

Michigan State University

School of Planning, Design, and Construction
Urban Planning Practicum

Tourism Development Strategy

For Idlewild, Michigan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

About Practicum

Practicum is a capstone course taught by the Michigan State University Urban and Regional Planning program. Through this course, undergraduate and graduate students gain practical planning experience by collaborating with community partners that are in need of planning assistance. It is the responsibility of the student team, the client and the community to determine a realistic scope of study for the project that meets the community's planning needs.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project is to help the historic community of Idlewild, Michigan achieve community and economic prosperity by researching and creating a tourism development strategy that leverages Idlewild's cultural and natural assets to attract year-round visitors.

Client and Project Partners

This report was prepared for the Idlewild Community Development Corporation (ICDC). The client contact was Hubert Brandon, a consultant for ICDC. Several other partners the project and provided information and assistance as needed; the project partners and their affiliations are summarized below.

Client Contact and Project Partners		
Name	Position	Organization
Hubert Brandon	Consultant and Client Contact	ICDC
Jim Marbury	Treasurer	ICDC
Pat Williams	Founder/ Small business owner	ICDC
John Meeks	President/ former Small Business owner/ Current Resident	Idlewild African American Chamber of Commerce (IAACC)
Ron Griffin	Township Supervisor	Yates Township
Virginia Moye- Carr	Small Business owner/ Current Resident	Paradise Lake Motel
Betty Boone	Director, Cultural Economic Development	Michigan State Housing Development Authority

Scope of Work

The scope of work for this project consisted of the following tasks:

Overview of Idlewild. This task involved gathering and analyzing information on Idlewild's background and physical characteristics. To begin this task, the team conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis to provide a general indication of the current issues facing Idlewild; the data for this analysis were gathered through two focus groups with Idlewild residents, public officials, nonprofits, and business owners. Next, using background documents from the client, Internet and library research, and geographic information systems (GIS) data from Lake County, the team assembled a brief history of Idlewild and an analysis of Idlewild's geography, topography, water features, land ownership, land cover, zoning, utilities, and key sites with potential for tourist-oriented development.

Socioeconomic Profile. The socioeconomic profile assessed the current condition and health of the economy and social environment of Yates Township and Lake County. Using data sets from the U.S. Census and American Community Survey, the team analyzed trends in Yates Township and Lake County over the two decades from 1990 to 2010, using comparison data from the State of Michigan as a frame of reference.

Tourism Asset Study. To help identify potential tourism-industry niches for Idlewild, the tourism asset study identified tourist attractions and tourism amenities that were currently available in Lake County and the surrounding region. The research consisted of (a) analysis of county-level business data by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes, (b) maps generated from Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) industry data; and (c) a qualitative assessment of the most important tourism assets as indicated by interviewees and by Internet research of the region.

Tourism Market Study. The tourism market study was designed to help the client agency understand their potential markets and market demographics regionally, statewide, and nationally. The research consisted of analysis of recent Michigan visitor profiles developed for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and included visitor demographics, travel behavior and spending, popular activities, states or Michigan regions of origin, tourist volume per region visited, and seasonal visitation patterns. The analysis also included visitor data for the Huron-Manistee National Park, which surrounds Idlewild. Finally, this section includes analysis of ESRI retail surplus and leakage data for the area surrounding Idlewild to provide a rough indication of what tourism-related retailers might succeed in Idlewild.

Summary of Planning Activities and Reports. To help the client make the best use of the many planning documents that have been developed for Idlewild or Yates Township since 2006, the MSU team summarized these recent plans, their recommendations, and the tentative status of those recommendations as of early 2013.

Case Studies. To identify promising, real-world approaches to inform the tourism development strategy, the team identified and described recent examples of similar communities that had leveraged a particular asset to draw tourism, and how they did it. The team developed case studies on aspects of tourism development that may provide lessons of

value to Idlewild. With the exception of Eatonville, Florida, these case studies do not necessarily come from communities that are fully comparable to Idlewild; rather, they exhibit tourism development approaches that could be adapted to Idlewild and appear complementary to the recommendations already provided by other recent planning initiatives. The case studies include the following:

- Zora Neale Huston Festival of the Arts and Humanities, Eatonville, Florida
- Silver Lake Sand Dunes Apple BBQ Cook-Off Festival, Hart, Michigan
- Winter Comedy Festival, Traverse City, Michigan
- Nicodemus, Kansas National Historic Site
- Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site
- Mashpee Commons, Massachusetts

Tourism Development Strategy. The final product of this work is a tourism development strategy that provides specific recommended action steps, resources, and tentative timelines for rolling out a tourism development initiative over the next ten years. To help the client build and maintain momentum, the strategy emphasizes incremental changes at an ascending scale of effort and cost—from short-term, no-cost approaches to long-term, ambitious approaches.

Appendices. The report includes the following appendices:

- *Appendix A:* The discussion guide used to conduct the SWOT analysis.
- *Appendix B:* Considerations for the establishment of the ICDC as a community land trust.
- *Appendix C:* Historic walking-tour maps of Idlewild developed by Commonwealth Cultural Resource Group and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.
- *Appendix D:* A sample request for qualifications, memorandum of understanding, and development agreement to be used as a model for seeking a developer to rehabilitate and reopen the Flamingo Club.

The summarized tourism development strategy recommendations are shown on the next page.

Tourism Development Recommendations, 2013-2023

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)	Medium Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)	Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)
Capacity building—training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michigan Nonprofit Association, Michigan Historic Preservation Network, Center for Community Progress Capacity building—collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Idlewild Tourism Committee with Yates Twp, county officials; Lake County Chamber, Land Bank; Lake County MSU Extension District 5; West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission; nonprofits; business reps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate volunteers Coordinate subcommittees for activities below Meet regularly to discuss status of activities and address problems Monthly conference call with state partners 	Capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire part-time planning and development coordinator Establish official ICDC headquarters Expand Idlewild Chamber of Commerce 	Capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire full-time planning and development coordinator
Physical development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue RFQ for Flamingo Club and Williams Island band shell Solicit DNR/DEQ funding for Williams Island bridge replacement Solicit USDA funding for broadband development 	Physical development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICDC partners with Lake County Land Bank to redevelop strategic properties in target area Construct welcome center at US-10 and Broadway Issue RFQ for redevelopment of Casa Blanca Hotel Solicit SHPO grant for Casa Blanca Hotel 	Physical development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel(s) established; commercial development occurring Raise funds locally to build permanent amphitheater on Williams Island
Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage volunteer for social media marketing—start with historical information and existing events. Content updates at least 3x/week Establish central Idlewild website (e.g., “visitidlewild.com”) During Idlewild Week, gather contact information (emails, addresses, phone) of all Idlewilders Club members Research Historically Black Colleges & Universities, Divine Nine 	Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire part-time marketing coordinator As events & attractions grow/diversify, increase marketing investment Hire marketing firm to create promotional videos Purchase ads in major Northwest Michigan markets as well as Detroit, Chicago, Grand Rapids Advertise in-state through Pure Michigan Targeted marketing materials, e-newsletters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idlewilders Clubs Historically Black Colleges & Univs. “Divine Nine” Fraternities & Sororities 	Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Idlewild Convention & Visitors Bureau Purchase ads in major North American markets Advertise nationwide through Pure Michigan TV commercials in major Midwestern cities
Beautification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a volunteer beautification subcommittee to set local priorities Wildflower Day—each year, plant native wildflowers at entrances and major corridor (seek donations from area greenhouses) Engage local artists to make decorative entry signs, wayfinding signs 	Beautification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with DNR/DEQ to coordinate ongoing evaluation and maintenance of the lakes 	Beautification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate sustained beautification activities through business improvement district or donations from local businesses
Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form volunteer special events subcommittee; set priorities and assign tasks Begin Father’s Day BBQ Fest or other food festival Seek additional sponsors for Idlewild Music Fest 	Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a part-time special events coordinator Expand/seek additional sponsors for BBQ/food fest Seek major acts for Idlewild Music Fest Establish Flamingo Club Summer Concert Series (pending reopening of Flamingo Club) 	Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-time special events staff
Preservation and Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose nonbinding design guidelines using language from Cultural Resource Management Plan 	Preservation and Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Historic District Study Committee Develop updated report using existing historic resource inventory as starting point 	Preservation and Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish local historic district

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INTRODUCTION

About Practicum

Practicum is a capstone course taught by the Michigan State University Urban and Regional Planning Program. Through this course, undergraduate and graduate students gain practical planning experience by collaborating with community partners that are in need of planning assistance. It is the responsibility of the student team, the client and the community to determine a realistic scope of study for the project that meets the community's planning needs.

The goals of practicum include mastering basic techniques for data collection, interviewing, field work, map making, and report writing, as well as the application of analytical techniques to create an understanding of the condition of a community and its problems.

Throughout the course, the student team's work is guided by the client and by MSU's practicum faculty, Dr. Zenia Kotval and Dr. Rex LaMore.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project is to help the unincorporated community of Idlewild, Michigan achieve community and economic prosperity by researching and creating a tourism development strategy that leverages Idlewild's cultural and natural assets to attract year-round visitors.

The client's vision for the project is substantially similar to the overarching goal articulated by the Cultural Economic Development National Resource Team when it developed a cultural economic development readiness assessment for Idlewild:

"... to assist Yates Township citizens and property owners to preserve, restore and develop Idlewild, Michigan, as a national rural retreat, resort and high value tourism destination. The community also wants to achieve prosperity by leveraging its natural environment, historic buildings, cultural heritage, creative talent and cultural assets to spur financial investment and economic growth." (National Resource Team, 2006)



Figure 1: Practicum Team and Client Representatives at Entrance to Idlewild. Left to Right: Emilio Voltaire, Corean Reynolds, John Meeks, Hubert Brandon, Matt Wojciechowski, Jim Marbury, Cortney Dunklin, and Nathalie Winans. Photo by Pat Williams.

Client and Project Partners

This report was prepared for the Idlewild Community Development Corporation (ICDC). The client contact was Hubert Brandon, a consultant for ICDC.

ICDC's mission is to “promote, preserve and protect the heritage and resources of historic Idlewild, Michigan that inform the world about the value and contributions of this National Register community, and to provide Economic Development opportunities in the Idlewild community that foster economic growth and quality of life improvement. The purpose of the ICDC is to engage local residents and business to work together to undertake community development, which improves the community in sustainable ways, and offer economic opportunities to low and moderate-income people in historic Idlewild, Yates Township and the region” (ICDC, 2012).

Although ICDC was the lead agency on this project, several other organizations and individuals supported the project and provided information and assistance as needed. The project partners and their affiliations are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Client Contact and Project Partners

Name	Position	Organization
Hubert Brandon	Consultant and Client Contact	ICDC
Jim Marbury	Treasurer	ICDC
Pat Williams	Founder/ Small business owner	ICDC
John Meeks	President/ former Small Business owner/ Current Resident	Idlewild African American Chamber of Commerce (IAACC)
Ron Griffin	Township Supervisor	Yates Township
Virginia Moyer- Carr	Small Business owner/ Current Resident	Paradise Lake Motel
Betty Boone	Director, Cultural Economic Development	Michigan State Housing Development Authority

Scope of Work

The scope of work for this project consists of the following tasks:

Overview of Idlewild

This task involved gathering and analyzing information on Idlewild's background and physical characteristics. To begin this task, the team conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis to provide a general indication of the current issues facing Idlewild; the data for this analysis were gathered through two focus groups with Idlewild residents, public officials, nonprofits, and business owners. Next, using background documents from the client, Internet and library research, and geographic information systems (GIS) data from Lake County, the team assembled a brief history of Idlewild and an analysis of Idlewild's geography, topography, water features, land ownership, land cover, zoning, utilities, and key sites with potential for tourist-oriented development.

Socioeconomic Profile

The socioeconomic profile assessed the current condition and health of the economy and social environment of Yates Township and Lake County. Using data sets from the U.S. Census and American Community Survey, the team analyzed trends in Yates Township and Lake County over the two decades from 1990 to 2010, using comparison data from the State of Michigan as a frame of reference.

Tourism Asset Study

To help identify potential tourism-industry niches for Idlewild, the tourism asset study identified tourist attractions and tourism amenities that were currently available in Lake County and the surrounding region. The research consisted of (a) analysis of county-level business data

by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes, (b) maps generated from Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) industry data; and (c) a qualitative assessment of the most important tourism assets as indicated by interviewees and by Internet research of the region.

Tourism Market Study

The tourism market study was designed to help the client agency understand their potential markets and market demographics regionally, statewide, and nationally. The research consisted of analysis of recent Michigan visitor profiles developed for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and included visitor demographics, travel behavior and spending, popular activities, states or Michigan regions of origin, tourist volume per region visited, and seasonal visitation patterns. The analysis also included visitor data for the Huron-Manistee National Park, which surrounds Idlewild. Finally, this section includes analysis of ESRI retail surplus and leakage data for the area surrounding Idlewild to provide a rough indication of what tourism-related retailers might succeed in Idlewild.

Summary of Planning Activities and Reports

To help the client make the best use of the many planning documents that have been developed for Idlewild or Yates Township since 2006, the MSU team summarized these recent plans, their recommendations, and the status of those recommendations as of early 2013.

Case Studies

To identify promising, real-world approaches to inform the tourism development strategy, the team identified and described recent examples of similar communities that had leveraged a particular asset to draw tourism, and how they did it. The team developed case studies on aspects of tourism development that may provide lessons of value to Idlewild. With the exception of Eatonville, Florida, these case studies do not necessarily come from communities that are fully comparable to Idlewild; rather, they exhibit tourism development approaches that could be adapted to Idlewild and appear complementary to the recommendations already provided by other recent planning initiatives. The case studies include the following:

- Zora Neale Huston Festival of the Arts and Humanities, Eatonville, Florida
- Silver Lake Sand Dunes Apple BBQ Cook-Off Festival, Hart, Michigan
- Winter Comedy Festival, Traverse City, Michigan
- Nicodemus, Kansas National Historic Site
- Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site
- Mashpee Commons, Massachusetts

Tourism Development Strategy

The final product of this work is a tourism development strategy that provides specific recommended action steps, resources, and tentative timelines for rolling out a tourism development initiative over the next ten years. To help the client build and maintain momentum, the strategy emphasizes incremental changes at an ascending scale of effort and cost—from short-term, no-cost approaches to long-term, ambitious approaches. The strategy also includes tools and tactics for fundraising and for increasing the likelihood of private investment.

Target Areas

Target Area for Tourism Development Strategy

The target area for the tourism development strategy is the center of unincorporated community of Idlewild. Idlewild is a part of Yates Township, which is located at the southern border of Lake County in Michigan's northwestern Lower Peninsula. Yates Township sits within the boundaries of the Huron-Manistee National Forest, about one hour east of Ludington/Lake Michigan and 15 miles west of US-131 (see Figure 5).

Being an unincorporated community, Idlewild lacks official boundaries and does not correspond with any census tract. The Idlewild National Register Historic District has well-defined boundaries; however, these extend beyond Yates Township and into parts of Pleasant Plains and Cherry Valley Townships and also do not correspond with census tracts (see Figures 3 and 4). For purposes of this project, the target area of the Idlewild Tourism Development Strategy is defined as the area bordered by Highway M-10 to the north, Foreman Road to the west, South Nelson Road to the east, and Michigan Road to the south. This area encompasses the historical center of Idlewild—i.e., Williams Island and the small “downtown” area to the west of Williams Island (Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009), as well as Idlewild Lake, Paradise Lake, and Tank Lake.

Figure 2 shows Idlewild within the larger context of Lake County and the Lower Peninsula.

Figure 3 shows the target area of the Idlewild Tourism Development Strategy.

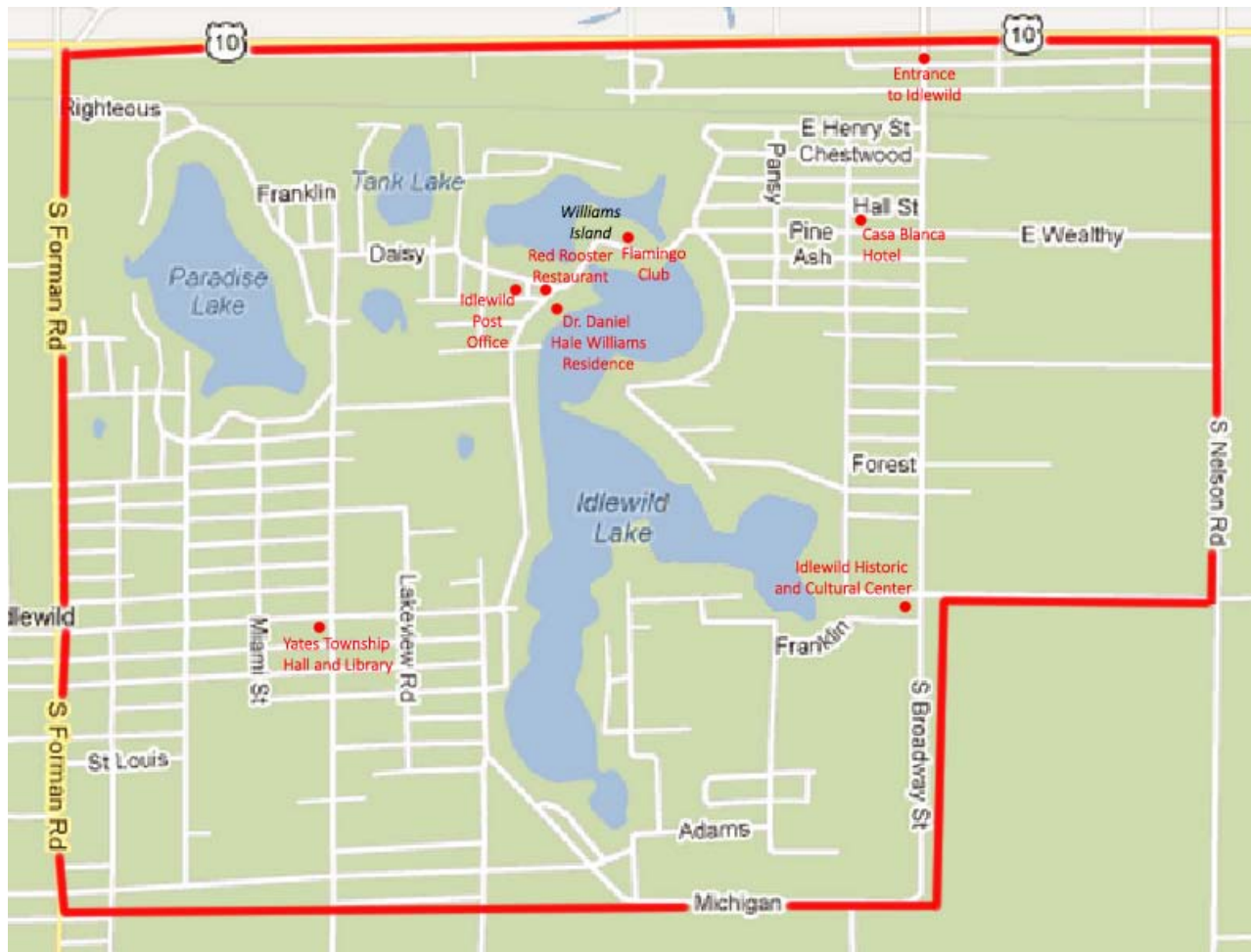


Figure 3: Target Area for Idlewild Tourism Development Strategy. Map by Google (2012) with boundaries and landmarks added.

Figure 4 shows the target area of the Idlewild tourism development strategy superimposed over the boundaries of the Idlewild National Register Historic District.

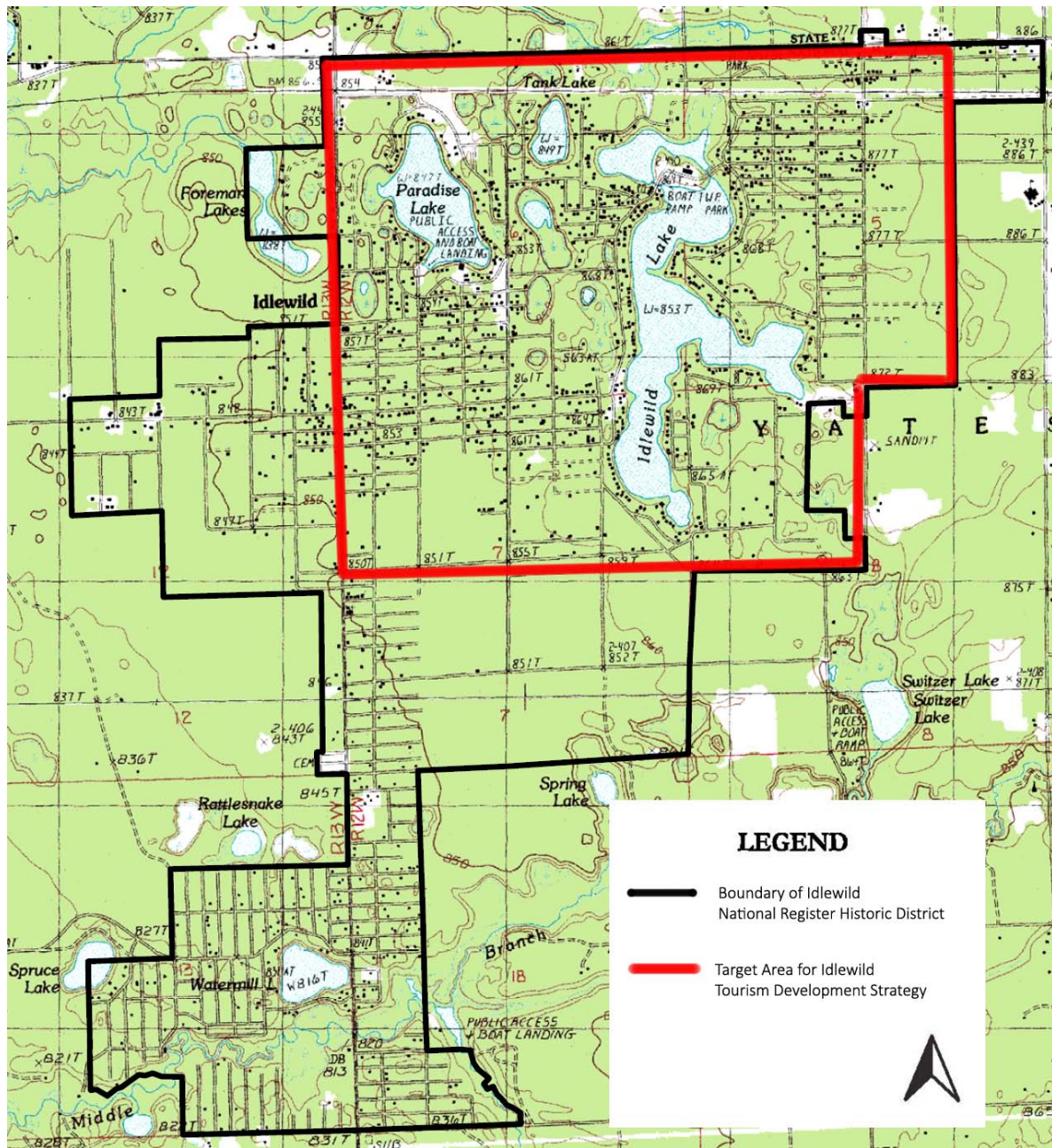


Figure 4: Idlewild National Register Historic District and Target Area For Idlewild Tourism Development Strategy. U.S. Geological Survey Topographic Quadrangle Map, modified for Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan (2009) and with tourism development target area added.

