



Tourism Report

NE RPI GRANT

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Using the Pure Michigan 2012 – 2017 Tourism Strategic Plan we will follow and implement our version of “THE VISION” portion of the plan.

I. Collaboration, cooperation and partnerships.

After several meetings with partners from NE Michigan the need to collaborate and create partnerships is foremost. We will need to form a group of the tourism stakeholders, including tourism based businesses, from each of the 11 counties. Regularly scheduled meetings would be set by this newly formed committee. As with the first Goal of “The Vision” this will unify the NE Michigan “tourism industry and help grow” our economy. It will strengthen and grow this partnership. “Support and revitalize” the NE region tourism development organizations.

II. Service excellence.

As per “The Vision ...tourism industry has (have) only one opportunity to make a positive first impression on its guests.” Before we can invite guests into our NE region we must look at how we present ourselves. There is a need in our region to clean up, spruce up our outward appearance that establishes that “first impression” a guest/visitor has of us. We must also “foster a culture of service excellence.” The Committee will look at ways to assist the region in hospitality/service training. Assistance with info regarding “Placemaking”; streetscapes and addressing issues with blight and obsolete buildings.

III. Product Development.

Most of the 11 counties have tourism websites. NEMCOG has two that cover all or most of the counties – US 23 HERITAGE ROUTE and UP NORTH TRAILS. We need to work together to link all the websites and promote them as accessible sites for guests/visitors to plan vacations here as well as to gain knowledge about our area. This will showcase an increased awareness of the diversity of the region, our events, products and services.

Region 3 Prosperity Initiative

Tourism

Adapting the State's Pure Michigan "2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan" for Northeast Michigan Region 3

Goal 1: Service Excellence (14 points)

- Objective 1: Define "service excellence" and establish criteria to measure it.
- Objective 2: Create a mystery shopper program for the region to observe and report the level of service being experienced by the guest to a community or business.
- Objective 3: Adapt the best of the best existing customer service training materials for widespread use with employees, potential employees (high school students), and anyone else who has contact with visitors/tourists. Possibly a certificate program that is valued as a competitive advantage for job seekers.

Goal 2: Promotion, Marketing, and Communications (13 points)

- Objective 1: Increase state and national awareness of Northeast Michigan tourism opportunities using existing outlets in the region and possibly through Pure Michigan advertisements and website.
- Objective 2: Utilize the regional marketing display created by the CDC
- Objective 3: Encourage visitors and resorters to become permanent residents and possibly start or relocate their company to Northeast Michigan.

Goal 3: Collaboration, cooperation, and partnerships (10 Points)

- Objective 1: Foster a culture of public-private collaboration across the region and beyond to continue to unify the tourism industry and help grow Michigan's economy.
- Objective 2: Establish a regional tourism development organization led by the CVBs to create and implement an expanded and detailed regional tourism plan.

Goal 4: Resources and Environment (10 points)

- Objective 1: Support and expand efforts to inventory and assess the natural, cultural, and heritage resources critical to growing Northeast Michigan's tourism industry.
- Objective 2: Implement stewardship principles so that we don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg.

Goal 5: Product Development (9 points)

- Objective 1: Assist tourism businesses by merging the Discover Northeast Michigan web page into the RPI web site. Requires on-going updates and maintenance.
- Objective 2: Showcase the region's diverse, extensive, and high quality network of motorized, Non-motorized, and water-based routes and trails through Up North Trails.