presentation that summarises this document, the *Community and Economic Benefits of Bicycling in Michigan* report and other relevant publications (see Appendix Six for a list of bicycle tourism resources). Other topics to include: (i) how to identify bicycle tourism assets; (ii) bicycle tourist segmentation; and (iii) how to communicate with bicyclists. Share with state and regional bicycling associations and bicycle (tourism) companies, shops, etc. and encourage them to present this to their local CVB, with the ultimate goal of establishing a bicycle tourism advocacy/advisory group/team in each area. This group should include CVB and local government representation (e.g., planning, transportation, parks/trails) in addition to bicycling-related entities.

A Sample Success Story: Following October's Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum in Gaylord, the Holland CVB took MDOT's Case Study Research of Holland – Community & Economic Benefits of Bicycling – seriously. Local bike shop owner Tim Meyer (Rock 'n' Road Cycle) reached out to area bike shops, commuters, and leisure riders, inviting them to a meeting to discuss the Case Study findings. (The study noted that while Holland 'has a strong bicycling community, there is not an organized presence working to promote and encourage bicycling... to improve infrastructure or programming.') Five months later, Holland's first "cycling advocacy" group, Pedal Holland, was formed. 'The goal of the group is to make the greater Holland area safer for all types of cycling, integrating bicycling into the infrastructure and soul of the community.' Pedal Holland is following the League of American Bicyclists Building Blocks of the Bicycle Friendly Community. They are working with the City of Holland to draft a new bike plan, and also providing expertise to the Holland CVB to develop visitor friendly bike maps that appeal to the leisure cyclist wanting to explore the greater Holland area.

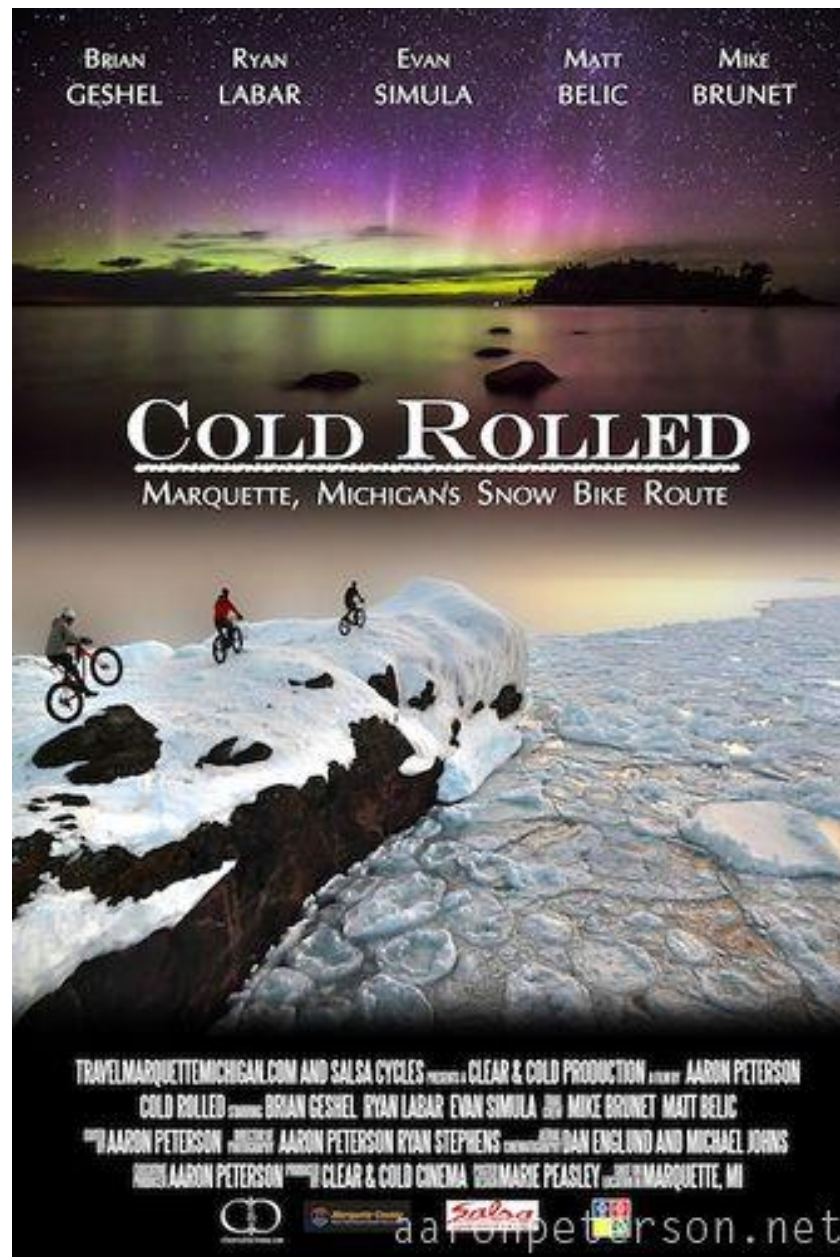
Create grass roots promotions within communities – starting with those that have the most significant resources to support bicycling – and develop programs to convince beginner/novice riders of the benefits of cycling. Identify creative opportunities for partnering, e.g., with local hospitals or insurance companies that are interested in showcasing the health and economic benefits of physical activity.