Idlewild is readily accessible by automobile. As shown in Figure 5, U.S. Route 10 runs immediately north of Idlewild, connecting with U.S. 131 to the east and U.S. 31 to the west.



Figure 5: Major Roads Surrounding Idlewild. Google, 2013.

Target Areas for Research

To create a tourism development strategy that helps Idlewild become a regional tourist attraction that draws visitors from outside Lake County and outside Michigan, some components of the research encompass larger areas beyond the target area for the Idlewild tourism development strategy. These research areas and their justification are described below.

Idlewild: An Overview. To understand the potential of Idlewild for tourism development, the overview of Idlewild focuses on Idlewild alone.

Socioeconomic Profile. To understand the current socioeconomic condition of Idlewild and its immediate surroundings, the study area for the socioeconomic profile is Yates Township and Lake County. To provide a frame of reference for the findings, the Yates Township and Lake County data are compared with socioeconomic information for the state of Michigan.

Tourism Asset Study. To determine what tourism assets and amenities already exist throughout the region, the tourism asset study encompasses Lake County and the five-county region surrounding Lake County (i.e., Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Wexford Counties). Tourism assets and amenities around the region could be complementary or competitive with Idlewild because the strategy hopes to draw tourists from outside Lake County. Therefore, the client should know what assets and amenities already exist throughout the region to avoid duplication where possible.

Tourism Market Study. To understand the preferences and visitation patterns of travelers who might visit Idlewild, the tourism market study analyzes data on tourism in Northwest Michigan, the State of Michigan, the Great Lakes region, and the United States. To be viable as a tourist destination, Idlewild will need to draw visitors from outside Lake County, which is very sparsely populated.

Summary of Planning Documents. The review of planning documents includes Idlewild alone (e.g., Idlewild Cultural Economic Development Readiness report and Cultural Resource Management Plan) as well as Yates Township (e.g., the Yates Township Comprehensive Plan or the Yates Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan).

Methods

The practicum team used the following research methods to carry out this study:

- Document review
- Secondary data analysis
- Interviews
- SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis

A copy of the moderator guide used for the SWOT analysis is provided in Appendix A. The format of the interviews was more informal, consisting of specific questions about Idlewild—e.g., the status of its utilities, the condition of the lakes, and the status of the recommendations from Idlewild’s recent planning activities. For this reason, no interview questionnaire was developed.

Data Sources

To inform the development of the economic development strategy, the practicum team gathered data from the following sources:

- Local Stakeholders
 - ICDC, Chamber of Commerce, Yates Township Officials, Lake County Officials, Business Owners, Residents
- State Employees
 - Michigan State Housing Development Authority, State Historic Preservation Office
- Planning Firm
 - Nederveld Associates, Inc.
- Existing Plans and Activities
 - Idlewild Cultural Economic Development Readiness Report, 2006
 - Idlewild Downtown Development Plan, 2007
 - Idlewild Historical Asset Inventory, 2009
 - Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009
 - Yates Township Master Plan, 2010
 - Flamingo Club Feasibility Study, 2011
 - West MI Shoreline Regional Development Plan, 2012
- Secondary Data Sources
 - United States Decennial Census and American Community Survey
 - ESRI industry data and maps
 - Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data
 - North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) county business pattern data
 - Michigan tourism visitor profiles from Michigan Economic Development Corporation
 - Smithsonian Institution data on museum visitation by underrepresented audiences
 - National Park Service data on national park visitors

Deliverables

The project deliverables include the following:

- This report
- A PowerPoint presentation summarizing the research findings and strategy recommendations
- A poster summarizing the strategy
- Electronic copies of recent planning reports, GIS data files, and the full historical asset inventory

OVERVIEW OF IDLEWILD

This section describes the general characteristics of Idlewild, including its history, geography, land elevation, water features, utilities, and current land use.

A Brief History of Idlewild

For those who experienced its charms, Idlewild is almost a legend. Idlewild is America's largest African American resort (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2010). During much of the twentieth century, Idlewild was literally a place apart—a forest haven where African Americans could relax and recover from the toxic pressure of legally sanctioned racism.

During the nineteenth century, the lumber industry eliminated the old-growth forest throughout Lake County and the surrounding region (Nolan, 2002). However, the sandy soil was not well suited for agriculture, and second-growth forest soon reclaimed the land. (The reconversion to forestland would accelerate in the 1930s, when crews from the Civilian Conservation Corps, including some 167 African Americans, planted trees on the federal land surrounding Idlewild—Stephens, 2001.)



In the second decade of the twentieth century, four white developers and their wives—Erastus and Flora Branch, Adelbert and Isabelle Branch, Wilbur and Mayme Lemon, and A.E. and Modolin Wright (Stephens, 2001)—saw potential in the recovering forest and quiet lakes. The consortium, christening itself the Idlewild Resort Company (IRC), homesteaded the land in 1912 and began purchasing and platting property in 1915. Shortly thereafter, the IRC began to invite middle-class African Americans to visit and buy building lots (*ibid.*). The IRC purchased advertisements in African American publications such as the *Chicago Defender* and organized tours of the site with prospective buyers from Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, and other major Midwestern cities. Some of buyers organized into the Idlewild Lot Owners Association, and the IRC turned the resort over to them in 1921 (Nolan, 2002).

Figure 6: Undated photo of bathers on Lake Idlewild. Photo by Stanley Kufta. Retrieved from Seeking Michigan, 2013.



Figure 7: Madame C.J. Walker. Photo by Scurlock Studio, 1915. Retrieved from Smithsonian Institution, 2013.

Because this initial development period took place in the midst of the First World War, Idlewild's growth was relatively slow at first. However, even in its early years, some of the most illustrious figures in African American history visited or purchased property in Idlewild. For example, Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, the first doctor to successfully perform open heart surgery, spent his retirement years in Idlewild (Roberts, 2008); the landmark Williams Island, originally known as Island Park (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009) bears his name. W.E.B. Du Bois, famed civil rights activist and founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP, 2009), vacationed in Idlewild. Madame C.J. Walker, America's first woman *and* African American to become a self-made millionaire as a result of her successful beauty-products business, owned land in Idlewild (Terborg-Penn, 2012). A portrait of Madame Walker is shown in Figure 7.

From its earliest days, Idlewild was recognized as something much more significant than a simple resort. At a time when African Americans were systematically pushed to the margins of society, Idlewild was viewed as a place where the luminaries of the black community could gather and discuss issues of vital collective interest. Madame Walker espoused this view in a 1918 letter to the Idlewild Resort Company:

I consider Idlewild a great national progressive movement ... it supplies a great pressing necessity to our people, namely, a national meeting place where the leading spirits from the various sections of the country may gather each year and discuss problems of national and race importance. Great good cannot but result from such a movement[,] and Idlewild[,] being located as it is in the heart of the Great Resort Sections of Michigan[,] makes it ideal for the combination of business and pleasure.

-Madame C.J. Walker, 1918, reprinted in Walker & Wilson, 2002 (p. 22)

W.E.B. Du Bois, recognizing Idlewild's symbolic importance, praised it eloquently in the official publication of the NAACP:

For sheer physical beauty—for sheen of water and golden air, for nobleness of tree and flower of shrub, for shining river and song of bird and the low, moving whisper of sun, moon and star, it is the beautifullest stretch I have seen for twenty years; and then to that add fellowship—sweet, strong women and keen-witted men from Canada and Texas, California and New York, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois—all sons and grand-children of Ethiopia, all with the wide leisure of rest and play—can you imagine a more marvelous thing than Idlewild?

– W. E. B. DuBois, 1921, reprinted in Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009 (p. 1)

During the 1920s and 1930s, Idlewild was known more as a place for rest, relaxation, and intellectual discussion than for music and dancing (Weible, 2012). However, Idlewild became much more boisterous during the prosperous years after World War II. A burgeoning clientele brought an increased demand for entertainment, and Idlewild became a stop on the so-called “Chit’lin Circuit,” a string of Midwestern venues where African American singers, dancers, and comedians could safely perform (Walker & Wilson, 2002). Nightclubs emerged in Idlewild to accommodate these performances, including the Flamingo Club, the Paradise Club, the El Morocco, the Purple Palace, and more (Stephens,

2001). From the late 1940s to the early 1960s, Idlewild hosted some of the greatest musicians of the twentieth

century, including B.B. King, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Aretha Franklin, Dinah Washington, Sammy Davis Jr., and many others (Coates, 2002). At its peak, Idlewild boasted a full array of tourism accommodations, including hotels, motels, summer cottages, stores, restaurants, churches, beauty salons, a riding stable, a roller skating rink, and more (Nolan, 2002).

Idlewild's heyday continued into the 1960s, but its fortunes took a turn for the worse after the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964. With the end of legalized discrimination, African Americans could vacation anywhere, and Idlewild suddenly found itself in direct competition with resorts nationwide. Idlewild's hospitality businesses were too slow to respond to this new



Figure 8: Jackie Wilson Performs at the Paradise Club in Idlewild. Photo courtesy of BJ Alvis. Retrieved from Weible, 2012.

challenge, and Idlewild had little to fall back on when tourists stopped coming (Walker & Wilson, 2007).

In the 1980s and 1990s, Idlewild began to stabilize and then—slowly—to grow again. With its listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 (State of Michigan, 2010), people came to understand the historical importance of Idlewild as a safe space for African Americans during the segregation era. Retirees, who had experienced Idlewild in its heyday, began purchasing vacation homes or permanent homes there. In 1994, Lake County was designated a federal Enterprise Community. This 15-year designation enhanced the county's eligibility for federal grant funding and led to several benefits for Idlewild, including a new sewer system and major renovations to a former Yates Township Hall building to house the Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center (Lake County Enterprise Community Board of Directors, 2009). And throughout this period, the six Idlewilders' Clubs continued to support Idlewild. The Idlewilders' Clubs were established to maintain the friendships and social networks formed in Idlewild; they include two in Chicago and one each in Cleveland, Detroit, mid-Michigan, and St. Louis (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009). To this day, the six Idlewilders' Clubs visit each year for Idlewild Week, which occurs in August. In addition to this event, the clubs take turns hosting an annual Idlewilders' Conclave in their home cities.

In 2006, the State of Michigan entered a formal partnership with Idlewild and Yates Township. This partnership, referred to as the Idlewild, Michigan Transformation Initiative, connects local officials, businesses, nonprofits, and residents with a coordinated effort by multiple state agencies to provide resources and technical assistance (Michigan State Housing Development Authority, 2007). As a result, Idlewild has benefited from a number of important planning and visioning activities as well as commitments of technical assistance and funding. In addition to the plans that are summarized in this report, these include the expansion of the Idlewild National Register Historic District, the establishment of a state park and boat landing on Idlewild Lake, the placement of several historical markers and historical walking tour signs (see Figure 9), the provision of funding for blight removal and community events, and much more.



Figure 9: Idlewild Historic District Walking Tour Sign. Photo by Nathalie Winans, 2013.

As the socioeconomic profile in this report will show, Idlewild continues to face challenges, but it enjoys a measure of stability in some indicators. More importantly, Idlewild benefits from the passion and dedication of residents, business owners, nonprofits, public officials, and a great many others who understand its enduring significance and are eager to spearhead the effort to bring a new prosperity to this beautiful and unique community.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

To provide a general understanding of issues affecting Idlewild's ability to cultivate tourism, the practicum team conducted an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) at the start of this study. In a SWOT analysis, a facilitator works with a group of stakeholders to identify positive and negative factors *within* their community or organization (strengths and weaknesses) as well as positive and negative factors *outside* their community or organization (opportunities and threats). (Renault, 2013.) Although it is not a rigorous form of data collection, SWOT analysis can be useful for quickly gathering impressions from stakeholders about important factors to consider when researching and developing a strategy such as this one.

The SWOT analysis for Idlewild took place on January 21, 2013 during two stakeholder focus groups. The participants included eight representatives of the client, local government, and businesses and eight citizens of Idlewild and Yates Township. Each focus group lasted approximately two hours.

Strengths

- Striking natural beauty of the lakes and surrounding forest
- National Register-listed African American resort
- Historic buildings with potential for rehabilitation
- Abundant land and wildlife
- Outdoor recreation opportunities
- Beach at Williams Island—"one of the best beaches in Lake County"
- Engagement/enthusiasm of local organizations and residents
- Recently created master plan
- Easy highway access
- Attractive gateway signage at US-10 entrance to Idlewild
- Idlewild Week (second week in August)—draws Idlewilders Clubs from all over the country
- Idlewild Music Festival (organized by Idlewild African American Chamber of Commerce)
- Lake Idlewild Park—recently installed by Department of Natural Resources

Weaknesses

- Low community capacity to initiate and follow through on development
- Local politics, not enough communication/collaboration—disconnects between residents and public officials, between seasonal and permanent residents, between Idlewild and rest of Yates Township
- Low population as a whole; small workforce
- "Low wealth community"—many retirees on fixed incomes

- Lack of funding; no major private investment
- Lack of entrepreneurial skills among local population
- Conflict on whether Idlewild should be a retirement community or a tourist attraction
- Few physical tourist attractions besides the lakes and landscape—only the Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center, which is only open on Saturdays in spring/summer
- No hotels; very few motels/restaurants
- Poor condition of historic buildings
- Lakes not well respected (e.g., crews dumping leaves in lakes)
- Community debt due to sewer installation (recently refinanced loan)
- Not enough promotional signage
- Lack of volunteerism (e.g., to keep Cultural Center open more than one day/week)
- No entertainment venues in Lake County
- Poor utilization of local people, resources—“we have a resident artist here, but we use clip art for our posters”
- Insufficient law enforcement
- Lack of high-speed Internet access

Opportunities

- Make Idlewild an important part of the continuum of tourist attractions in the northwest Lower Peninsula
- Draw visitors from entire region with entertainment venues, historical value
- Bring in diverse visitors—not just African American market
- Provide quality amenities (e.g., food, accommodations) to ensure that they return
- Development in Idlewild that benefits the regional economy
- Ongoing partnerships with State of Michigan and universities
- Rally community together around a common vision of economic development balanced with community prosperity
- Encourage engagement of local youth
- Maintain stewardship of lakes, natural environment
- Cultivate investment that brings dollars into community rather than exporting to outside corporations, developers

Threats

- Development that does not respect Idlewild’s historical status and character
- Development that exports dollars to outside companies
- Gentrification

Geography

The unincorporated community of Idlewild is located in the northwest corner of Yates Township, which in turn is located at the southern edge of Lake County. The land area of the current Idlewild National Register Historic District is 2,536 acres (State Historic Preservation Office, 2010). The target area for the practicum team's tourism development strategy encompasses Idlewild Lake, Tank Lake, and Paradise Lake and measures approximately 1,531 acres. The land area of Yates Township measures 22,656 acres (35.4 square miles), nearly half of which is owned by the federal government or the state of Michigan (Jacobsen Daniels Associates, 2010). Most of this public land belongs to the Huron-Manistee National Forest, which encompasses all of Lake Township (U.S. Forest Service, undated).

As shown in Figure 10, the driving distance from Idlewild to most cities in or near the Lower Peninsula is relatively short. For example, Idlewild is 260 miles (4 hours) from Chicago, 217 miles (3.5 hours) from Detroit, 84 miles (1.3 hours) from Grand Rapids, 148 miles (2.25 hours) from Lansing, and 70 miles (1.5 hours) from Muskegon or Traverse City. (Google, 2013).

Within these driving times, Idlewild is accessible to a significant number of people. The total estimated population within a one-hour drive of Idlewild is 245,627 people. Within the two-hour radius, the population climbs to 2,281,488. The three-hour radius reaches 5,870,509 people. The four-hour radius reaches into Chicago (historical home of some of Idlewild's earliest landowners, including the Chicago Idlewilders social clubs that continue to operate today), as well as parts of Indiana, Ohio, and Ontario. Within the four-hour radius, Idlewild is accessible to a grand total of 16,533,445 individuals. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009, via ESRI, 2013)

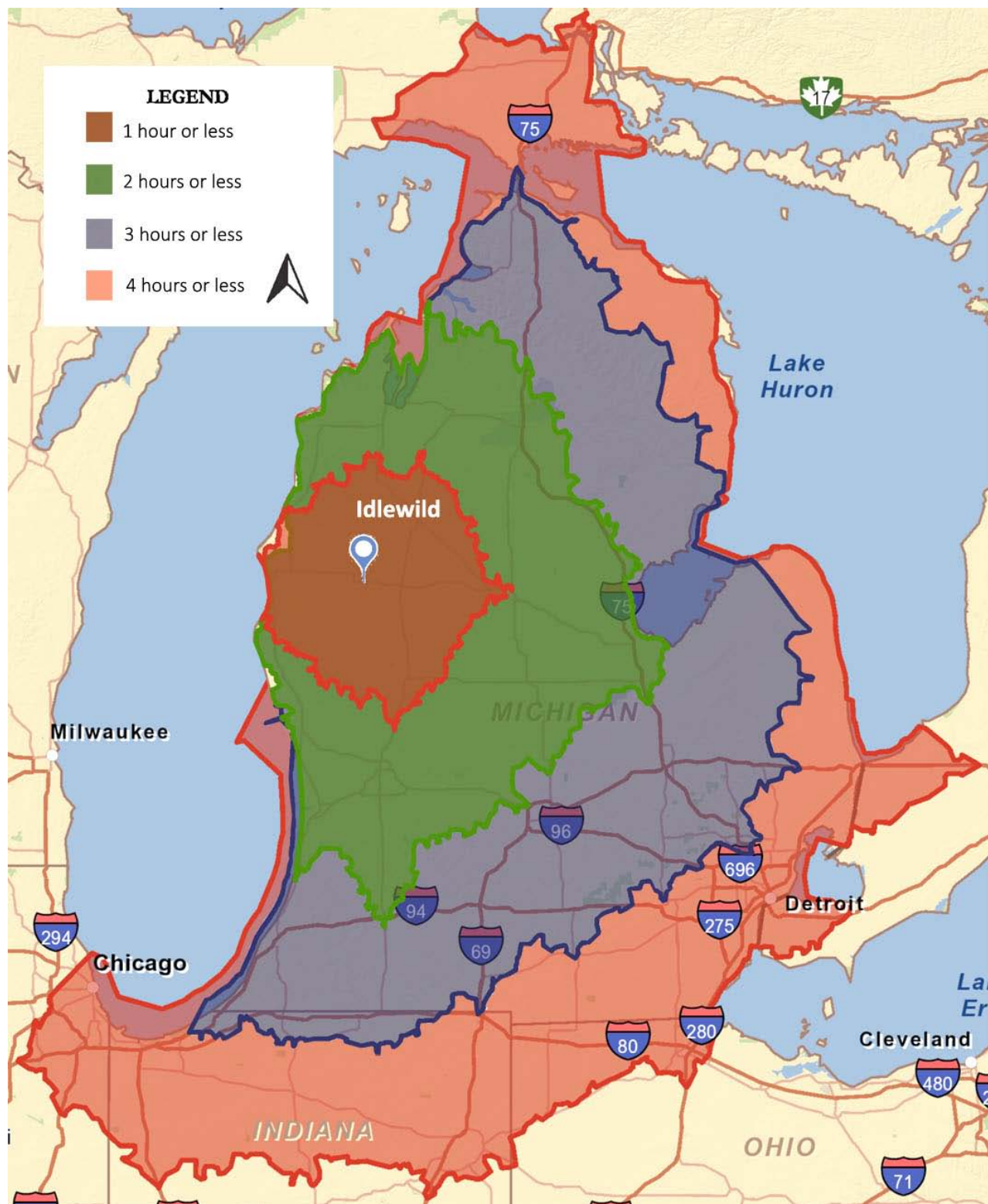


Figure 10: Driving Distances within a Four-Hour Radius of Idlewild. ESRI, 2013.

Land Elevation, Soil, and Water Features

Yates Township belongs to the Newaygo Outwash Plain, which encompasses much of Lake County as well as several surrounding counties. Its characteristic landforms include relatively uniform land elevation, sandy soils, and abundant bodies of water (U.S. Geological Survey, 2013). Idlewild departs somewhat from the prevailing topography, with gentle slopes curving toward the lakes; elevations range from 877 feet in the northeast corner of the target area to 850 feet in the southwest corner (see Figure 11). This feature adds a picturesque character that undoubtedly was a factor in the initial decision to settle Idlewild as a resort. At the same time, the slopes appear to be mild enough that they should not pose significant challenges to development.

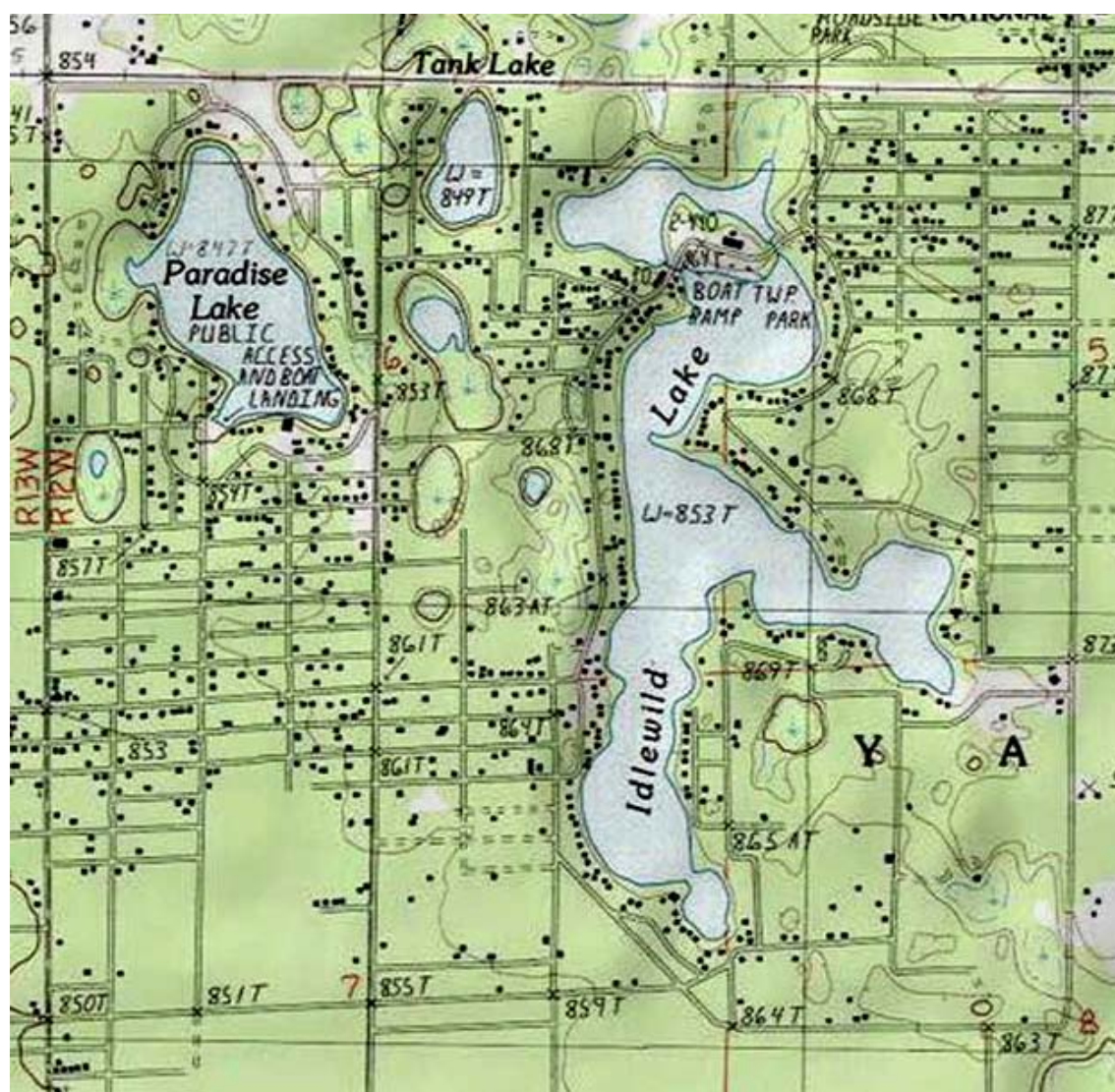


Figure 11: U.S. Geologic Survey Map of Idlewild Indicating Land Elevations. Michigan DNR, 2013.

The landscape of Idlewild is defined by its lakes—Idlewild Lake, Paradise Lake, and Tank Lake. Idlewild Lake is the largest in the county, with a surface area of more than 100 acres. Its maximum depth is 22 feet, but about 70 percent of the lake is less than 15 feet deep (Jacobsen Daniels & Associates, 2010). Idlewild's bodies of water are kettle lakes, formed from depressions left behind by large blocks of ice when the Ice Age glaciers retreated (U.S. Geological Survey, 2013). They are landlocked, with no inlets or outlets (Jacobsen Daniels, 2010). According to one of the individuals interviewed for this paper, Idlewild Lake was becoming clogged with vegetation and sediment, and the Michigan Department of Natural resources was scheduled to begin dredging the lake in 2013.

Idlewild's water features belong to the Pere Marquette River Watershed, which extends to Lake Michigan in the west (West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, 2012).

A wintertime view of Idlewild Lake is shown in Figure 12.



Figure 12: Lake Idlewild in Winter. Photo by Cortney Dunklin, 2013.

Utilities

Water and Sewer Service

The distribution of utilities in Lake County is very limited, a reflection of the county's heavily rural character. The village of Baldwin—the county seat—is the only place in Lake County that has municipal water service (WMSRDC, 2012). The Yates Township Comprehensive Master Plan (2010) cites the lack of water service as a critical impediment to commercial development and recommends that the township consider options for water service provision and adopt a phased approach to water service installation.

Idlewild recently received an initial sewer system installation with help from a \$200,000 federal grant, a result of its Enterprise Community status (Walker & Wilson, 2007). Idlewild's existing sewer system and proposed sewer system extensions, developed as part of the Yates Township master plan of 2010, are shown in Figure 13 on the next page. According to an individual interviewed for this report, the sewage treatment facility for this system is located in Pleasant Plains Township, and the sewer system is managed by the Baldwin Water Department.

Gas, Electric, Phone, and Internet Service

The Enterprise Community designation also allowed for the installation of natural gas lines (ibid.). Electricity is supplied to Lake County by Great Lakes Energy and Consumers Energy, and DTE provides natural gas. Phone service is supplied by Michigan Bell and Frontier (WMSRDC, 2012). Cellular phone reception is excellent due to a nearby cellular tower.

Idlewild does not have broadband Internet access. According to interviewees, the main source for high-speed Internet access in Idlewild is through expensive data plans from cellular phone service providers; Baldwin is the only community in Lake County that currently has broadband service. The interviewees indicated that obtaining broadband service continues to be an important goal that the community is actively pursuing.

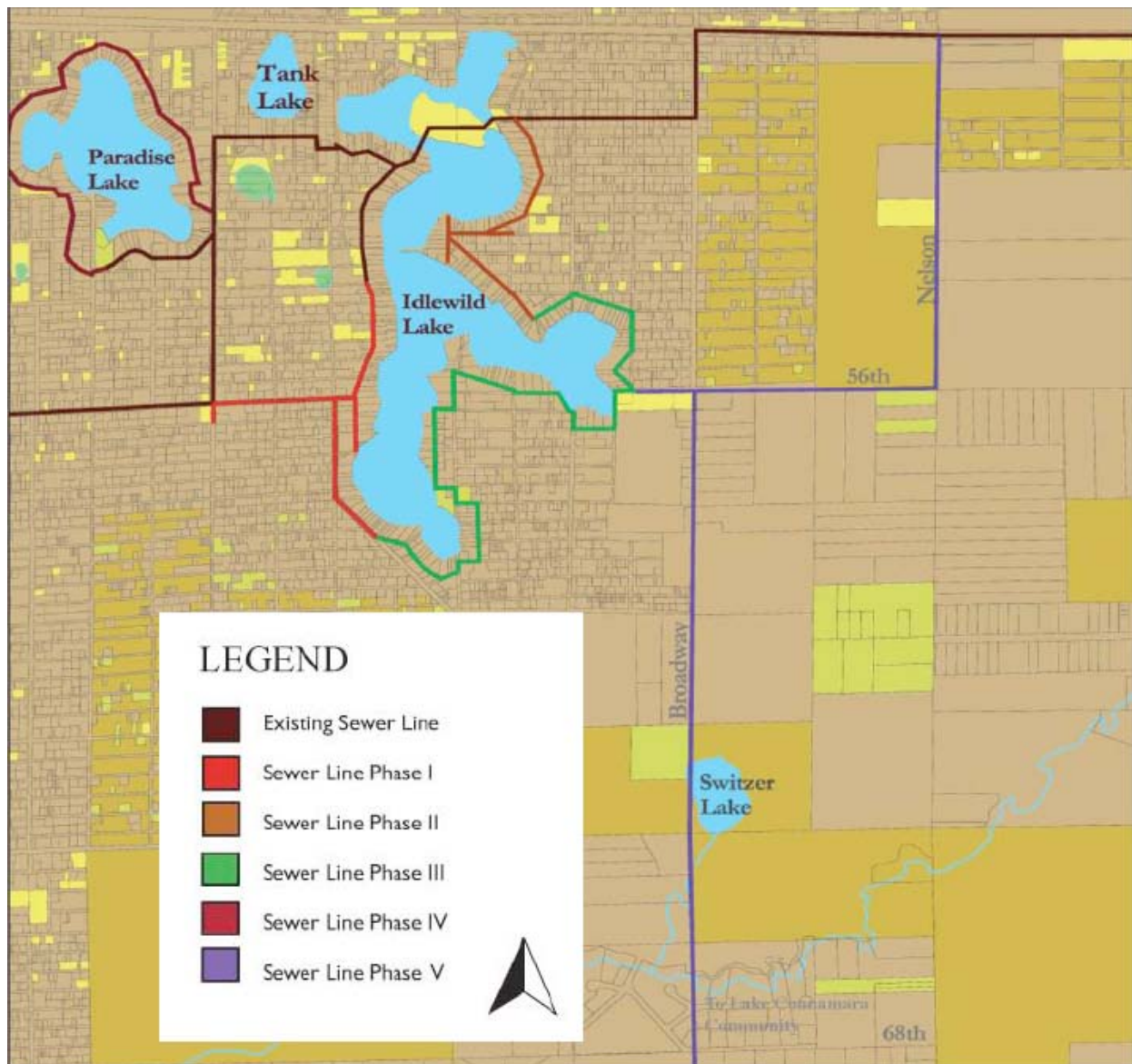


Figure 13: Current Idlewild Sewer System and Proposed Expansions. The existing sewer line runs roughly southwest to northeast, encompassing Idlewild’s small “downtown” and crossing Williams Island—former site of many of Idlewild’s historical entertainment and recreational facilities. Jacobsen Daniels Associates, 2010.

Zoning

As shown in Figure 14, nearly all of Idlewild is zoned for residential use (i.e., rural residential, community residential, and lake residential), with residential density increasing as one moves toward the lakes and Idlewild's small commercial district. This district, marked in brown on the map, is located immediately south of Tank Lake and west of Idlewild Lake. The Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan (2009) defines Williams Island and the Idlewild commercial district as the center of Idlewild.

Apart from Idlewild, nearly all of Yates Township (not shown) is zoned for agricultural use; however, Idlewild's sandy soils make farming difficult (U.S. Geological Survey, 2013).

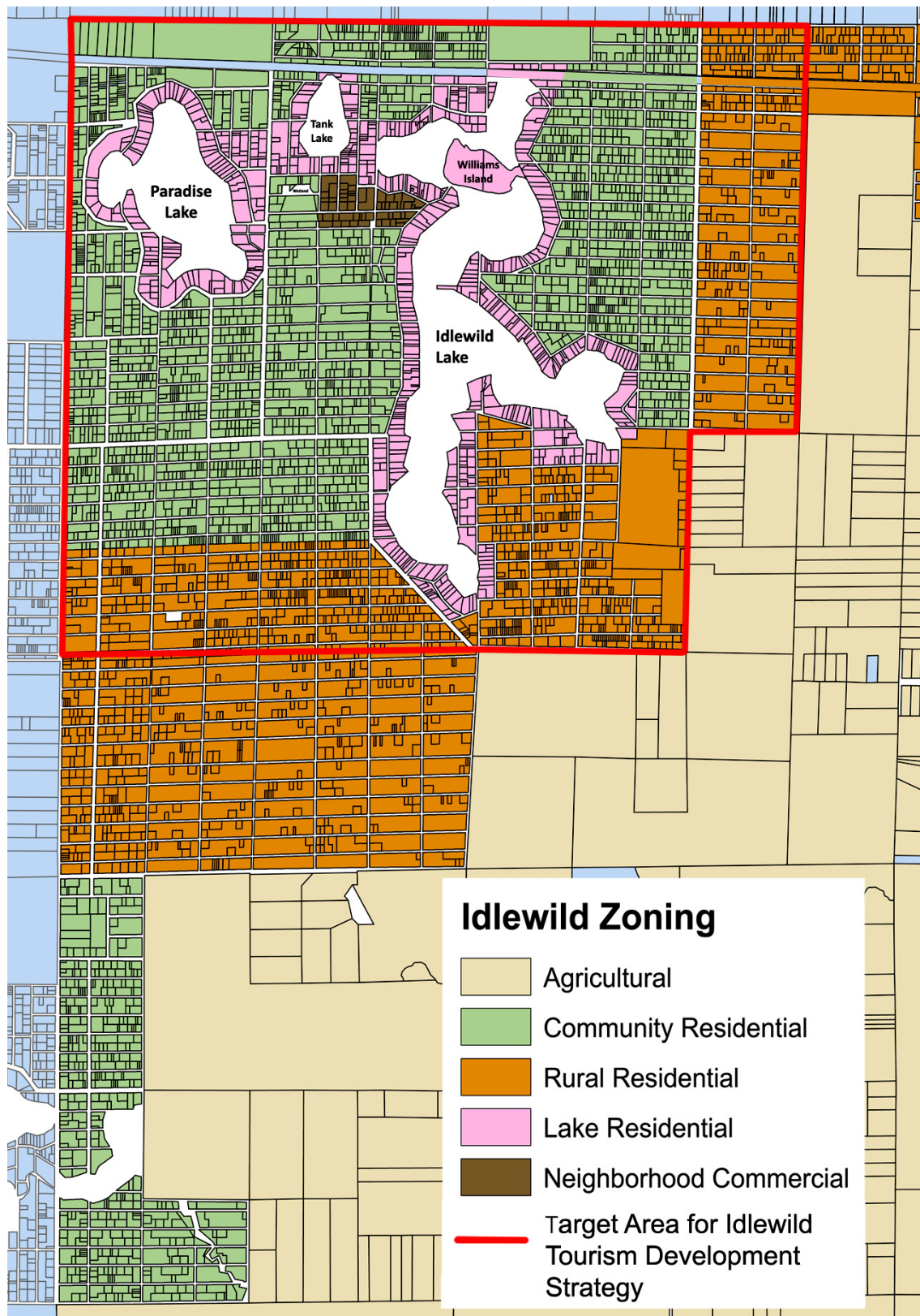


Figure 14: Zoning Map of Idlewild with Target Area of Idlewild Tourism Development Strategy. Generated from map in Jacobsen Daniels Associates (2010) using GIS files supplied by Lake County, Michigan (2013).

Land Ownership

Table 2 shows land ownership data for Idlewild.

Table 2: Parcels and Land Acreage in Idlewild			
	Parcels	Acres of Land	Average Parcel Size in Acres
Lake County Land Bank	549	86.84	0.16
Michigan Land Bank	70	13.53	0.19
State of Michigan	165	54.12	0.33
Federal Government	132	280.99	2.13
Yates Township	244	96.31	0.39
Private Ownership	4,479	1,385.84	0.31
Total	5,639	1,917.6	0.34
Percentage public land	21%	28%	
Percentage private land	79%	72%	

Calculated using GIS files supplied by Lake County, Michigan, 2013.

Almost half of the land in Yates Township is owned by the state or the federal government (Jacobsen Daniels Associates, 2010); much or all of this land belongs to the Huron-Manistee National Forest. These federal land holdings extend to the outskirts of Idlewild itself. However, as shown in Table 2, nearly three-quarters (72%) of the land acreage in Idlewild is privately owned. Of the remaining 28% of land, most is owned by the federal government, followed by Yates Township, the Lake County Land Bank, and the State of Michigan. When the acreage owned by the Lake County Land Bank is combined with acreage owned by the Michigan Land Bank, land banks are the second largest public landowners in Idlewild.

To ensure the affordability of the parcels in Idlewild, lot sizes were made intentionally small. The average lot size of the original Idlewild plat was only 25 feet wide by 100 feet deep, or 0.06 acres; however, many of the lots have been consolidated since then (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009). As shown in Table 2, the current average lot size in Idlewild is 0.34 acres—much larger than the original size, but still very small by modern standards. The small lot sizes could be beneficial for retaining Idlewild’s historic character, and the Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan (2009) recommends retaining small lot sizes to the extent possible, as they are a character-defining feature of the community. On the other hand, they may pose challenges for land assembly and development; outside metropolitan areas, the national average lot size for new construction outside metropolitan areas is 0.66 acres (U.S. Census, 2011a).

As shown in Figure 15, several relatively large properties in the target area of the tourism development strategy—including all of Williams Island—are owned by Yates Township. These land holdings could provide the community with valuable leverage in its effort to stimulate tourism-oriented development. In contrast, land bank and State of Michigan properties are scattered throughout the target area.

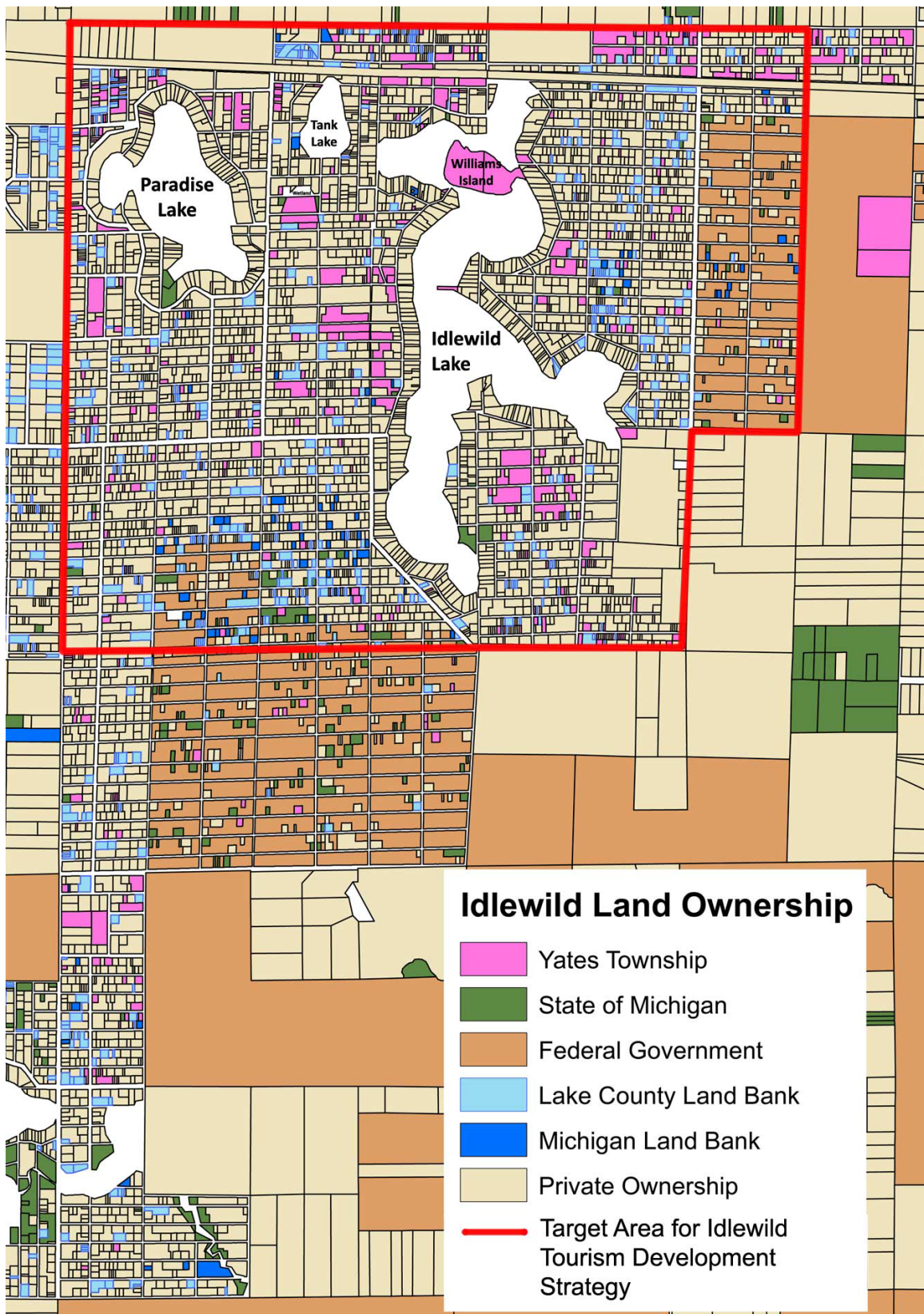


Figure 15: Land Ownership in Idlewild with Target Area for Idlewild Tourism Development Strategy. Generated from GIS files supplied by Lake County, Michigan, 2013.

Summary of Historical/Cultural Resources

Starting in 2009, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) carried out an extensive inventory of historic assets in Idlewild in preparation for the nomination of an expanded Idlewild National Register Historic District. The original 1979 National Register district encompasses the center of Idlewild and corresponds with the target area of the Tourism Development Strategy. The new Idlewild National Register Historic District, approved in 2010, extends outside the target area of this study to include parts of Cherry Valley and Pleasant Plains Townships. A map of the district is shown in Figure 3 (page 7).

SHPO's historical asset inventory documented every property's address, building style and material, and whether the property was considered "contributing" or "noncontributing" to Idlewild's historic character. Throughout the district, SHPO found that 482 properties were considered "contributing," and 393 were considered "noncontributing." SHPO provided the full historic asset inventory and nomination forms to the practicum team, and these materials are presented to the client along with this report.

Concurrently with the development of the revised National Register nomination, the State of Michigan retained Commonwealth Cultural Resource Group to compile a cultural resource management plan for Idlewild. This plan established standards and categories for defining Idlewild's cultural resources and issued recommendations for their management; these recommendations are summarized in the Summary of Recent Planning Activities and Reports in this paper.

The Cultural Resource Management Plan defines "cultural resources" as those characteristics that make Idlewild unique. They include tangible features like buildings or bridges, as well as intangible features like Idlewild's interesting street names (e.g., Righteous, Creation, Miracle, etc.), the personal stories of the people who have lived and vacationed there, or any undocumented archeological sites that may lie beneath Idlewild. The plan gives the following reasons for preserving cultural resources:

- *Cultural resources connect one generation to another.*
- *Cultural resources provide a means to reinforce identity.*
- *Cultural resources connect people from differing backgrounds. (p. 2)*

The plan identifies five categories of cultural resources as defined by the National Park Service:

- **Archaeological resource.** *Archaeological resources are the remains of past human activity that are usually found on or buried in the ground. Archaeological resources are valuable for what they tell us about past human behaviors. For instance, we can learn about social organization and even dietary patterns from archaeological resources.*

- **Cultural landscape.** *A cultural landscape is a setting created by humans in the natural world, and they reveal ties between people and the land. The Idlewild Historic District is a cultural landscape.*
- **Structure.** *In this category, the National Park Service includes all things that “extend the limits of human capability,” that is, things that allow humans to survive in and manipulate the world. Structures include things like buildings, bridges, roads, and trains.*
- **Museum object.** *Museum objects are collected records of human behavior or natural history. The Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center contains displays of museum objects.*
- **Ethnographic resource.** *Ethnographic resources are a society’s intangible record of its culture and include things like traditions, native languages, and religious beliefs. Stories told about Idlewild—the oral histories—are ethnographic resources. (p. 3)*

Within the above categories, the plan identifies five types of cultural resources:

- **Building.** *Buildings are resources created to shelter humans and their activities. A house or an indoor roller skating rink is an example of a building.*
- **Structure.** *A structure is a functional construction made for purposes other than shelter. A bridge is an example of a structure.*
- **Object.** *An object is a construction that is relatively small in scale and simply built. Streetlights and signposts are examples of objects.*
- **Site.** *A site is a location where there is evidence of human activity. Archaeologists excavate sites. Sites may also refer to parks or open recreational spaces.*
- **District.** *Districts are concentrations of sites, buildings, structures, or objects that are united historically by a plan or through physical development. The Idlewild Historic District contains buildings, structures, objects, and sites and, thus, is an example of a district. (p. 3)*

The Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan also provides a useful overview of the types of historic buildings identified in the historical asset inventory, including photographic examples of each building type. These are briefly summarized below. Photographs of a subset of key historic sites are shown in the next section, “Key Sites in Idlewild.”

Buildings Distinguished by Form, Style, or Material

This section, starting on page 23 of the Cultural Resource Management Plan, describes and shows photographs of historic building types in Idlewild according to their shape, architectural style, or construction materials. These building types are listed below, and one of the typical Idlewild building styles is shown in Figure 16.

- Single Lot Cottages (1915-1935)
- Bungalow Style (1910-1930)
- Concrete Block (1930-1970)
- Dutch Colonial Revival (1900-1930)

- Tudor/English Cottage (1910-1950)
- Minimal Traditional Style (1930-1955)
- Ranch Style, (1940-1990)
- Travel Trailer and Manufactured Home (1950s-2000s)
- Concrete Veneer (1950s-1960s)
- Brick (1940-2000s)
- Half-Log Siding (1930-2000s)

Figure 16 shows the Herman and Lela Wilson residence. This is a Bungalow Style house, characterized by a long, sloping roof line that extends over the front porch and is frequently accented with dormer windows. However, unlike the all-wood construction of most Idlewild bungalows, the lower story of this example was constructed in fieldstone. The Wilsons were Chicagoans who moved to Idlewild in 1921 and were important contributors to its history; they owned the Paradise Club (demolished) and Wilson's Grocery (currently vacant). (Cultural Resources Management Plan, 2009)



Figure 16: Example of a Bungalow Style Residence: The Herman and Lela Wilson House, 6583 S. Paradise Path. Photo by Corean Reynolds, 2013.