Develop a series of YouTube videos to inform cyclists of riding opportunities in specific areas and to highlight (inter)nationally acclaimed opportunities. Partner with area CVBs, national brands, local colleges and universities with parks/recreation/tourism and media/video classes/programs, etc. E.g., Trek and Andrew Shandro at the new Silver Level International Mountain Bicycling Association Ride Center ® in Copper Harbor, Michigan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rN9btRzqsvA> and Cold Rolled: Marquette Michigan's

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Snow Bike Route ('an action documentary from Clear & Cold Cinema, Salsa Cycles and TravelMarquetteMichigan.com that explores the history and progression of winter cycling culture in the adventure-loving Lake Superior harbor town of Marquette, Michigan'): <http://vimeo.com/80375092>

Encourage everyone interested in the bicycle tourism sector to join and make active use of the Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum on LinkedIn – this site could serve as the central repository for all relevant news, meetings and conferences, etc.



MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN



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MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Appendix One. April 16 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum Agenda

2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum Lansing, 1-5pm, April 16, 2014

Agenda

1. Welcome and Why We Are Here – Sarah Nicholls, Roger Curtis and Barry Owens
 - i. Overview of the 2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan
 - ii. Overview of the Promotion, Marketing & Communications Goal / Objectives
 - iii. Results of CVB Niche Survey
2. Introductions – All
3. Overview of Travel Michigan – Dave Lorenz
4. Bicycle Tourism in Michigan – Assets / Strengths – Activity – All
5. Bicycle Tourism beyond Michigan – Who / Where Does it Best? – Activity – All
6. Growing / Improving Bicycle Tourism in Michigan – Activity – All
7. Next Steps – Sarah Nicholls, Roger Curtis and Barry Owens

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Appendix Two. Input from April 16 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum

Activity 1 – Michigan’s Assets and Strengths (n = 32)

What are Michigan’s strengths as a bicycle tourism destination? What people/partnerships/places/brands/stores/events, etc. do we have in Michigan that are unique, that no other destination has or can offer, that have been recognized as ‘the best of’ in the region or the country or the world? Why would or should someone choose to come to Michigan to bicycle?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Weather/climate/four seasons	15	46.9%
Great Lakes/water/rivers/streams	15	46.9%
Craft breweries/beer	14	43.7%
Number of different rides/events	13	40.6%
Mackinac Island	10	31.3%
Miles of trails (#1 for rail-trails)	10	31.3%
Diversity of trail settings	9	28.1%
Diversity of trail types/terrains	8	25.0%
Quiet country roads, agricultural areas	8	25.0%
Scenery	8	25.0%
Copper Harbor, Keweenaw	6	18.7%
Number/strength of bike clubs/groups	6	18.7%
DALMAC	5	15.6%
Wineries	5	15.6%
Diversity of trails/tours	4	12.5%
Federal lands, e.g., National Lakeshores	4	12.5%
Pure Michigan brand/campaign	4	12.5%
Extent of state lands (parks, forests, etc.)	4	12.5%
Beaches	3	9.4%
Farmers’ markets	3	9.4%
Iceman Challenge	3	9.4%
Quality of maps	3	9.4%
US bike routes	3	9.4%
PALM Bike Tour	2	6.3%
Quality of MDOT maps	2	6.3%
Marquette	2	6.3%
MDNR	2	6.3%

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Activity 2 – Who Does it Best? (countries, states, cities and events) (n = 28)

Which cities/states/countries do bicycle tourism best, are bicycle tourism leaders? Which cities/states/countries would we most like to be compared to, or to be considered even better than? What assets do these places have that make them great (people, agencies/organizations, partnerships, plans, etc.)?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Netherlands	13	46.4%
Oregon	10	31.2%
Portland, OR	10	31.2%
Colorado	5	17.8%
Minnesota	5	17.8%
Moab, UT	5	17.8%
RAGBRAI, IA	5	17.8%
Chicago, IL	4	14.2%
Minneapolis, MN	4	14.2%
New York, NY	4	14.2%
Park City, UT	4	14.2%
Boulder, CO	3	10.7%
Germany	3	10.7%
Washington	3	10.7%
Washington, DC	3	10.7%
Seattle, WA	3	10.7%
Tour De France	3	10.7%
Vermont	3	10.7%
Belgium	2	7.2%
British Columbia	2	7.2%
Denmark	2	7.2%
Denver, CO	2	7.2%
Fort Collins, CO	2	7.2%
France	2	7.2%
Italy	2	7.2%
Madison, WI	2	7.2%
Napa Valley, CA	2	7.2%
Wisconsin	2	7.2%

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Activity 3 – How Do We Get There From Here? What is Needed? (n = 29)

What do we need to do to improve Michigan’s bicycle tourism offerings? Who should be involved? Who or what is missing? Who could help (who else should have been here today)? What data or research do we need? What opportunities do you see for growth or improvement in Michigan? Who would we need to partner with to achieve this growth?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
More/better collaboration/coordination	13	44.8
A single/central website	12	41.4
More/better promotion/advertising	9	31.0
An economic impact study	6	20.7
A signature ride/event for the state	6	20.7
Packaging of trails with destinations	6	20.7
More funding	5	17.2
More/better maps	4	13.8
More bike lanes	4	13.8
More education of/support from communities	4	13.8
Better roads	3	10.3
More/better trail connections	3	10.3
More bike share programs	3	10.3
More data/research on bicyclists	3	10.3
More/better trail maintenance	2	6.9
More/better trail signage	2	6.9
More education of other road/trail users	2	6.9

Activity 3 – How Do We Get There From Here? Who is Missing (people and places) (n = 29)

Response	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
City officials	3	10.3
Marquette	2	6.9
South Haven	2	6.9
Bicycle manufacturers	1	3.4
Bicycle retailers	1	3.4
County road officials	1	3.4
Media	1	3.4
Michigan Heritage Leadership Council	1	3.4
Michigan Municipal League	1	3.4
Traverse City	1	3.4

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Appendix Three. April 16 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum Agenda

2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum Birch North Room, Treetops Resort, Gaylord 1-5pm, October 24, 2014

Agenda

1. Welcome to the Forum and to Treetops – Sarah Nicholls and Barry Owens
2. Introductions – All
3. Overview of the 2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan and the Promotion, Marketing & Communications Goal / Objectives – Sarah Nicholls
4. Recap of April 16 Michigan Bicycle Tourism Forum – Sarah Nicholls
5. Summary of *Community and Economic Benefits of Bicycling in Michigan* Report – Josh DeBruyn
6. Presentation / Discussion of *DRAFT* Michigan Bicycle Tourism Marketing Plan – Barry Owens and Sarah Nicholls

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Appendix Four. Statewide Bicycle Groups in Michigan

League of Michigan Bicyclists: <http://www.lmb.org/>

The mission of the League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB) is to promote bicycling and the safety of bicyclists on the roadways of Michigan.