Buildings Distinguished by Use

This section, starting on page 35 of the Cultural Resource Management Plan, describes and shows photographs of Idlewild's building types according to their uses. These uses are listed below, and an example is shown in Figure 17.

- Guest cottages
- Boathouses and docks
- Screened rooms
- Lodging facilities (hotels and motels)
- Commercial/civic/municipal buildings
- Religious buildings
- Fraternal halls
- Social/entertainment buildings

Figure 17 shows the vacant Wilson's Grocery, an example of a historic commercial building. Like many other structures in Idlewild, the building is made of concrete block. Most of Idlewild's surviving commercial buildings are similar to this one—detached, one-story structures of modest design. (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.)



Figure 17: Example of Commercial Building and Concrete Block Structure: Wilson's Grocery, 332 E. Wilson Drive (Vacant). Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

Key Sites in Idlewild

The entire Idlewild historic district contains historic sites that contribute to its significance. However, several sites within the tourism development strategy target area are of particular historical or scenic interest and, as such, are likely to play a key role in Idlewild's tourism development. These sites are discussed below. As the photos in this section show, most of Idlewild's buildings are humble by modern standards, being small in size and simple in design and construction. However, they provide an important record of Idlewild's history and are considered character-defining features of the Idlewild National Register Historic District (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009).

Williams Island and Phil Giles' Flamingo Club

Williams Island, originally known as Island Park (ibid.), was the site of Idlewild's first homestead. During Idlewild's heyday, it became the resort's most important recreational center, complete with stores, restaurants, a hotel, the Purple Palace nightclub, Phil Giles' Flamingo Club, and an array of tiny single occupancy vacation cottages known as "doghouses" (ibid.). Today, Williams Island is owned by Yates Township and managed as a park. It houses only two structures—the vacant Flamingo Club and a small outbuilding. Figure 18 shows an aerial view of Williams Island and Phil Giles' Flamingo Club.

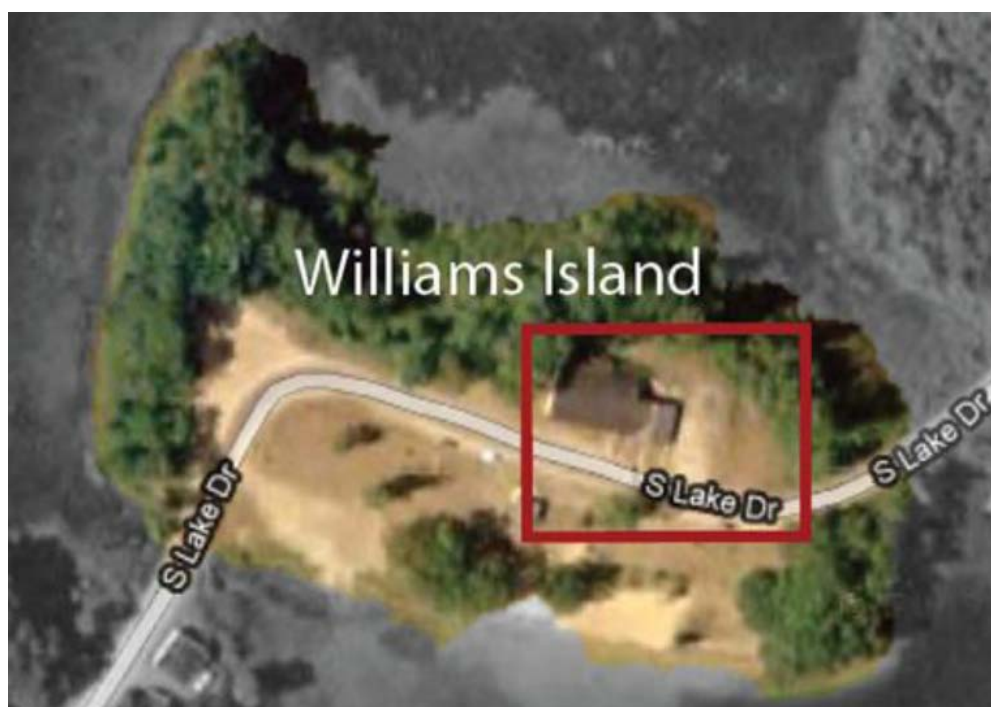


Figure 18: Williams Island, with Vacant Flamingo Club Marked in Red. Google Map modified by Jacobsen Daniels Associates, 2010.

The modest appearance of the Flamingo Club belies its former popularity. Founded in 1949, the Flamingo Club was one of Idlewild's best loved nightclubs, hosting rhythm and blues entertainers LaVern Baker and Little Willie John, the musical comedy duo Butterbeans and Susie, and many others (Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009). The Flamingo Club remained a centerpiece of Idlewild's entertainment landscape until it succumbed to declining tourism in the late 1960s. However, the vacant Flamingo Club building has survived to the present and—although in need of much repair—still holds potential for rehabilitation, according to a recent development feasibility study that is summarized in the Recent Planning Activities and Reports section of this paper (Jacobsen Daniels Associates Inc., 2011).

Figure 19 shows a historical image of Phil Giles' Flamingo Club. The photo appears to have been taken shortly after its closure, as the entrance seems to be boarded up but the original sign and awnings are still intact. (Although the sign in this photo refers to the establishment as the Flamingo Bar, all available reference documents refer to it as Phil Giles' Flamingo Club.)



Figure 19: Historical Exterior Image of Phil Giles' Flamingo Club, 1002 East Martin Luther King Drive. Photo undated; retrieved from Nolan, 2002.

Figure 20 shows a historical image of the Flamingo Club's interior. In contrast with the building's plain exterior, the interior was beautifully decorated with a pink and blue color scheme, a wall-length flamingo mural, and a bar in knotty pine.



Figure 20: Historical Interior Photo of the Flamingo Club, 1002 East Martin Luther King Drive. Postcard image courtesy of Robert Christensen, reproduced in Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

Figures 21-24 show recent photographs of the still-intact flamingo mural, the exterior of the vacant Flamingo Club, and the beach at Williams Island.



Figure 21: Recent Closeup Photo of Mural at Flamingo Club. Jacobsen Daniels Associates, 2011.



Figure 22: Phil Giles' Flamingo Club, 1002 E. Martin Luther King Drive. Photo by Emilio Voltaire, 2013.



Figure 23: View of the Beach at Williams Island, Showing Phil Giles' Flamingo Club (Right) and Outbuilding (Center). Jacobsen Daniels Associates, 2011.



Figure 24: View of the Beach at Williams Island, Looking South. Photo by Nathalie Winans, 2013.

Figure 25 shows one of the two road crossings from Williams Island to Idlewild’s “downtown.” These relatively recent crossings were constructed over culverts, which make it difficult to see that Williams Island is actually an island and restrict the flow of water between the north and south ends of Idlewild Lake (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009).



Figure 25: Bridge from Williams Island to “Downtown.” Photo by Emilio Voltaire, 2013.

Idlewild Neighborhood Commercial District

Idlewild's "downtown" neighborhood commercial district, located immediately southwest of Williams Island, once housed a cluster of small businesses such as LeeJon's Confectionery and Gift Shop, Winburn's House of Beauty, the Homesite Realty Company, and Rosana's Tea Room; most of these structures are gone today (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009).

However, several key historic buildings remain, including the former Rosana's Tea Room (now in business as the Red Rooster Tavern); a U.S. Post Office (in use as same); the former Chamber of Commerce building (vacant); the Tabernacle AME Church (in use as same), and the former LeeJon's, which rented boats and bicycles and sold bait, tackle, and refreshments (renamed the Idlewild Party Store and now vacant). These buildings could form the nucleus of a revitalized Idlewild business district that would complement recreational uses on Williams Island.

Much of the neighborhood commercial district is vacant, offering the potential for new commercial development. Figure 26 shows the district with the locations of key historic buildings. Figure 27 shows the ownership status of the business district. Photos of key historic structures in the commercial district are shown in Figures 28-31.

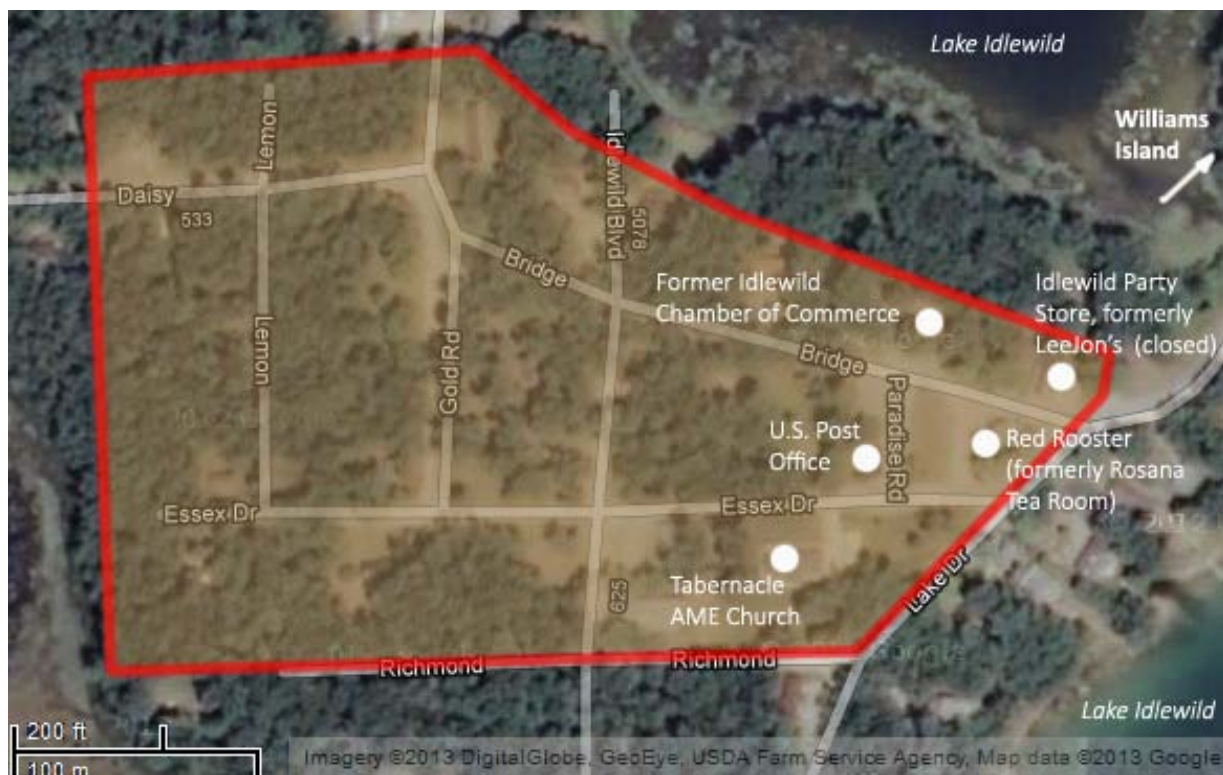


Figure 26: Idlewild Neighborhood Commercial District. Google Map (2013) with district boundaries and business names added.

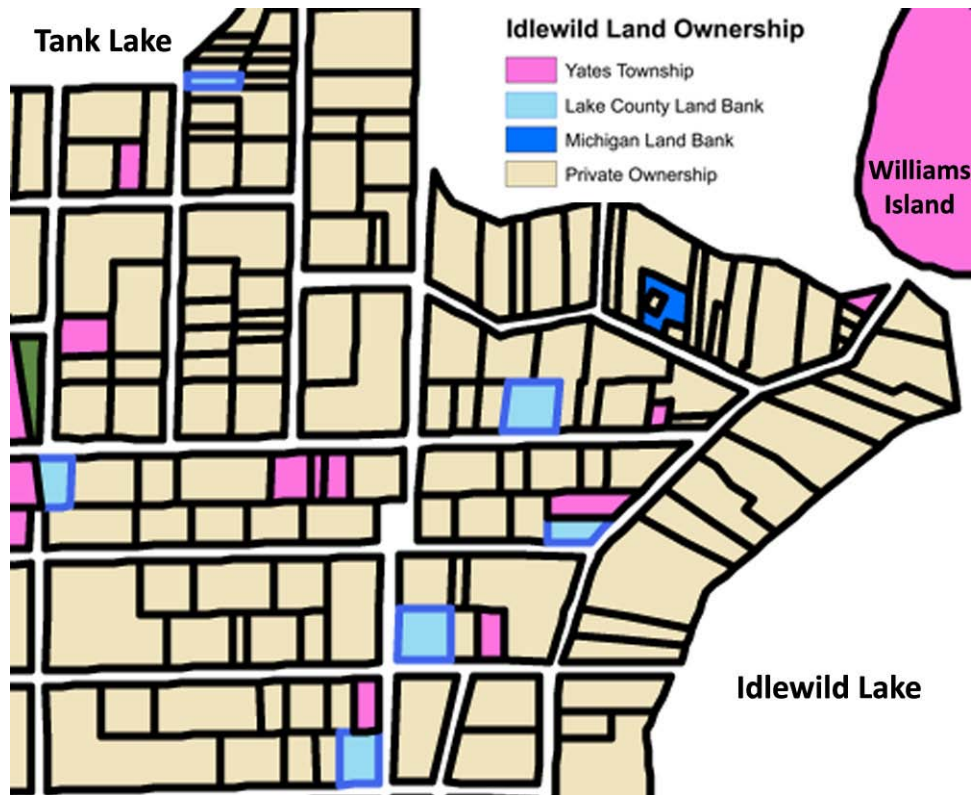


Figure 27: Property Ownership in Idlewild Neighborhood Commercial District. Map generated from GIS files supplied by Lake County, 2013.



Figure 28: Former Idlewild Chamber of Commerce, 870 E. Martin Luther King Drive. Photo by Nathalie Winans, 2013.



Figure 29: Idlewild Party Store, Formerly LeeJon's Confectionery and Gift Shop (Vacant), 880 Martin Luther King Drive. Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.



Figure 30: Idlewild Post Office, 812 E. Essex St. Photo by Nathalie Winans, 2013.



Figure 31: Tabernacle A.M.E. Church, 765 E. Essex Drive. (Across the street from the vacant parcel above). Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

As noted above, large portions of the downtown are vacant. Figure 32 shows a large vacant lot on Essex Drive, next to the post office. Based on the land ownership map (Figure 27), this property appears to be owned by the Lake County Land Bank.



Figure 32: Large Parcel of Vacant Land Facing Essex Street, West of Post Office. Photo by Nathalie Winans, 2013.

Broadway and Entrance to Idlewild

The main entrance to Idlewild is located at the junction of US-10 and Broadway Street. This intersection is marked with decorative signage and landscaping installed recently by members of the Idlewild community and leads to Broadway Avenue, the main corridor by which most visitors reach Idlewild. Possibly the most notable landmark in the area near the entrance is the Casa Blanca Hotel, built in 1949 (Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009) and currently vacant. The intersection and nearby historic landmarks are shown in Figure 33.

The Yates Township master plan (2010) recommends creating a business corridor from the existing “downtown” area across Williams Island and up Broadway. Except for Williams Island and the existing neighborhood commercial district, the entire corridor is currently zoned for residential use. However, according to an interviewee who serves on the Yates Township Planning Commission, Yates Township will soon begin developing a new zoning ordinance, which will likely allow for commercial use along the Broadway corridor if it follows the recommendations in the comprehensive plan.



Figure 33: Entrance to Idlewild and Nearby Landmarks. Map by ESRI (2013) with landmark information added.

Figure 34 shows the land ownership status of the area surrounding Broadway Street. Much of the property to the east of Broadway is owned by the federal government. The Lake County Land Bank owns many properties between Broadway and Williams Island, and Yates Township owns several properties in this area as well.

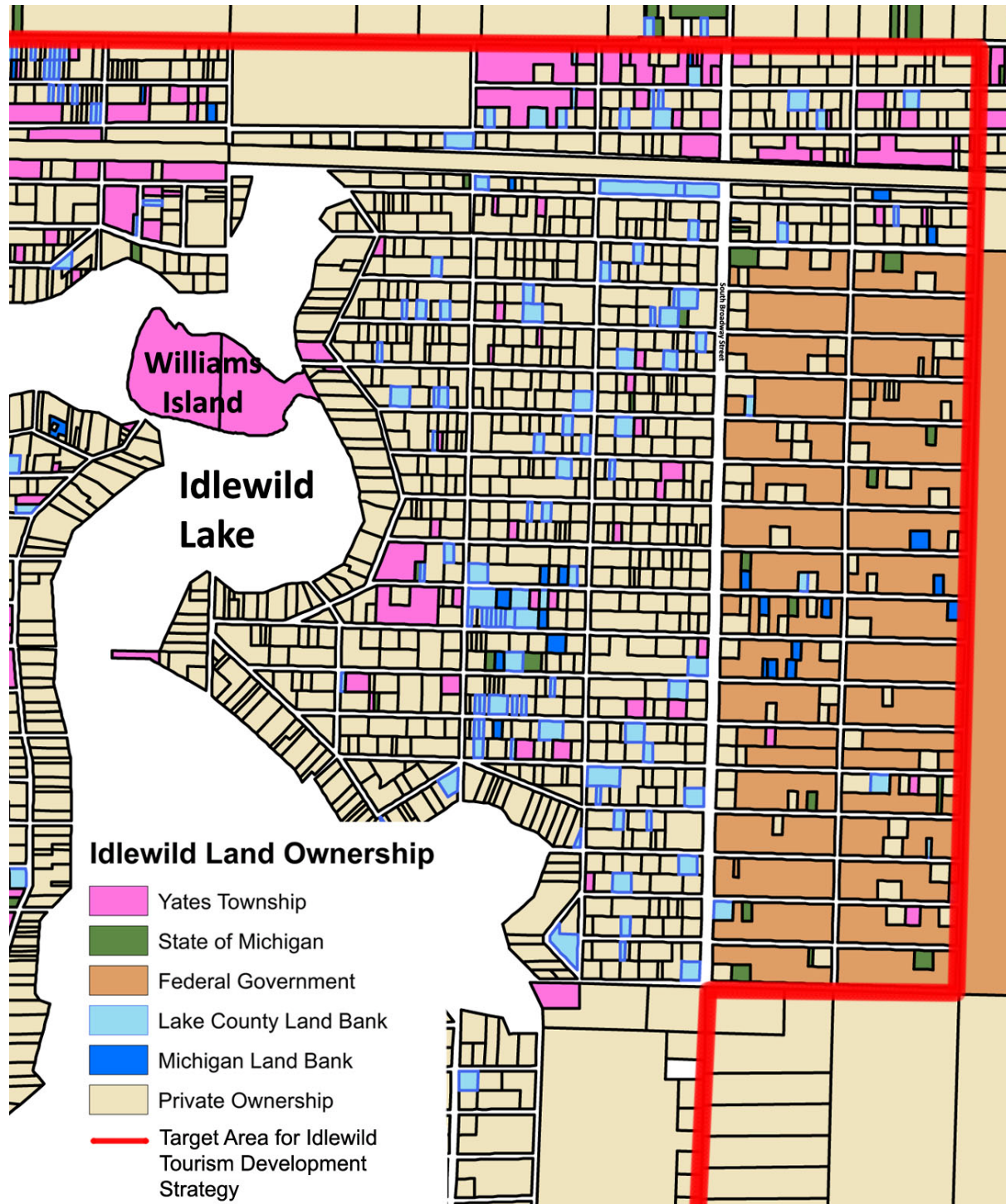


Figure 34: Land Ownership in Area Surrounding Broadway Street. Map generated from GIS files supplied by Lake County, 2013.

Figures 35 through 44 show key historic structures in the vicinity of Broadway. The vacant Casa Blanca hotel, constructed in 1949 by architect and builder Woolsey Coombs (Cultural Resources Management Plan, 2009), is shown in Figures 35 and 36.



Figure 35: Casa Blanca Hotel, 1396 E. Hall Road (Vacant). Photo by Emilio Voltaire, 2013.

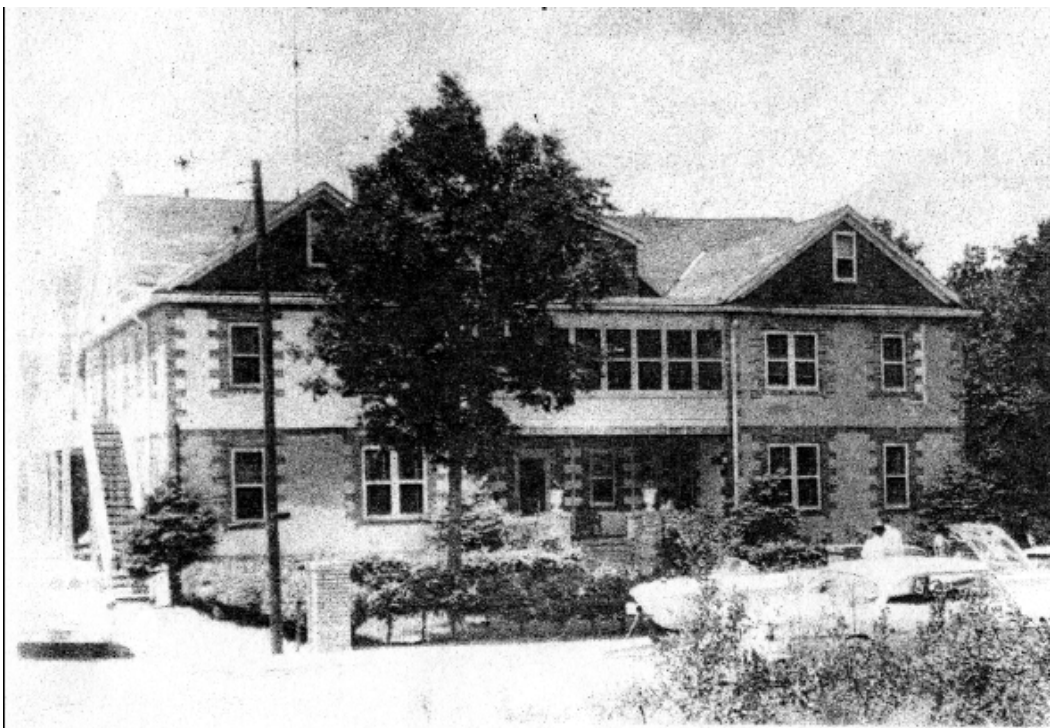


Figure 36: Historical Photo of Casa Blanca Hotel. Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

The next two photographs show the seasonal homes of famous doctors. Figure 37 is the house of Daniel Hale Williams, the first person to perform a successful open-heart surgery. Figure 38 is the residence of Ida Gray Nelson Rollins, the first African American woman to earn a doctorate of dental surgery. Both doctors lived and worked in Chicago (ibid.).



Figure 37: Daniel Hale Williams Residence, 15712 Lake Drive. Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.



Figure 38: Rollins/Hudson House, 14712 Lake Drive. Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

Figure 39 shows the house of Charles Waddell Chesnutt, a popular author and attorney whose main residence was in Cleveland. Figure 40 is “Bayview,” designed by and constructed for Henry Gregory, an electrical contractor from Detroit who installed Idlewild’s first electrical generator system (ibid.).