LMB is a non-profit, tax-exempt statewide membership organization working to improve conditions for bicycling in Michigan. LMB supports many programs and projects and cooperates with state and local agencies and other like-minded groups toward this goal.

Michigan Mountain Biking Association: <http://mmba.org/>

The Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA) is a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit corporation comprised of International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) chapters located throughout Michigan. Each chapter elects a representative to sit on the MMBA Board of Directors to represent their interests in state advocacy efforts.

The mission of the MMBA is to promote responsible mountain biking and to work toward the goals of common land access and natural resource protection through interaction with policy makers, the cycling industry, race promoters, mountain bikers and other trail users.

We represent all levels of riders, from beginners to world champion racers. Our common passion for trail riding and stewardship brings us together as a collective voice.

Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance: <http://www.michigantrails.org/>

Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance is a non-profit organization that shall foster and facilitate the creation of an interconnected statewide system of trails and greenways for recreation, health, transportation, economic development and environmental/cultural preservation purposes.

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Appendix Five. Major Michigan Bicycle Events

DALMAC (Dick Allen Lansing to MACKinaw) Bike Ride (<http://dalmac.org/>): A four- or five-day ride from the MSU campus to and over the Mackinac Bridge, ending in St Ignace (four-/five-day routes) or Sault Ste. Marie (five day-UP route). Held every Labor Day weekend. Founded by State Senator Dick Allen, “who wanted to prove that bicycles could peacefully coexist with car-loving Michigan’s autos on our scenic roads.” Entry fee = \$230 for five-day routes, \$200 for four-day route. Accommodations = camping. All-volunteer event organized and sponsored by the Tri-County Bicycle Association of Lansing.

PALM (Pedal Across Lower Michigan) Bicycle Tour (<http://www.palmbiketour.org/>): Begins on Lake Michigan and heads east along a different route each year, typically on paved, lesser used roads and generally avoiding major urban areas. Distance = 250-300 miles over six days. Limited to 700 riders. Entry fee = \$120. Accommodations = school grounds. Started in 1982. Organized by volunteers.

Michigander Bike Tour (<http://michigantrails.org/michigander-bicycle-tour/>): Two-, six- and seven-day riding options for cyclists of all ages and abilities along rail trails and low-traffic back roads. One of Bicycling Magazine's "Top 10 Multi-Day Rides in America." Organized by Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance.

Wish-A-Mile Bicycle Tour (<http://michigan.wish.org/news-and-events/signature-events/wish-a-mile-bicycle-tour>): The largest fundraising event for Make-A-Wish Michigan. Two route options: a three-day, 300 mile route and a one-day 50-mile option. The 27th Annual Wish-A-Mile Bicycle Tour raised more than \$2 million to help grant wishes of Michigan children. Nearly 1,200 supporters cycled or supported the event. Organized by Make-A-Wish Michigan.

Bell's Beer Iceman Cometh Challenge (<http://iceman.com/>): A 29 mile point-to-point mountain bike race from Kalkaska to Traverse City, traditionally held on the first Saturday of November (unless the first Saturday of November is the 1st). The 25th annual Iceman will be held Saturday, November 8, 2014; registration closed/filled within 3.5 hours of opening on February 28th. Entry fee = \$75. Limited to 3,700 riders. Over \$52,000 in cash prizes and \$10,000 in merchandise prizes will be awarded.

MICHIGAN BICYCLE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Appendix Six. Bicycle Tourism Resources

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