Figure 39: Charles Waddell Chesnutt House, 14240 Lake Drive. Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.



Figure 40: “Bayview,” 14180 Lake Drive. Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

Figure 41 shows the Robert Riffe Youth Center, owned by the Idlewild Lot Owners Association (ILOA). Formed in 1921, ILOA is the oldest active homeowners' association in Idlewild. Figure 42 shows the Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center, formerly the Yates Township Hall; the building was renovated by Five-Cap Inc. with federal Enterprise Community funding (ibid.).



Figure 41: Idlewild Lot Owners Association Bldg., 11330 Lake Drive. Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.



Figure 42: Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center, 7025 S. Broadway. Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

Figure 43 shows the Detroit Idlewilders' Clubhouse. The Detroit Idlewilders are one of six Idlewilders' Clubs that were established to maintain the friendships formed in Idlewild (ibid.). The Detroit club is the only one with property in the historic district; however, all Idlewilders' Clubs visit on the second week of August for Idlewild Week.



Figure 43: Detroit Idlewilders' Club House, 13174 Lake Drive. Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

Figure 44 shows the new sign at US-10 and Broadway, the main entrance to Idlewild.



Figure 44: Entrance Sign at US-10 and Broadway Street. Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009.

Land Cover in Idlewild

The Idlewild National Register Historic District is subdivided into thousands of small parcels, many of which contain cottages and other small buildings. However, even at the peak of its popularity in the 1950s, Idlewild retained its significant cover of second-growth forest (Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2010). This still true of Idlewild today, creating the visual impression of a collection of cottages in the woods. Idlewild's rural character is illustrated by the satellite map in Figure 45.

The region around Idlewild is also heavily forested. The area encompassing Idlewild and Yates Township is classified as pine, aspen, and birch forestland (U.S. Forest Service, undated).

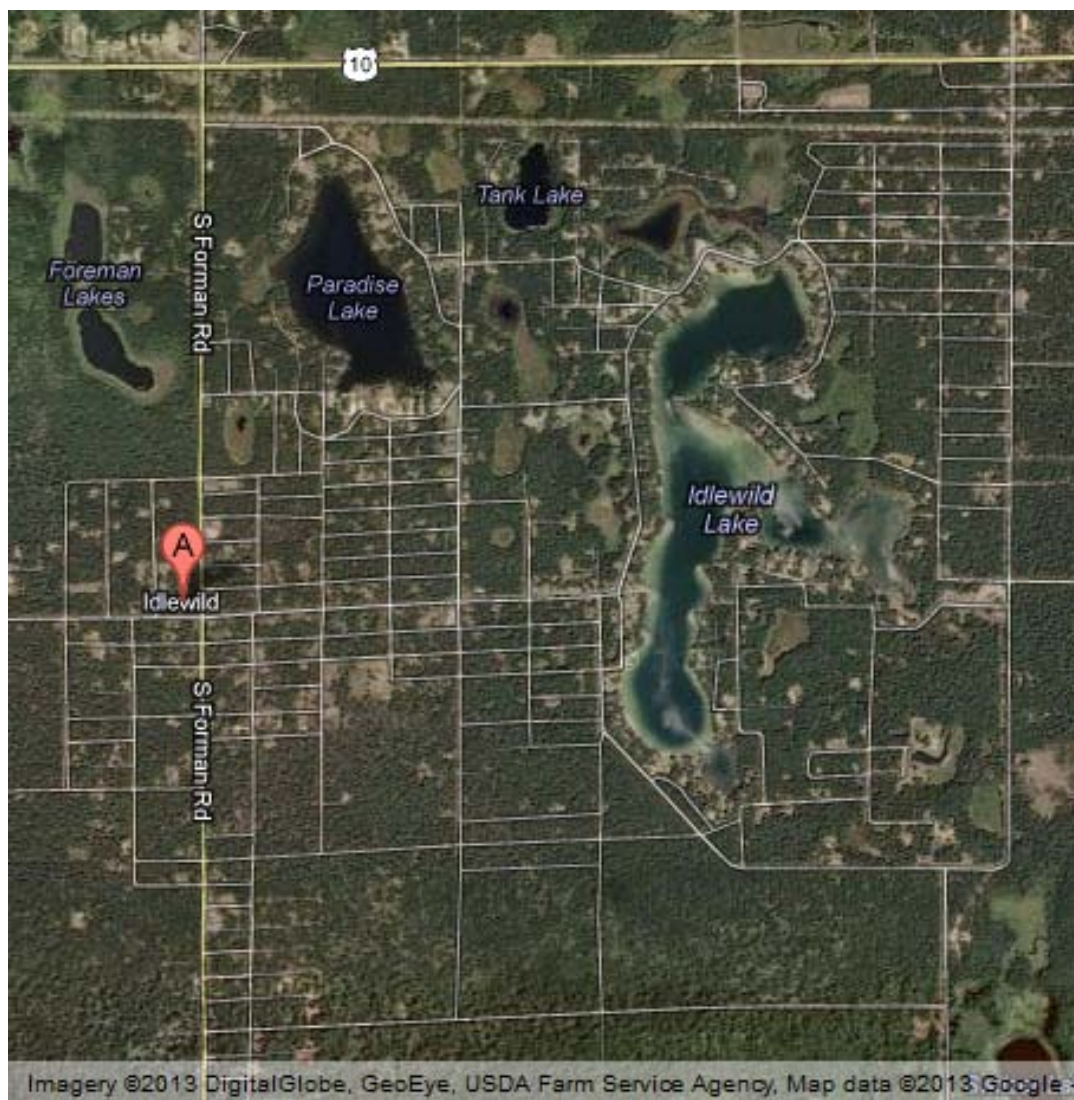


Figure 45: Satellite Map of Idlewild. Google, 2013.

Another notable land cover feature in Idlewild is its wildflowers. According to the U.S. Forest Service (2011), the sandy soil within and around Idlewild boasts one of the most impressive displays of savannah/barrens wildflower species in the mid-Michigan region. These displays occur throughout the growing season and could be leveraged as an additional attraction for spring, summer, and autumn tourism. Examples are shown in Figures 46 and 47.



Figure 46: Smooth Yellow False Foxglove (*Aureolaria flava*). This species is rare in the Huron-Manistee National Forest but abundant in Idlewild. U.S. Forest Service, 2011.



Figure 47: Assorted Wildflowers on the Corner of Broadway and Baldwin Streets in Idlewild. U.S. Forest Service, 2011.

SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE

The purpose of this section is to understand long-term trends in the socioeconomic health of Yates Township and Lake County. Data sources include U.S. Census records from 1990, 2000, and 2010. Where ten-year Census data were not available, comparable American Community Survey data were used; this was particularly true of the 2010 census, as full census records for that year were not yet available at the time this report was written.

To provide a frame of reference for understanding the findings, the profile includes data for the State of Michigan where feasible. The findings are presented in three subsections: a Social Profile, an Educational Profile, and an Economic Profile.

Note on Census Tract Changes

The analysis of socioeconomic trends in Yates Township is complicated by a change in census tract boundaries during the study period. In 1990, the Yates tract encompassed only Yates Township and part of Chase Township. The tract size increased significantly in 2000, adding Pleasant Plains, Lake, and parts of Sweetwater and Webber Townships (including all of the village of Baldwin). In 2010, the tract shrank somewhat to encompass Yates, Chase, and parts of Pleasant Plains, Webber, Cherry Valley, and Pinora Townships (including half of the village of Baldwin). The change in tract size is shown in Figure 48.

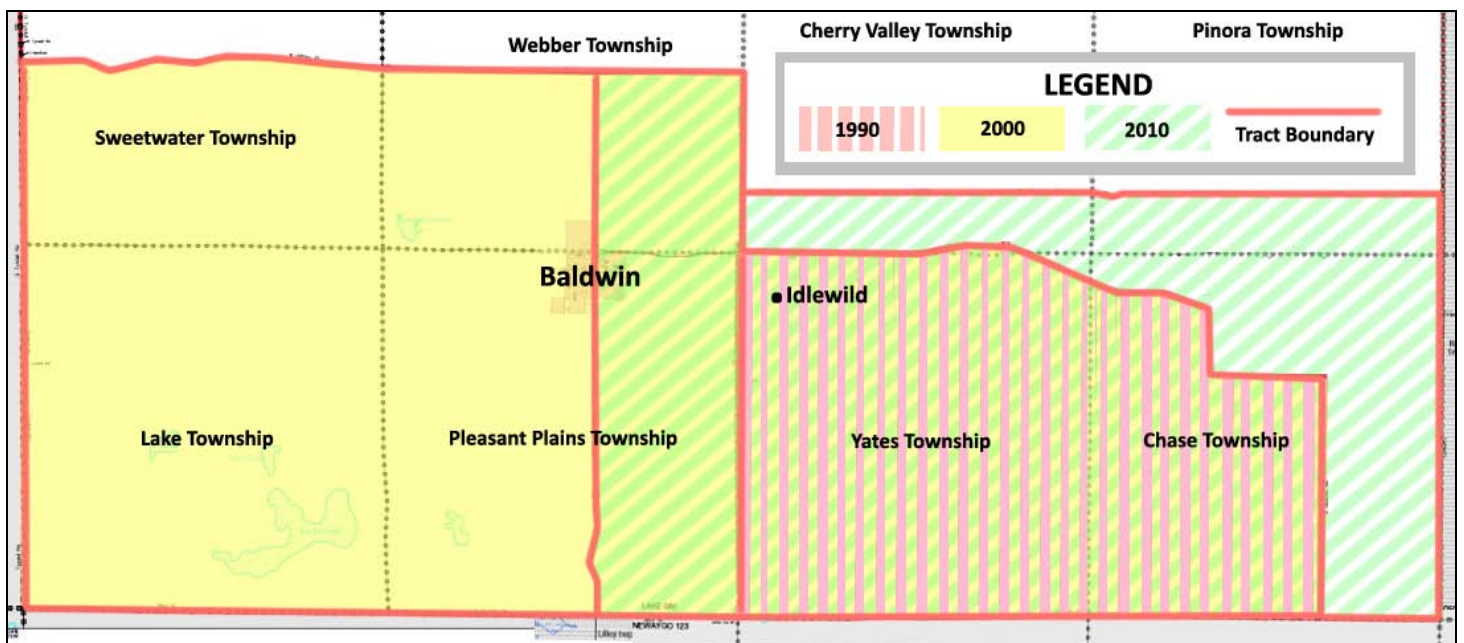


Figure 48: Census Tract Encompassing Yates Township, 1990-2010. Composite map created by practicum team from U.S. Census Bureau maps (2002 and 2011).

These changes in census-tract size must be considered when interpreting the demographic changes that have occurred in Yates Township in the last 20 years, and their implications are discussed further in the subsections below. The data for Lake County provide a useful frame of reference for understanding the changes that occurred in Yates Township, as Lake County is also sparsely populated and its census boundaries did not change during the study period.

Social Profile

The social profile provides information on demographic changes in the study area, including trends in population size, age, and race.

Population

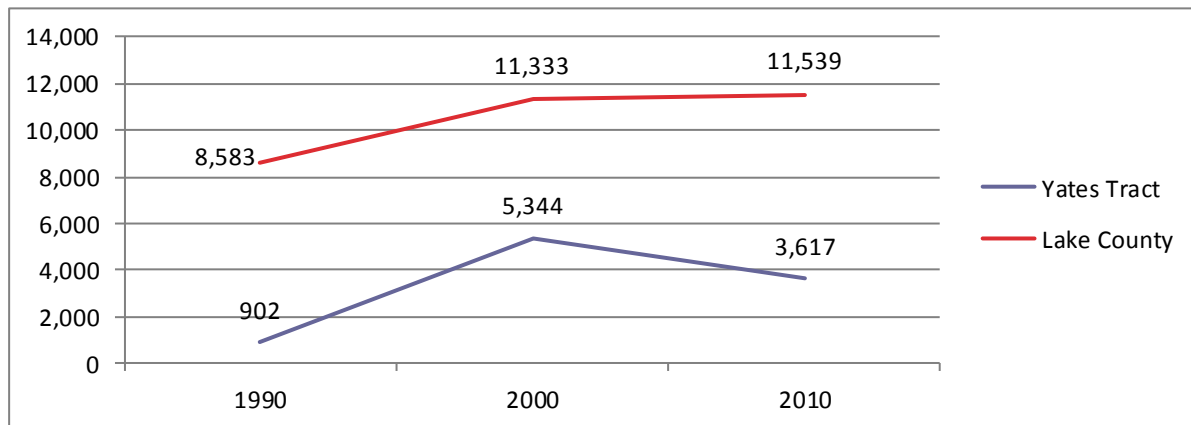


Figure 49: Population of Yates Tract and Lake County, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

As shown in Figure 49, Lake County experienced population growth from 1990 to 2000, but its growth leveled off considerably from 2000 to 2010. The interpretation of population change in Yates Township is complicated by the changes in its census tract, which grew sharply from 1990 to 2000 and then shrank somewhat from 2000 to 2010. Actual population trends in Yates Township over the 20-year period appear similar to those for Lake County, whose population increased 32% from 1990 to 2000 and then leveled off (increasing only 1.8%) in the last ten years. Population change in Michigan (not pictured) followed a trajectory somewhat similar to that of Lake County, growing 6.9% in 1990-2000 and declining slightly (0.6%) from 2000-2010 (U.S. Census, 1990, 2000, 2010).

Age

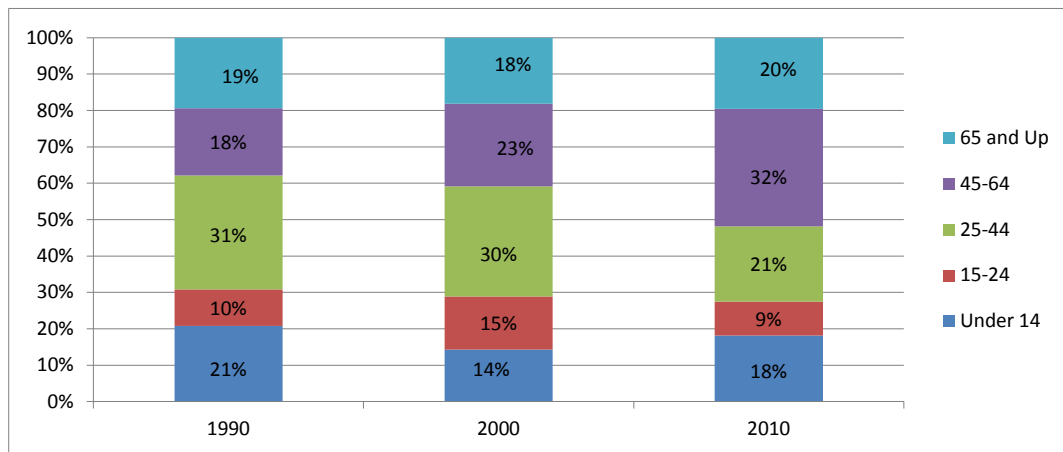


Figure 50: Population by Age in Yates Census Tract, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

As shown in Figure 50, the proportion of older residents in the Yates tract is increasing. Despite the significant shrinkage of the census tract from 2000 to 2010, the percentage of residents aged 65 and up held steady, and persons aged 45-64 increased by nine percent.

The net increase in the age of the population can be seen more clearly in Lake County (Figure 51). Again, the strongest population gains were for individuals aged 45 and up. The percentage of residents aged 25 or under decreased steadily throughout the study period.

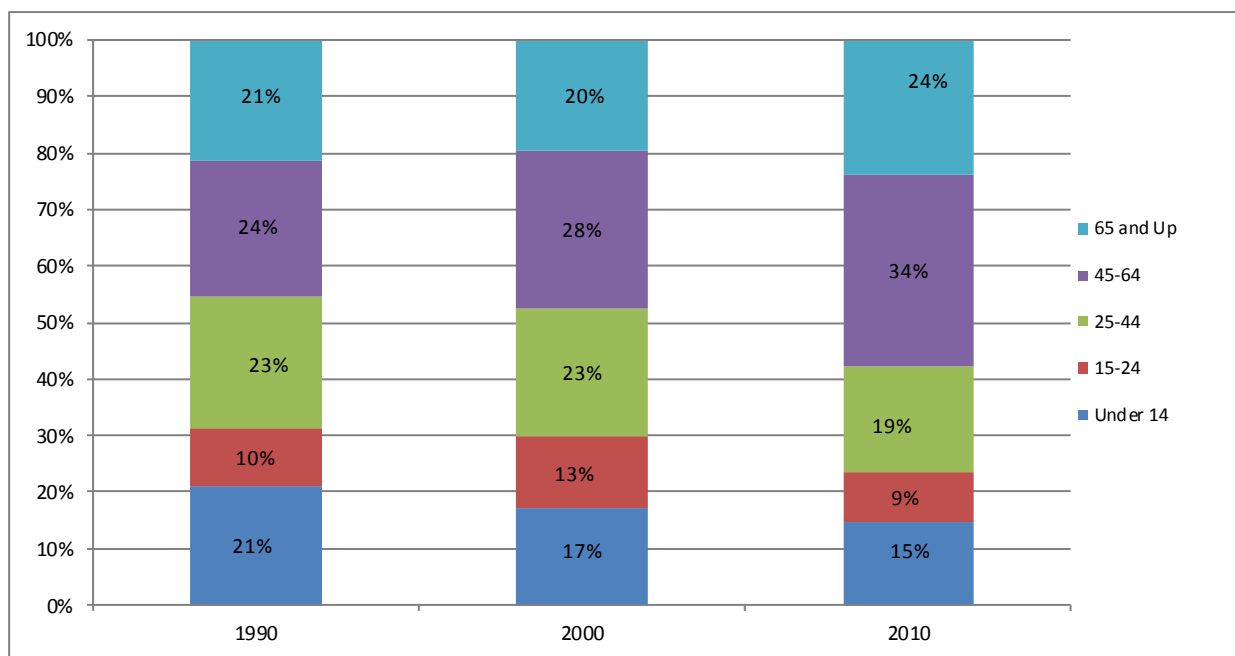


Figure 51: Population by Age in Lake County, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Race

As shown in Table 3, the Yates tract appeared to register a significant decline in the percentage of residents who were African American between 1990 and 2000—again, a possible reflection of the change in census tract dimensions. However, Lake County also registered a steady (but much slower) decline in African American residents. Meanwhile, African American populations held steady in the state of Michigan.

Table 3: Racial Composition of Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010

	Yates Tract			Lake County			Michigan		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
White	55.2 %	72.1%	79.3%	85 %	84.7%	87%	83.4%	80.2%	79%
Black	43.6%	22.8%	16.8%	13.3%	11.2%	9.2%	13.9%	14.2%	14.2%
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	.8%	1.4%	.9%	.9%	1%	.8%	.6%	.6%	.6%
Asian or Pacific Islander	0%	.2%	.1%	.1%	.2%	.2%	1.1%	1.8%	2.4%
Other	0%	3.5%	2.9%	0%	2.9%	2.9%	.9%	3.2%	3.8%

Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Educational Profile

Education can be an important indicator of the potential for economic growth due to the availability of skilled workers to take jobs or start businesses of their own. An educational profile of Yates Township, Lake County, and the state of Michigan is provided in this section.

School Enrollment Levels

As shown in Table 4, school enrollment for Yates Township and Lake County was consistently lower than that of the state of Michigan, and it declined at a much faster rate than state-level enrollment. The data apply to the entire population over three years of age.

Table 4: School Enrollment for Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010

<i>Persons over 3 years of age</i>	Yates Tract			Lake County			Michigan		
	1990	2000	2010*	1990	2000	2010*	1990	2000	2010*
Enrolled	25.1%	21%	15.4%	23.9%	21.1%	20.2%	29.1%	29.1%	28.8%
Not Enrolled	74.9%	79%	84.6%	76.1%	78.9%	79.9%	70.9%	70.9%	71.3%

Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

*Five-year American Community Survey data.

Figure 52 provides a visualization of the change in enrollment in the Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan from 1990 to 2010.

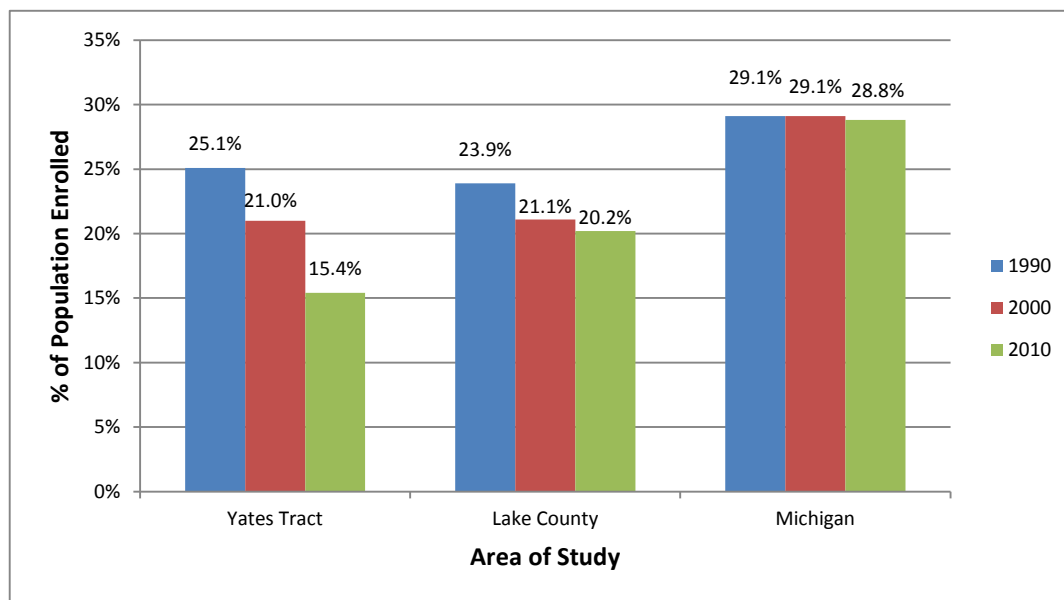


Figure 52: Enrollment in the Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Educational Attainment

As shown in Table 5, the Yates tract and Lake County area have a high proportion of high school graduates. However, the attainment of bachelor's and master's degrees in these areas is below that of the state of Michigan.

Table 5: Educational Attainment for Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010

<i>Persons 25 and older</i>	Yates Tract			Lake County			Michigan		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
Less than High School	28.9%	29.4%	22.3%	38.7%	27.8%	20.3%	23.2%	16.6%	12.0%
High School Graduate	44.6%	34.8%	44.8%	36.6%	39.8%	44.5%	32.2%	31.3%	31.5%
Some College	19.8%	26.9%	27.7%	18.1%	24.6%	26.7%	27.1%	30.3%	31.6%
Bachelor's Degree	3.3%	5.8%	5.2%	4.6%	5.6%	6.1%	10.9%	13.7%	15.5%
Master's	3.4%	2.3%	0%	2.0%	1.7%	2.2%	6.4%	5.7%	7.0%
Professional Degree	NA	.6%	0%	NA	.5%	.1%	NA	1.6%	1.7%
Doctorate	NA	.2%	0%	NA	.1%	.1%	NA	.8%	.9%

Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Figures 53, 54, and 55 provide a visualization of educational attainment in the three study areas.

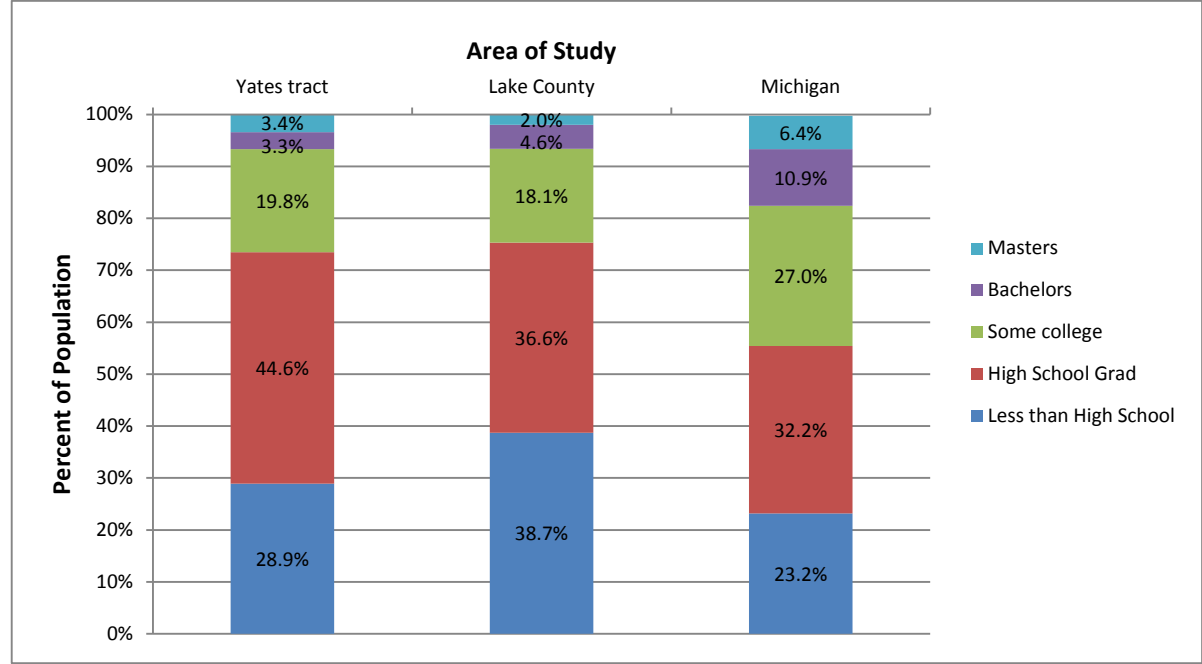


Figure 53: 1990 Educational Attainment in the Yates tract, Lake County, and Michigan. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

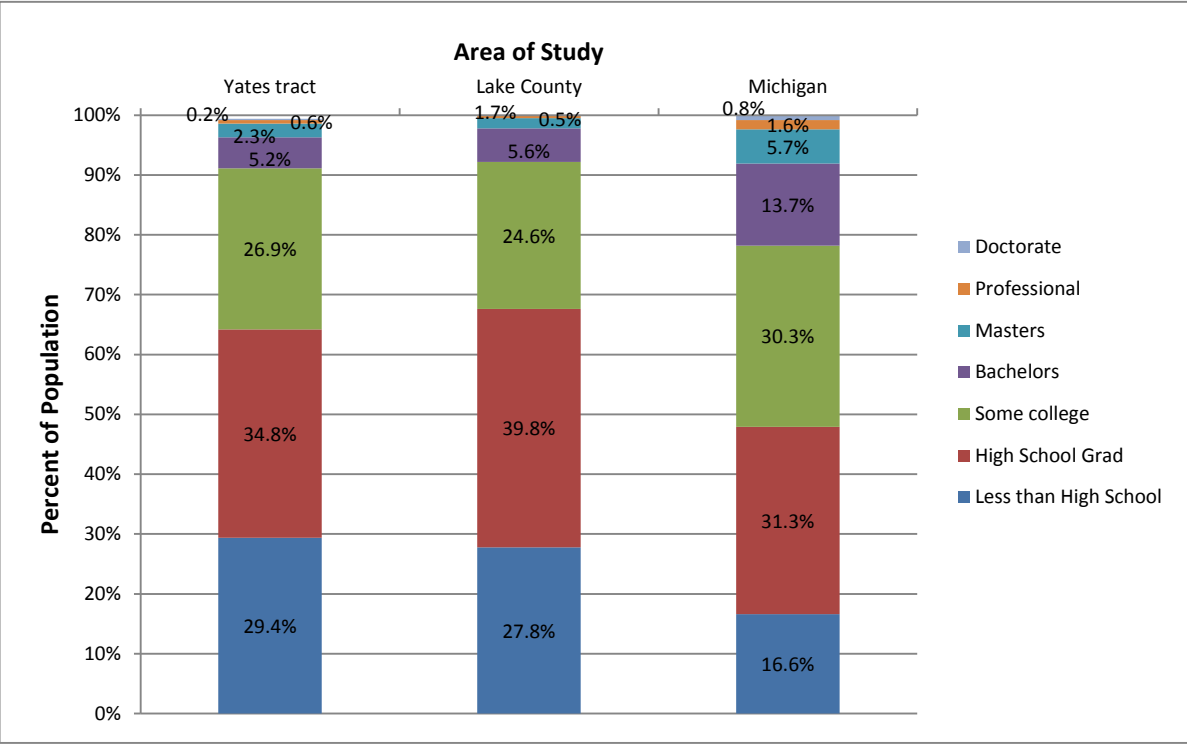


Figure 54: 2000 Educational Attainment in the Yates tract, Lake County, and Michigan. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

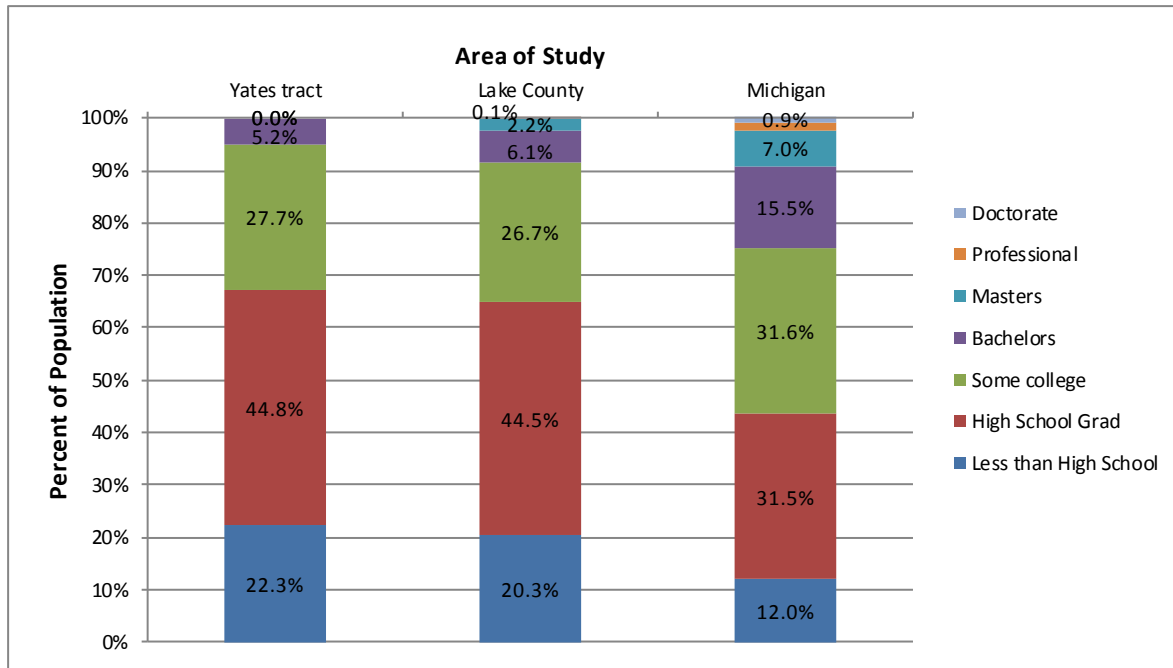


Figure 55: 2010 Educational Attainment in the Yates tract, Lake County, and Michigan. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

High School Graduation/Enrollment and Dropout Rate

High school graduation/enrollment and dropout rates are shown in Table 6. Both the Yates tract and Lake County registered a dramatic increase in high school dropout rates from 1990 to 2000, then experienced an even more pronounced decrease by 2010. In contrast, Michigan dropout rates declined steadily during the study period; in 2010, dropout rates were slightly higher for the Yates tract and Lake County than for the state of Michigan. It is unclear why the Yates tract and Lake County experienced such a significant rise and fall in dropout rates during the study period.

Table 6: High School Dropout Rates for Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010

<i>Persons aged 16-19 years</i>	Yates Tract			Lake County			Michigan		
	1990	2000	2010*	1990	2000	2010*	1990	2000	2010*
Not High School Grad – Dropped out	7.3%	35.9%	0%	9.2%	25.1%	6.7%	10%	8.7%	5.5%
High school grad, or enrolled	92.7%	64.2%	100%	90.8%	74.9%	93.3%	90%	91.3%	94.5%

Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

*Five-year American Community Survey data.

Figure 56 provides a visualization of high school graduation/enrollment trends in the three study areas.

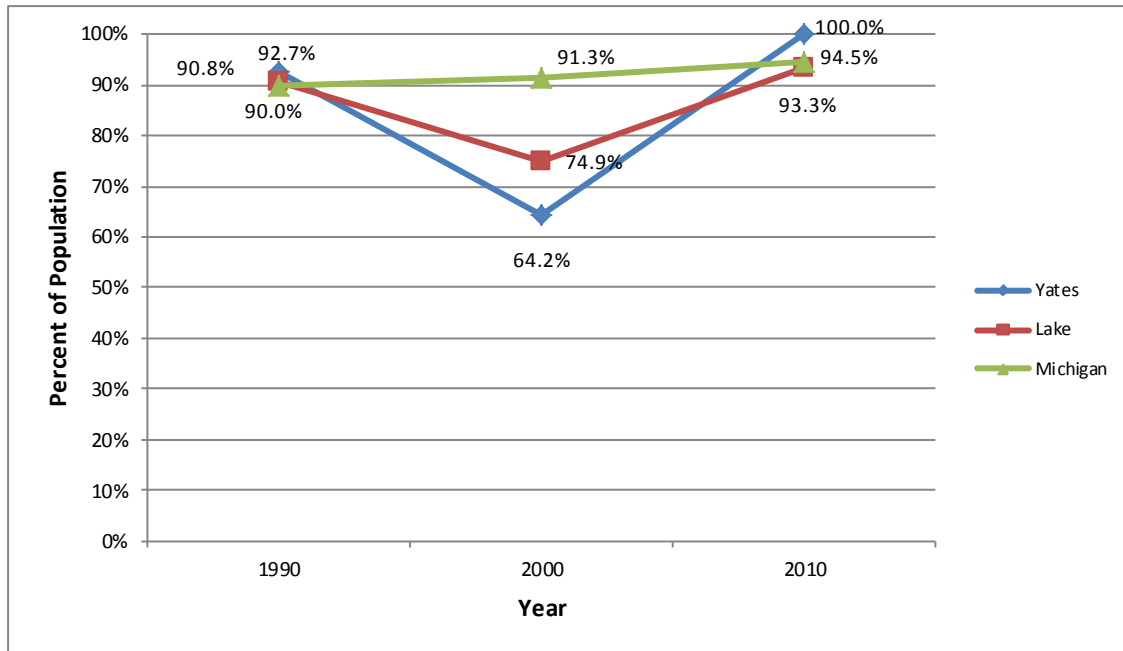


Figure 56: High School Graduation/Enrollment Rates in the Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Economic Profile

The following section details average household income; employment and unemployment; income below poverty level; households receiving public assistance; and housing patterns in Yates Township, Lake County, and Michigan.

Average Household Income

As shown in Figure 57, average household income for the Yates tract and Lake County is much lower than the average for the state of Michigan. The Michigan average is nearly double that of the Yates tract throughout the study period.

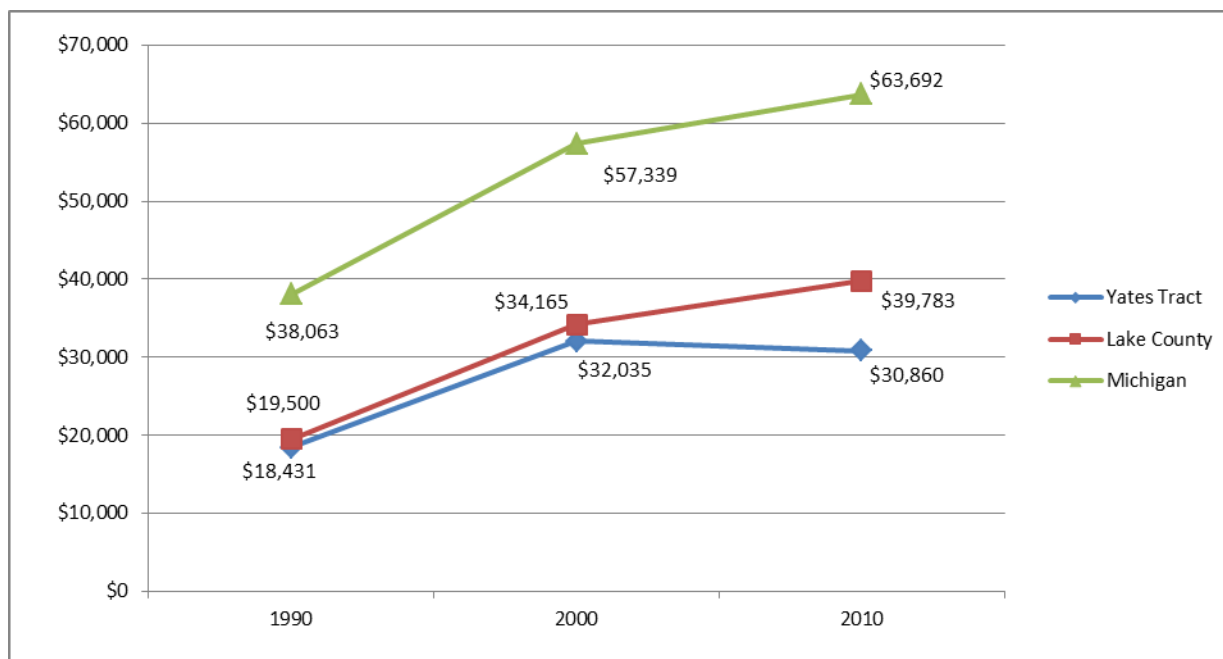


Figure 57: Average Household Income in the Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Employment, Unemployment, and Labor Force Participation

As shown in Table 7, the labor force is similar in Yates Township and Lake County, and much lower than in the State of Michigan. Employment is consistently lower than the state average, and unemployment began much higher than the state average but is currently lower than the state average.

Table 7: Employment, Unemployment, and Labor Force Participation, 1990-2010

<i>Persons over 16 years of age</i>	Yates Tract			Lake County			Michigan		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010*	1990	2000	2010
In Labor Force	45.8%	42.9%	45.8%	41.4%	46.4%	42.2%	64.1%	64.6%	63.1%
Employed	78.7%	39.2%	39.9%	82.4%	42.5%	35.7%	91.8%	60.8%	55.8%
Unemployed	21.3%	3.8%	5.9%	17.6%	3.9%	6.5%	8.2%	3.7%	7.3%

Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Income Below Poverty Level

As shown in Figure 58, the poverty levels in Lake County and Yates Township were significantly higher than in the state of Michigan in 1990, but they leveled off with the county and state levels in 2000 and 2010. The very significant increase in population at or above poverty level in Yates Township from 2000 to 2010 may have been a result of the change in the census tract encompassing the township during that period.

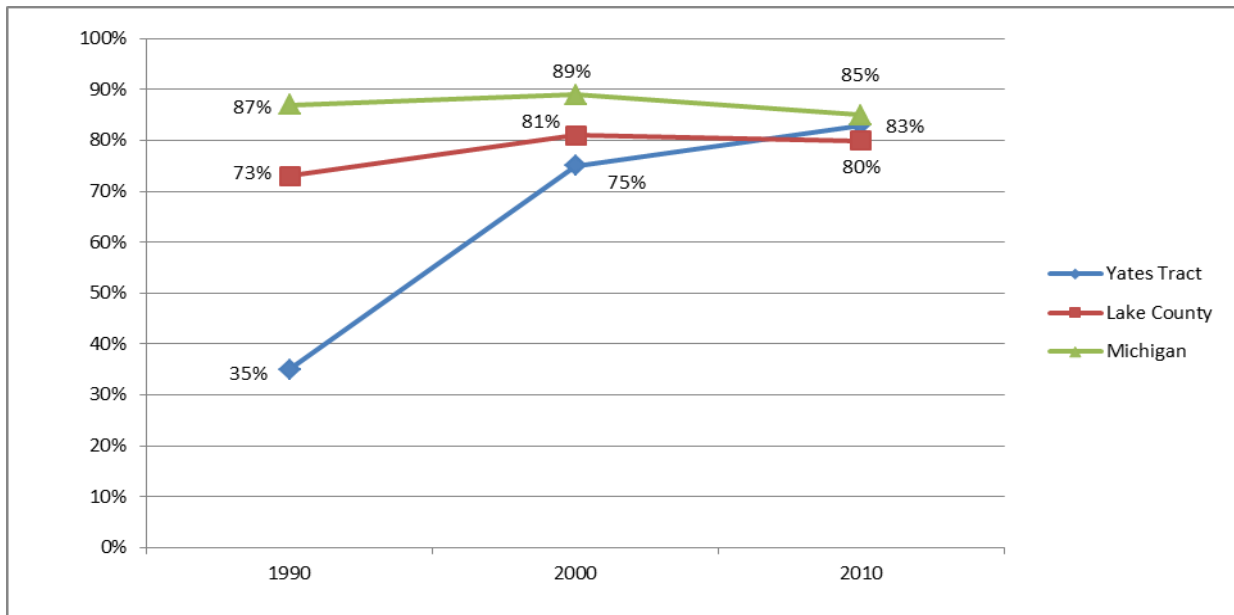


Figure 58: Population At or Above Poverty Level in the Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010.
Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Households Receiving Public Assistance Income

As shown in Figure 59, all three study areas have seen a drop in the number of households receiving public assistance. Public assistance levels in the Yates tract and Lake County, once much higher than the state average, are now comparable to the state average.

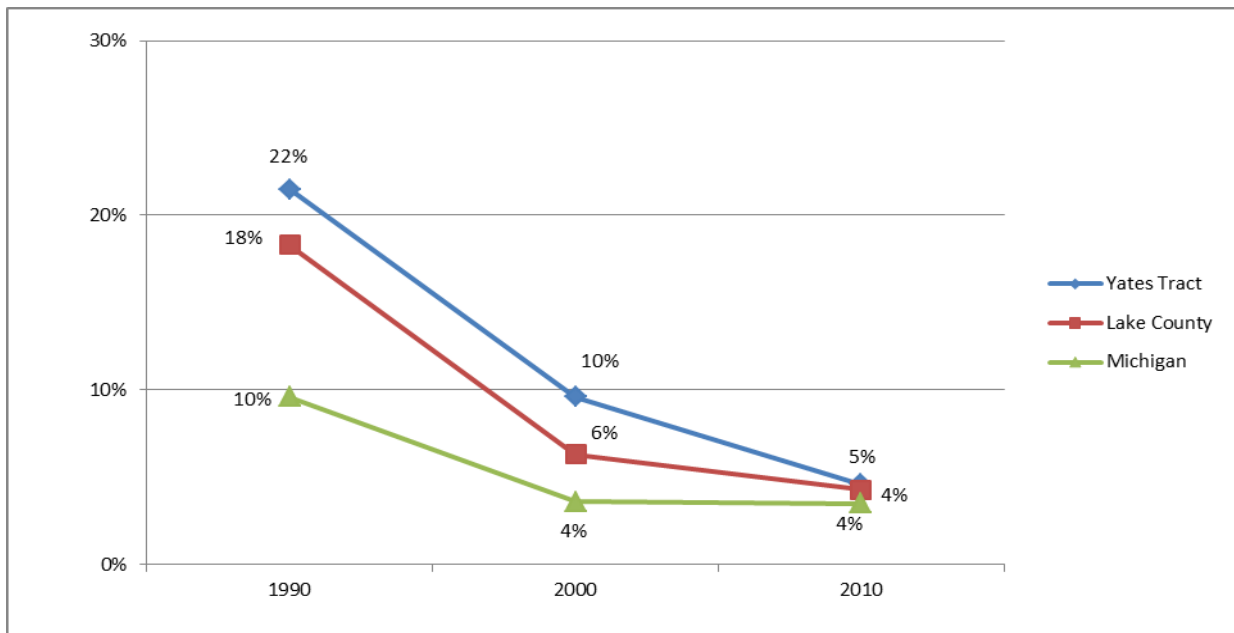


Figure 59: Households Receiving Public Assistance Income in Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010.
Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Housing Units

As shown in Table 8, Lake County and Michigan had an increase of housing structures, indicating steady growth. The dramatic rise and decline in the number of housing units in the Yates tract is perhaps a function of the change in census tracts from 1990 to 2010.

Table 8: Housing Units in Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010

	Yates Tract			Lake County			Michigan		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
Housing units	1,269	6,599	4,008	12,114	13,498	14,966	3,847,926	4,234,279	4,532,233

Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Housing Occupancy and Vacancy

As shown in Table 9, housing vacancies exceed housing occupancies in both the Yates tract and Lake County during the entire study period. The “vacant housing” category of the Census includes seasonal, recreational, and occasional housing (Mazur & Wilson, 2011). According to MEDC and the MSU Extension (2005), 61% of Lake County’s housing is seasonal/recreational (see Table 12); these seasonal residences appear to account for the large proportion of vacant housing found by the Census.

Table 9: Housing Occupancy in Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010

	Yates Tract			Lake County			Michigan		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
Total units	1,269	6,599	4,008	12,114	13,498	14,966	3,847,926	4,234,279	4,532,233
Occupied	29%	33%	40%	29%	35%	34%	89%	89%	85%
Vacant	71%	67%	60%	71%	65%	66%	11%	11%	15%

Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Housing Vacancy Status

As shown in Table 10, housing vacancy status changed little from 1990 to 2000 in the three study areas but shifted from 2000 to 2010. The percentage of units for sale increased significantly in all three study areas—from 2% to 88% in the Yates tract, from 2% to 92% in Lake County, and from 10% to 55% in the state of Michigan.

Table 10: Housing Vacancy Status in Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010

	Yates Tract			Lake County			Michigan		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
Total vacant units	905	4,449	2,416	8,578	8,794	9,808	428,595	448,618	659,725
For rent	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	18%	16%	22%
For sale	2%	2%	88%	1%	2%	92%	7%	10%	55%
Other	97%	97%	10%	98%	97%	7%	75%	74%	23%

Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Seasonal Residency Patterns

Table 11 compares seasonal residency in Lake County with that of its contiguous counties.

Table 11: Seasonal Residency Patterns in Lake County Region

County	Total Population	Total Housing Units	Seasonal Housing Units	Percentage of Housing Units that are Seasonal
Lake	11,333	13,498	8,235	61%
Manistee	24527	14272	3488	24.4%
Mason	28274	27739	3774	23.5%
Newaygo	47874	23202	4394	18.9%
Mecosta	40553	19593	3611	18.4%
Wexford	30484	14872	3048	14.8%

Source: Michigan Economic Development Corporation and Michigan State University Extension, 2005.

The data indicate that nearly two out of three (61%) Lake County housing units are seasonal homes. This means that 8,235 out of the 11,333 homes could be occupied only seasonally, increasing Lake County's population during the peak months of spring and summer (see Figure 50 on the next page). Compared to the other counties, Lake County has the smallest population but the highest number of seasonal homes. It also has more housing units than people counted in the Census, which generally takes place in April.

Median Year Structure Built

As shown in Figure 60, the median construction year of housing structures increased steadily from 1990 to 2010 in all three study areas. When average housing age is aggregated over the 20-year period, housing in the Yates tract is slightly older than in Lake County (43 years in the Yates tract versus 39 years in the county) but younger than in the state of Michigan (49 years).

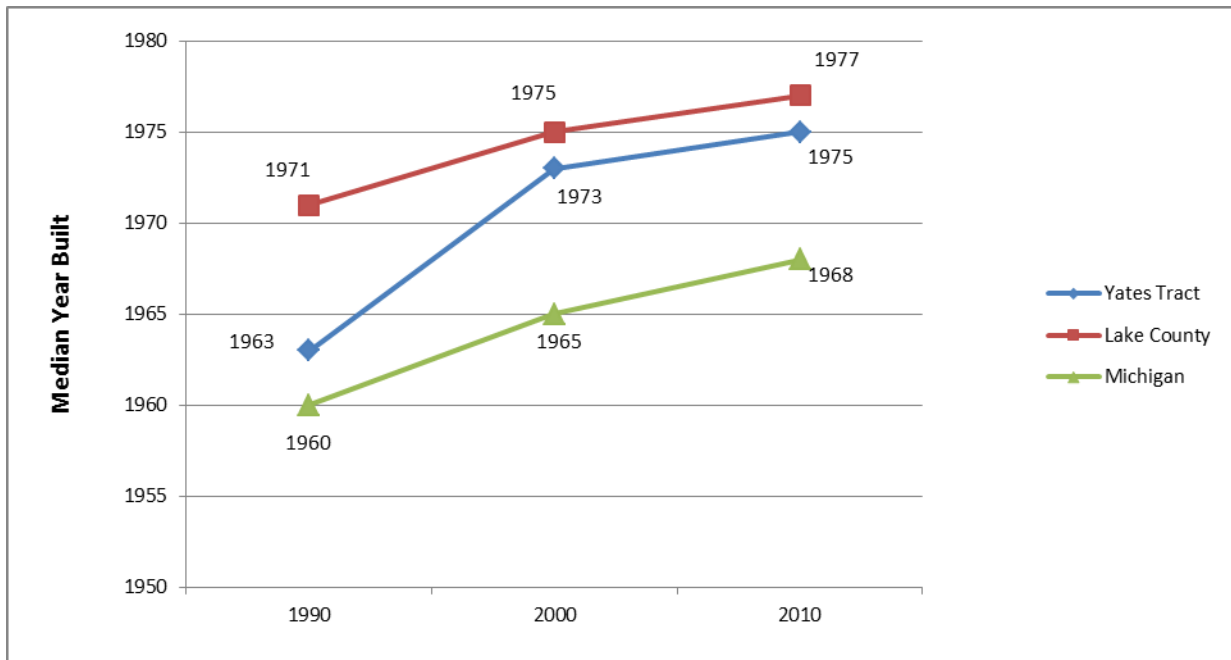


Figure 60: Median Structure Age in Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, ACS 2010; Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Average Gross Rent

As shown in Figure 61, average gross rent was lower in the Yates tract than in Lake County in 2000, but this trend reversed by 2010. (Data on average gross rent were not available in 1990.) Rent in both the Yates tract and Lake County remained less expensive than in the state of Michigan.

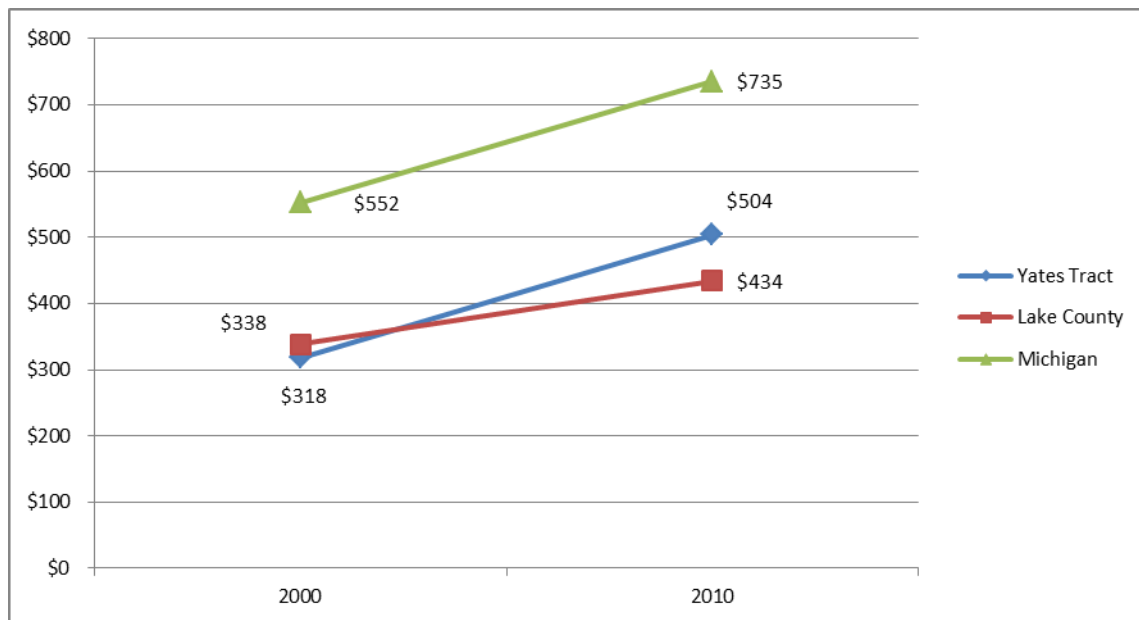


Figure 61: Average Gross Rent in Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 2000-2010. Source: Census 2000, ACS 2010; Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Average Housing Value

Figure 62 shows average housing values in the Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan. Housing value in all three study areas increased dramatically during the study period. However, housing value in both the Yates tract and Lake County remained well below the state average. Average housing values in the Yates tract and Lake County were very similar. However, the value in the Yates tract was slightly lower in 1990 and 2000 and then rose slightly higher than the Lake County average in 2010.

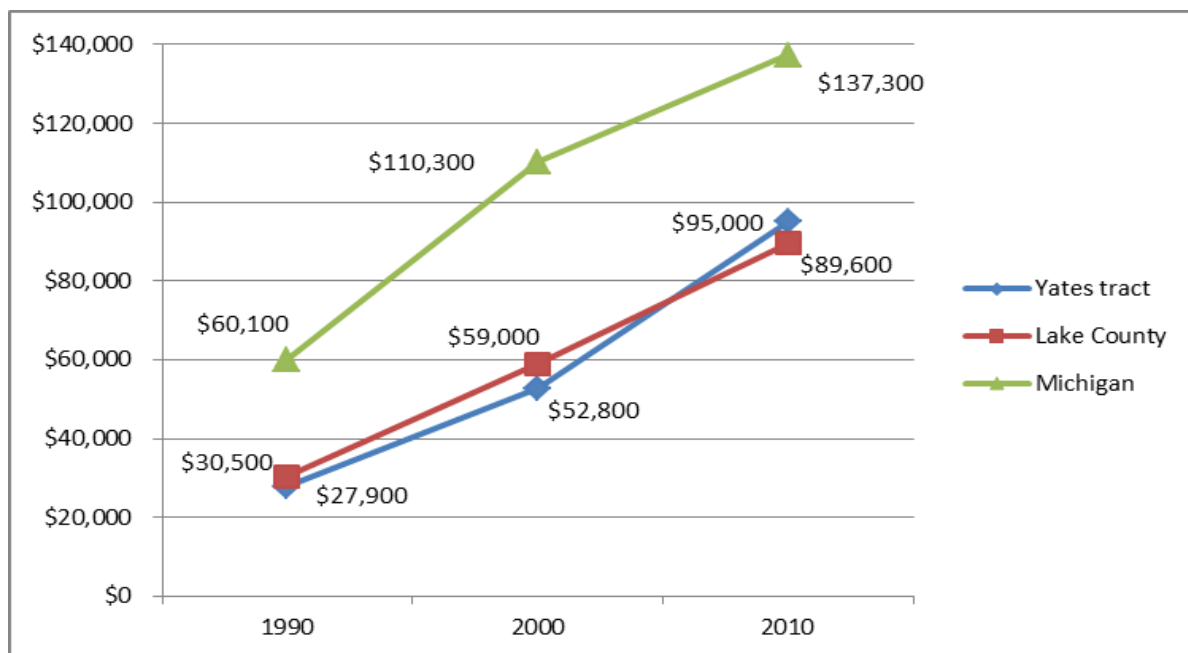


Figure 62: Average Housing Value in the Yates Tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000; ACS 2010; Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Summary

As noted at the start of this section, caution is required when interpreting the findings of the socioeconomic profile for Yates Township because of the significant changes in the census tract encompassing the township between 1990 and 2010. However, the data for Lake County provide an indication of likely socioeconomic trends in Yates Township. These are summarized in the order of the sections of the socioeconomic profile, with a discussion at the end that synthesizes the findings.

Social Profile

Slow increase in population. The population of the Yates tract and Lake County registered a net increase between 1990 and 2010. The extent of the increase in the Yates Tract is unclear because of the changes in the size of the census tract changes, but the general trajectory—a relatively rapid increase from 1990 to 2000 followed by a leveling off from 2000 to 2010—was repeated in the Yates tract, Lake County, and the state of Michigan.

Increasing age. Both the Yates tract and Lake County showed a steady increase in the age of the population, with a growing percentage of residents aged 45 and up and a declining percentage of residents aged 44 and under.

Decrease in African-American residents. Both the Yates Tract and Lake County showed a steady decrease in the percentage of African American residents, with a commensurate increase in the percentage of Caucasian residents.

Educational Profile

Decreasing school enrollment. School enrollment in the Yates tract and Lake County declined steadily during the study period.

Low educational attainment. Educational attainment steadily improved across all three study areas; the Yates tract and Lake County saw notable increases in the percentage of high school graduates. However, the Yates tract and Lake County remained behind the state in the percentage of residents with post-high school education, and the percentage of Yates and Lake County residents with less than a high school diploma remained higher than in the state of Michigan.

Low high school dropout rate. All three study areas experienced a net decline in the high school dropout rate; however, the Yates tract and Lake County followed a different trajectory than the state of Michigan. The former study areas registered a notable increase and an even more pronounced decrease in dropout rates from 1990 to 2010.

Economic Profile

Household income well below the state average. For both the Yates tract and Lake County, household income remained consistently lower than the state average.

Small labor force and low employment; decreasing unemployment. For both the Yates tract and Lake County, the labor force and the employment rate are consistently lower than in the State of Michigan. Unemployment in the Yates tract and Lake County were much higher than the state average at the start of the study period but is now lower than the state average.

Decreasing proportion of residents with income below poverty level. The proportion of residents below poverty level was much higher in the Yates tract and Lake County at the start of the study period but is now comparable to that of the state of Michigan.

Decreasing proportion of households receiving public assistance income. As with poverty levels, the proportion of households receiving public assistance income in the Yates Tract and Lake County was much higher at the start of the study period and was comparable to that of the state at the end of the study period.

Steady increase in housing units. Lake County and Michigan had an increase of housing structures, indicating steady growth. The Yates tract showed a rapid rise and decline in housing units, which may have been a function of the change in census tracts during the study period.

Very high housing vacancy—probably because of seasonal residences. Across the study period, roughly two-thirds of the housing in the Yates tract and Lake County was vacant, compared with only about 10 percent of housing statewide. However, this proportion correlates strongly with the proportion of seasonal housing in Lake County.

Relatively new housing. In all three study areas, the median construction year increased steadily, but the average housing age is slightly newer in the Yates tract and Lake County than in Michigan.

Much lower rent and housing values. Average gross rent and housing value increased steadily in all three study areas. They were very similar in the Yates tract and Lake County, and both were much lower than in Michigan throughout the study period.

Discussion

The socioeconomic profile indicates that Yates Township and Lake County are growing—albeit slowly—in several indicators. The population is trending upward, but much of this growth is in residents aged 45 and up. African-American populations, although still larger than in the state of Michigan, have decreased steadily.

School enrollment is decreasing, as is the labor force. Taken together with the decrease in residents in poverty and on public assistance income as well as the large proportion of seasonal homes, the data may indicate an increasing population of older residents who do not have children or whose children have grown, and who do not have high incomes but are economically self-sufficient. If this is true, then this population could provide an audience for new tourist attractions or events in Idlewild. However, because of the low overall population numbers in Lake County, it will be necessary to market outside the county in order to make tourist attractions viable in Idlewild.

The decreasing workforce and the low educational attainment in the Yates tract and Lake County suggest a limited number of potential employees to staff tourism facilities in Idlewild. If this is the case, Idlewild may need to search outside the county to find workers—especially for managerial positions and other jobs requiring highly skilled employees. The workforce and educational attainment data may indicate a similar difficulty in generating locally based entrepreneurs, although a business incubator might be able to grow entrepreneurs from within the community.

Although they remain much lower than the state average, housing value and rent have increased steadily. Together with the population numbers, this suggests that while Yates

Township and Lake County are less desirable than other places in Michigan, they are not in decline. Given that the population and housing value already appear to be increasing, the client's interest in providing affordable housing while promoting tourism may be justified. If Idlewild's tourism economy grows significantly, then the population will probably increase as well, and with it the cost of living and the need for affordable housing for low-income residents.

TOURISM ASSET STUDY

The tourism asset study provides data on tourist attractions and tourism amenities in Lake County and the contiguous counties of Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Wexford. The study is intended to highlight existing tourism “hot spots” in the region as well as gaps in tourism resources that Idlewild could potentially fill.

The research includes Lake County industry trends from 2000 to 2010, Lake County and regional comparisons of numbers of businesses, Lake County and regional industry maps, and a brief overview of major tourist attractions in the northwestern Lower Peninsula that may provide examples for Idlewild.

Tourism and Hospitality Industry Patterns

As shown in the tables and maps on the following pages, Lake County does not offer as much to the tourist as do the surrounding counties. This is especially true of tourist attractions, which occur rarely in the county (with the notable exception of the Huron-Manistee National Forest, which covers much of Lake County). It is also true of tourism amenities such as lodging, attractions, restaurants, and bars, albeit to a lesser extent.

Figure 63 shows the significant lack of tourist attractions in Lake County vis-à-vis the surrounding counties. This map is a visualization of the NAICS data on tourist attractions (code 71) in Table 12.

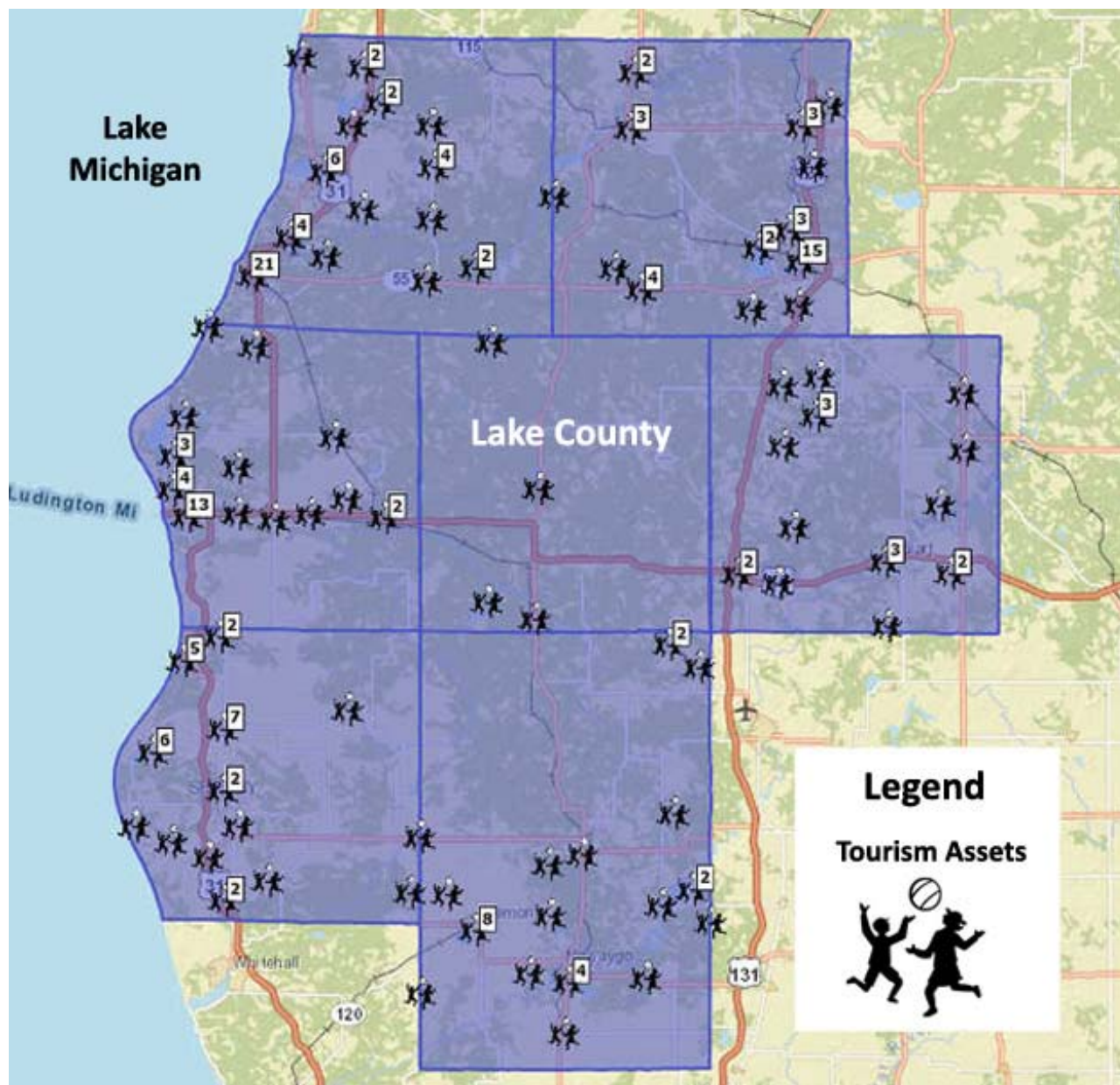


Figure 63: Distribution of Tourist Attractions in Lake County and Surrounding Region. Source: ESRI, 2010.

Table 12 shows the extremely low number of tourism attractions (with the exception of the Huron-Manistee National Forest, which was not included as an attraction in the listing) in Lake County.

Table 12: Tourist Attractions in Lake, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Wexford Counties (NAICS Code 71)

County	Number of Businesses
Lake	4
Manistee	41
Mason	32
Newaygo	39
Oceana	31
Osceola	19
Wexford	38

Source: ESRI, 2010.

Figure 64 shows the distribution of tourism amenities in the region surrounding Lake County. Tourism amenities are relatively well distributed in Lake County; however, the numbers of amenities in Lake County are lower than in the surrounding counties. This map is a visualization of the NAICS data on accommodations and food services (code 72) in Tables 13, 14, and 15.

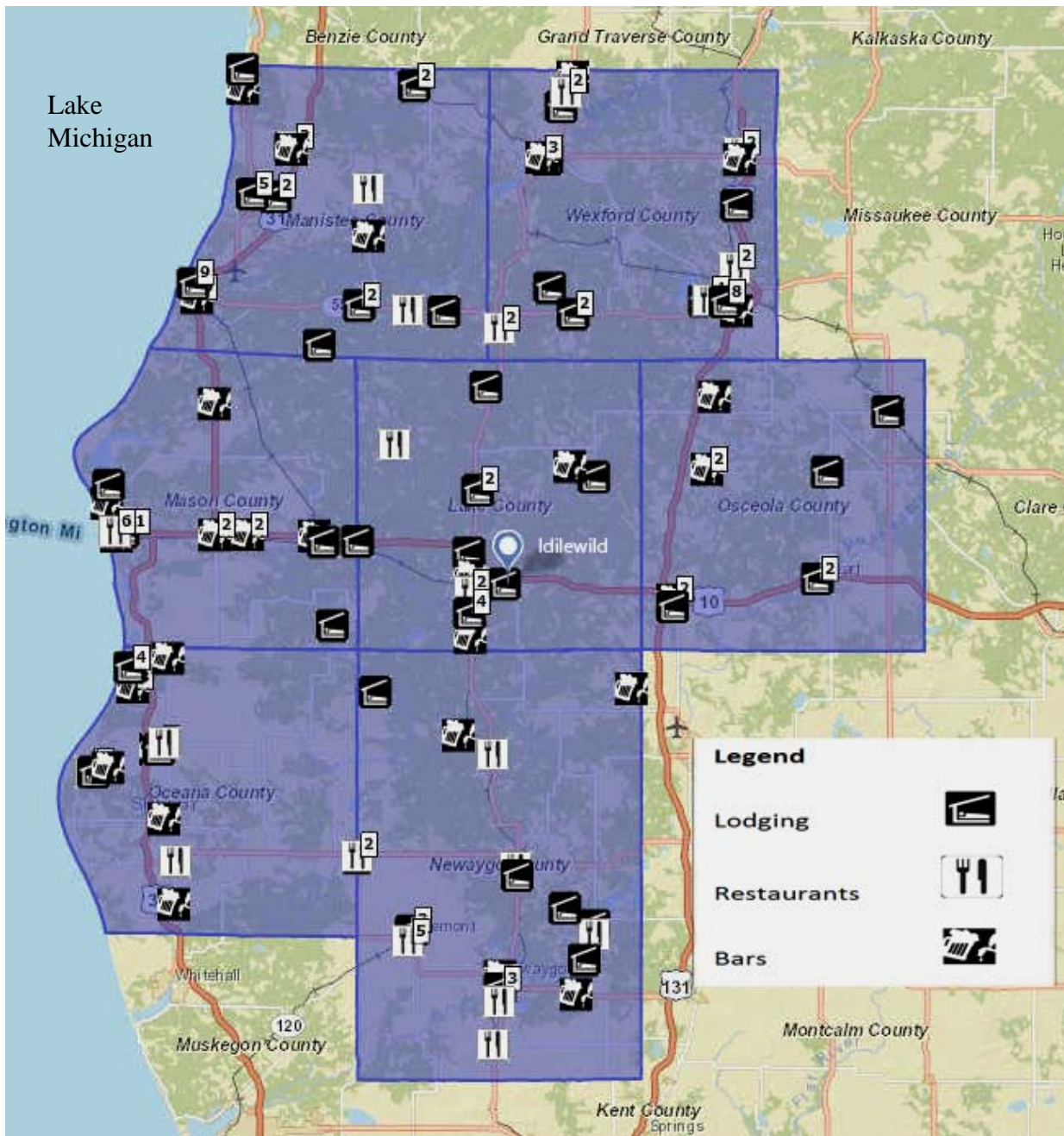


Figure 64: Distribution of Tourism Amenities in Lake County and Surrounding Region. Source: ESRI, 2010.

Table 13 shows that Lake County has fewer lodging places than any other county in the region. Furthermore, Lake County has no hotels—all of the lodging places listed for Lake County are motels (ESRI, 2010).

Table 13: Lodging in Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Wexford Counties

County	Number of Businesses
Lake	11
Manistee	24
Mason	25
Newaygo	11
Oceana	10
Osceola	5
Wexford	14

Source: ESRI, 2010.

As shown in Tables 14 and 15, Lake County has fewer restaurants and bars than any other county in the region.

Table 14: Restaurants in Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Wexford Counties

County	Number of Businesses
Lake	18
Manistee	33
Mason	46
Newaygo	47
Oceana	31
Osceola	24
Wexford	53

Source: ESRI, 2010.

Table 15: Bars in Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Wexford Counties

County	Number of Businesses
Lake	5
Manistee	21
Mason	14
Newaygo	11
Oceana	11
Osceola	6
Wexford	9

Source: ESRI, 2010.

Figure 65 provides a closer view of the distribution of tourist attractions (NAICS code 71) within Lake County. The addresses of these attractions are shown in Table 16.

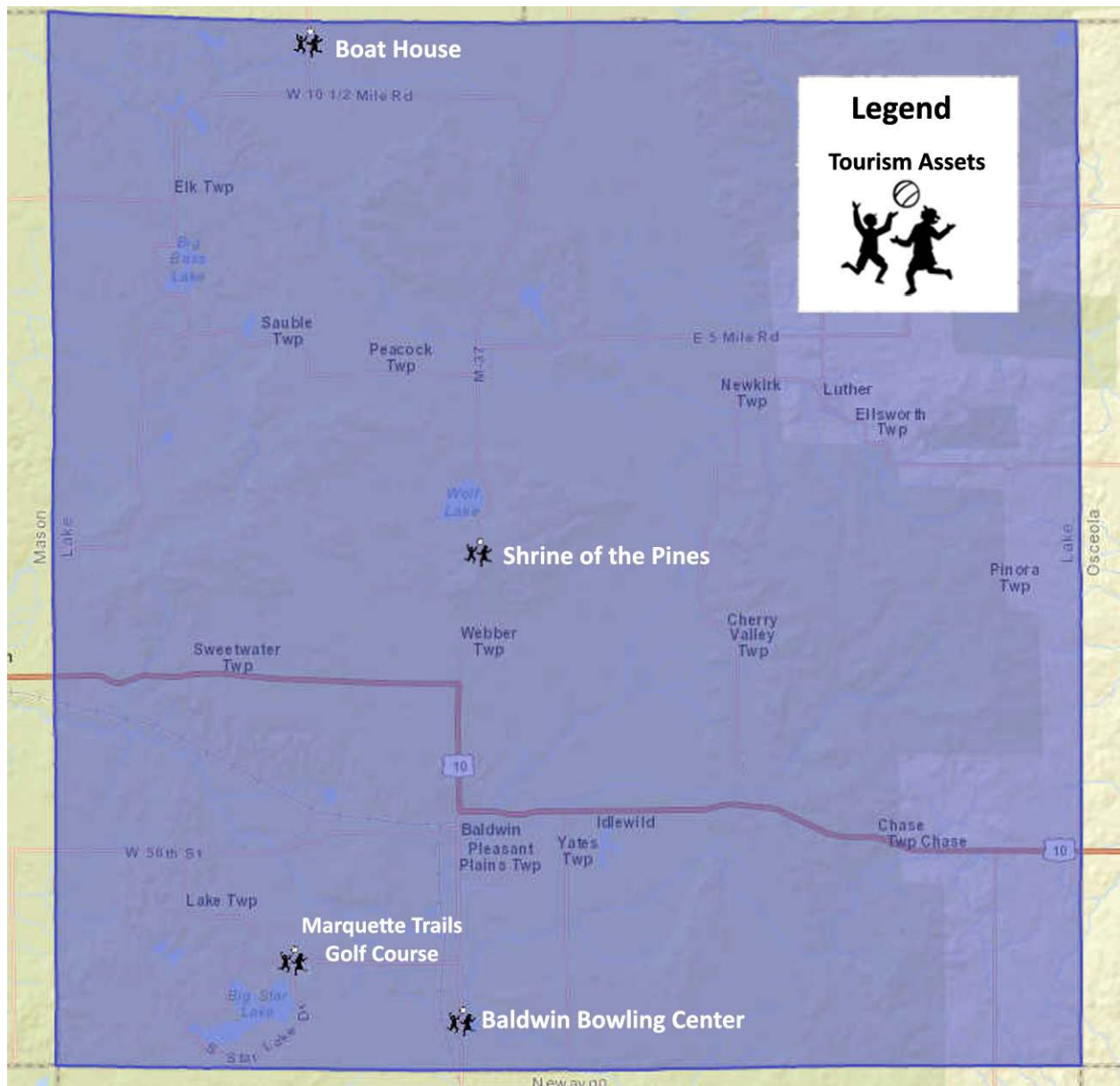


Figure 65: Distribution of Tourist Attractions in Lake County. Source: ESRI, 2010.

Table 16: Tourist Attractions in Lake County

Amusements	Address	City	State	ZIP
Baldwin Bowling Center	708 Michigan Ave	Baldwin	MI	49304
Marquette Trails Golf Course	6409 W 76th St	Baldwin	MI	49304
Boat House	11551 N Brooks Rd	Irons	MI	49644
Shrine of the Pines	8962 S M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304

Source: ESRI, 2010.

Figure 66: Distribution of Tourism Amenities in Lake County. Source: ESRI, 2010.



Tables 17 and 18 describe specific tourism amenities in Lake County. Amenities in Idlewild are shaded. As shown in the tables, there are few amenities available to accommodate visitors to Lake County, and even fewer in Idlewild.

Table 17: Bars in Lake County

Bars	Address	City	State	ZIP
Edie's Log Bar	846 Michigan Ave	Baldwin	MI	49304
Barski	4016 S M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304
North Bar	216 State St	Luther	MI	49656
Jackie's Place	6016 W 10 1/2 Mile Rd	Irons	MI	49644
Oak Grove Tavern	5482 W 10 1/2 Mile Rd	Irons	MI	49644
Red Rooster Tavern	15655 Lake Dr	Idlewild	MI	49642

Source: ESRI, 2010.

Table 18: Lodging in Lake County

Lodging	Address	City	State	ZIP
Dreamcatcher Motel	9261 S M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304
Red Moose Lodge	8982 S M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304
Motel BBT	9425 S M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304
Outdoor Inn	7176 S M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304
Cloud Nine Resort	3360 S M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304
Morton's Motel	6389 S Tacoma	Idlewild	MI	49642
Paradise Lake Motel	6534 Tampa	Idlewild	MI	49642
Wolf Lake Motel & Resort	1197 N M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304
Day Star Motel	1140 N M 37	Baldwin	MI	49304
Lazy Days Motel	11978 W Us Highway 10	Branch	MI	49402
Rockwell Lake Lodge	3943 N Skookum Rd	Luther	MI	49656
Irons Motel	516 Merrillville Rd	Irons	MI	49644

Source: ESRI, 2010.

The following tables show change over time in the number of tourist attractions and amenities in Lake County, based on North American Industry Classification System or NAICS codes. Table 19 shows a slight decrease of tourist attractions such as museums, historical sites, gambling, and recreational sporting (NAICS Code 71).

**Table 19: Tourist Attractions in Lake County
(Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation—NAICS Code 71)**

Year	Number of Businesses
2000	9
2005	6
2010	6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2005, 2010.

As shown in Table 20, the number of tourism amenities—i.e., accommodations and food services (NAICS Code 72)—remained steady from 2000 to 2010.

Table 20: Accommodations and Food Services in Lake County (Hotels/motels, camps, bars, and restaurants—NAICS Code 72)	
Year	Number of Businesses
2000	31
2005	28
2010	31

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2005, 2010.

Regional Tourism Highlights

This section highlights several communities in the region surrounding Lake County that have been classified as tourism “Hot Spots” by the State of Michigan. These communities have established a strong tourism base and share similar amenity and land characteristics to Yates Township. This also provides additional detail on the character of the region’s tourist attractions. An examination of these places can shed light on what tourism strategies are already working for the region. With attractions that complement those which exist already, Idlewild could draw visitors from elsewhere in the region for day trips or longer stays.

Ludington

Just under an hour away from Idlewild is the city of Ludington. The two are not only joined by the Huron-Manistee National Forest, but also by U.S. Highway 10. Ludington is defined by its 5½ mile beach along the eastern coast of Lake Michigan and its historic lighthouses. The city is the starting point to The Lake Michigan Carferry’s SS 4 hour voyage to Manitowoc, WI. Visitors enjoy fishing on break wall of the Ludington North Breakwater Light, hiking dunes and walking the boardwalk decorated with original bronze sculptures. Given its proximity to Ludington, Idlewild could benefit from Ludington’s tourist traffic if it were to develop unique tourist attractions such as a refurbished Flamingo Club or new seasonal festivals.



Figure 67: Ludington Breakwater Lighthouse. Source: Michigan.org, 2013.

Manistee

Like Ludington, Manistee is about one hour away from Idlewild, is another important part of the tourism mix in the region, and could be a source of tourist traffic to Idlewild. Manistee’s Fifth Avenue beach is shown in Figure 68. Manistee draws people with beaches like this and

also its river walk, sport fishing, golf resort, and outdoor concert experiences. A unique attraction to bring winter visitors is the annual Victorian Sleigh Bell Parade. This parade is profiled in greater detail in the Case Studies section, as it provides an example of how Idlewild could draw visitors in winter.



Figure 68: Fifth Avenue Beach, Manistee. Source: Michigan.org, 2013.

Traverse City

Figure 69 shows Clinch Park Beach, one of the many beaches available to visit in the Grand Traverse area. Traverse City, a 90-minute drive from Idlewild, was named 2nd in Trip Advisor's top 10 Charming Small Towns (Michigan.org, 2013a) and is another important source of tourist traffic in the region that surrounds Idlewild. The Grand Traverse region is defined by its outdoor recreation as well as its shopping, wine, and eateries. As with Ludington and Manistee, Traverse City is close enough to supply visitors to Idlewild for special events or attractions.



Figure 69: Clinch Park Beach, Traverse City. Source: Michigan.org, 2013a.

Cadillac

Cadillac is located in the northern Lower Peninsula, a 45-minute drive from Idlewild. Like Idlewild, Cadillac is surrounded by a National Forest. This community prides itself on having one the oldest ski resorts in Michigan. Fishing, hunting and hiking are enjoyed year round. Cadillac also has a central downtown that provides shopping for all ages and several restaurants.



Figure 70: Manistee River Little Mac Pedestrian Bridge, Cadillac. Source: Michigan.org, 2013.

Mount Pleasant

Mount Pleasant, a 1.25-hour drive from Idlewild, is located in the central Lower Peninsula. This community is home to seven different parks that promote camping, fishing, boat/canoe launches, and swimming. Mount Pleasant is most famous for the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort, which brings people from all over the state and country, as well as Central Michigan University. The Ziibiwing Cultural Center brings rich culture to the area as well.



Figure 71: Mount Pleasant Kayaking. Source: Michigan.org, 2013.

Summary

The data from the tourism asset study indicate that Lake County is lacking in tourism assets in the midst of a tourism-rich region. Given its proximity to these other assets, its picturesque lakes and forests, its historical importance and its easy freeway access (see Figure 5), Idlewild has the potential for providing tourism attractions and amenities in Lake County that would complement other attractions in the region and draw upon the tourists who already visit Northwest Michigan.

TOURISM MARKET STUDY

The data in this section are intended to reveal potential tourism markets for Idlewild. They include visitor spending patterns, popular activities, seasonal visitation and residency patterns, tourist volume and length of stay, regions of origin, niche tourism, and visitor demographics, as well as surplus and leakage data for tourism-related retail.

Visitor Demographics

Table 21 shows that visitors aged 18-34 account for the largest average number of leisure days in Michigan. Nationwide, visitors aged 35-54 account for the most leisure days.

Table 21: Age Distribution and Average Leisure Days Spent on Trip in 2009		
Age	Michigan	USA
18-34	40	34
35-54	36	38
55+	24	29

Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., 2010.

Table 22 provides an overview of visitor demographics in Michigan regions in 2009. Northwest Michigan visitors are slightly younger than visitors to the rest of the state, with the dominant life stage being young families (visitors aged 18-34 with children) or “young and free” (visitors aged 18-34 without children). In all regions of the state, “Gen X” travelers—i.e., those born between 1965 and 1980—account for the largest proportion of Michigan leisure days.

Table 22: Michigan Visitor Demographics by Region in 2009						
	Mich.	SE	NW	SW	NE	UP
Average Age	43	43	40	42	42	44
Average HH Income	\$78,580	\$84,374	\$75,453	\$76,284	\$76,837	\$61,748
Have Children in HH	50%	52%	46%	45%	58%	51%
Dominant Life Stage	Young Family	Young Family	Young Family; Young & Free	Young Family	Young Family	Young Family
Dominant Generation	GenXers	GenXers	GenXers	GenXers	GenXers	GenXers

Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., 2010.

Travel Spending

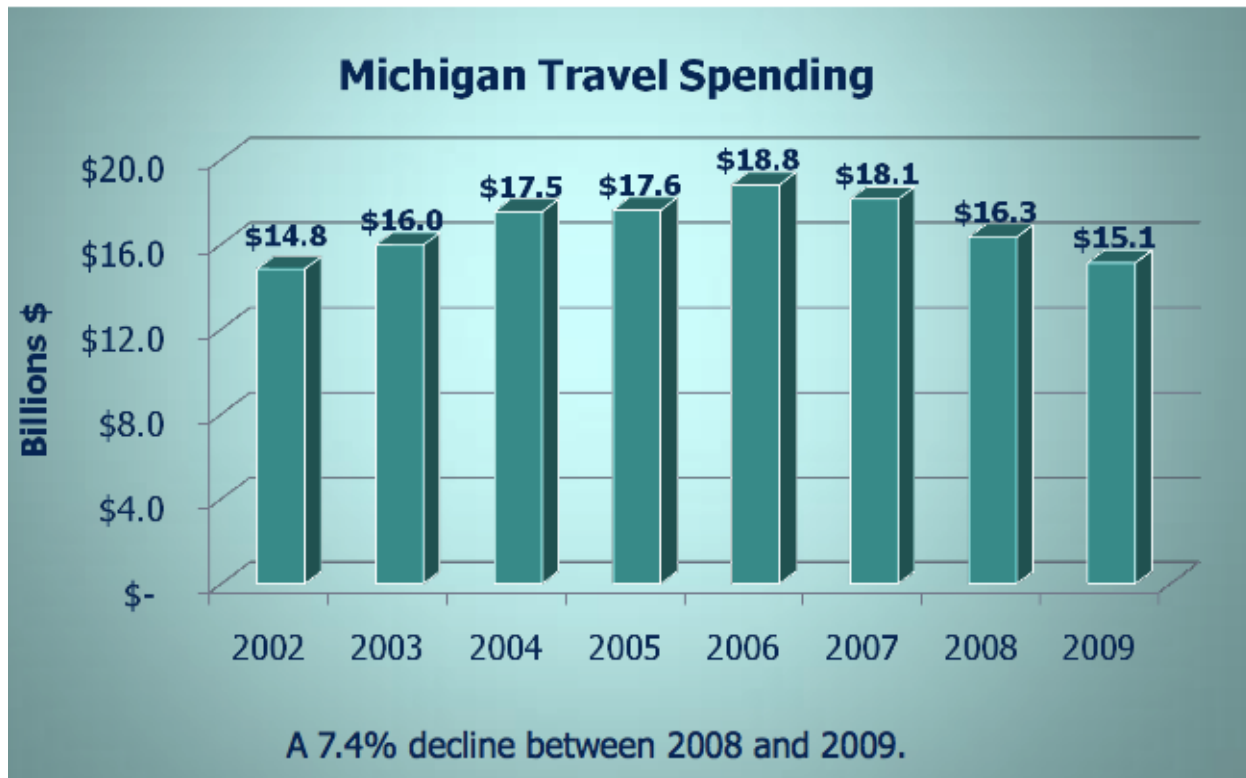


Figure 72: Total Michigan Travel Spending, 2002-2009. Pure Michigan, 2012.

Michigan's overall travel spending from 2002 to 2009 is shown in Figure 72. Travel spending peaked in 2006 and then declined into 2009; however, the 2009 travel expenditure was still slightly higher than the 2002 expenditure.

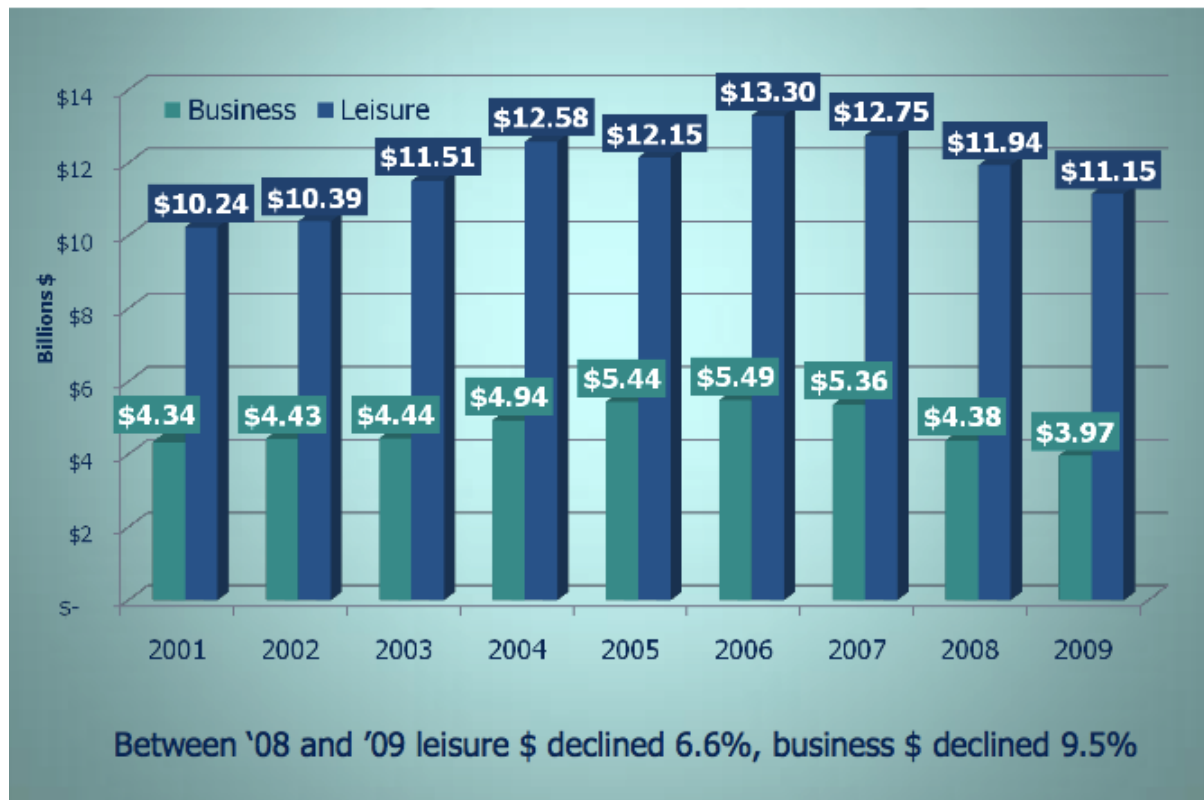


Figure 73: Business and Leisure Spending in Michigan, 2001-2009. Pure Michigan, 2012.

As shown in Figure 73, \$3.97 billion was spent on business travel and \$11.15 billion on leisure travel in Michigan in 2009. Both business and leisure spending increased in the mid-2000s, then declined toward the end of the decade. The figure also shows that leisure travel commands a much larger proportion of travel spending in Michigan than does business travel.

Table 23 shows the average daily spending of Michigan tourists by region compared to the United States in 2009. The average daily spending in this table combines expenditures for transportation, food, lodging, shopping, entertainment, and miscellaneous spending. As shown in Table 23, tourists in Northwest Michigan spend an average of \$70 per day—more than in Northeast Michigan or the Upper Peninsula, but less than in southern Michigan or the United States.

Table 23: Average Daily Spending of Michigan Tourists by Region in 2009						
	USA	Southeast Michigan	Southwest Michigan	Upper Peninsula	Northwest Michigan	Northeast Michigan
Average Dollars Spent	\$97	\$80	\$79	\$69	\$70	\$65

Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., 2010

Purpose of Stay

Table 24 compares the percentage of person-days for different types of leisure visits in northwest Michigan and the United States. As shown in the table, most visitors traveled to the area to visit friends and relatives or for a weekend getaway. These short-stay visitors could be a target for Idlewild. They are already coming to the area, and they might be enticed to visit Idlewild if more attractions and activities were available.

**Table 24: Purpose of Stay, Northwest Michigan and United States:
Percentage of Leisure Person-Days, 2007-2009**

	Northwest Michigan	U.S.
Getaway Weekend	28%	15%
General Vacation	22%	21%
Special Event	10%	14%
Other Personal	11%	13%
Visit Friends/Relatives	29%	38%

Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., 2010

Accommodation Type

Table 25 compares the percentage of overnight person-days for different types of accommodations in northwest Michigan and the United States. As shown in the table, hotels make up the largest proportion of accommodation types in northwest Michigan, followed by private homes. When hotels are combined with “other paid” accommodations, paid accommodations make up nearly two-thirds of the overnight person-days in northwest Michigan.

**Table 25: Types of Accommodation in Northwest Michigan:
Percentage of Overnight Person-Days, 2009**

	Northwest Michigan	U.S.
Hotel	40%	39%
Other Paid	20%	12%
Private Home	31%	40%
All Other	10%	10%

Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., 2010

Popular Activities

**Table 26: Percentage of Popular Tourism Activities:
Northwest Michigan and USA**

	Northwest Michigan	USA
Dining	18	29
Shopping	21	23
Entertainment	23	21
Sightseeing	17	15
Beach/Waterfront	11	6
Gamble	13	6
Festival/Craft Fair	5	4
National or State Park	4	5
Hunt/Fish	14	2
Concert	2	4
Hiking/Biking	2	3
Historic site visit	3	4
Camping	2	2
Museum/Art Exhibit	1	4
Nature/Eco-travel	3	3
Other Adventure Sports	2	1
Snow ski	1	1

Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., 2010.

Table 26 compares the popularity of an array of tourism activities in northwest Michigan versus the rest of the United States. The highlighted figures show that that entertainment, sightseeing, beach/waterfront activities, gambling, arts and crafts festivals, hunting, fishing, and other adventure sports are more popular in Northwest Michigan than across the country. The chart also indicates that Northwest Michigan appears to have a stronger market in nature/eco-travel and camping compared to the rest of the country. This information may prove useful to Idlewild, which boasts waterfront property; hunting, fishing, camping, and seasonal adventure sport opportunities; and a seasonal music festival. In addition, a new snowmobile trail has been proposed that would link Yates Township with other snowmobile trails throughout the region (Mulherin, 2013); this feature could help increase Idlewild's attractiveness as a winter tourism destination.

Top States of Origin for Michigan Tourism

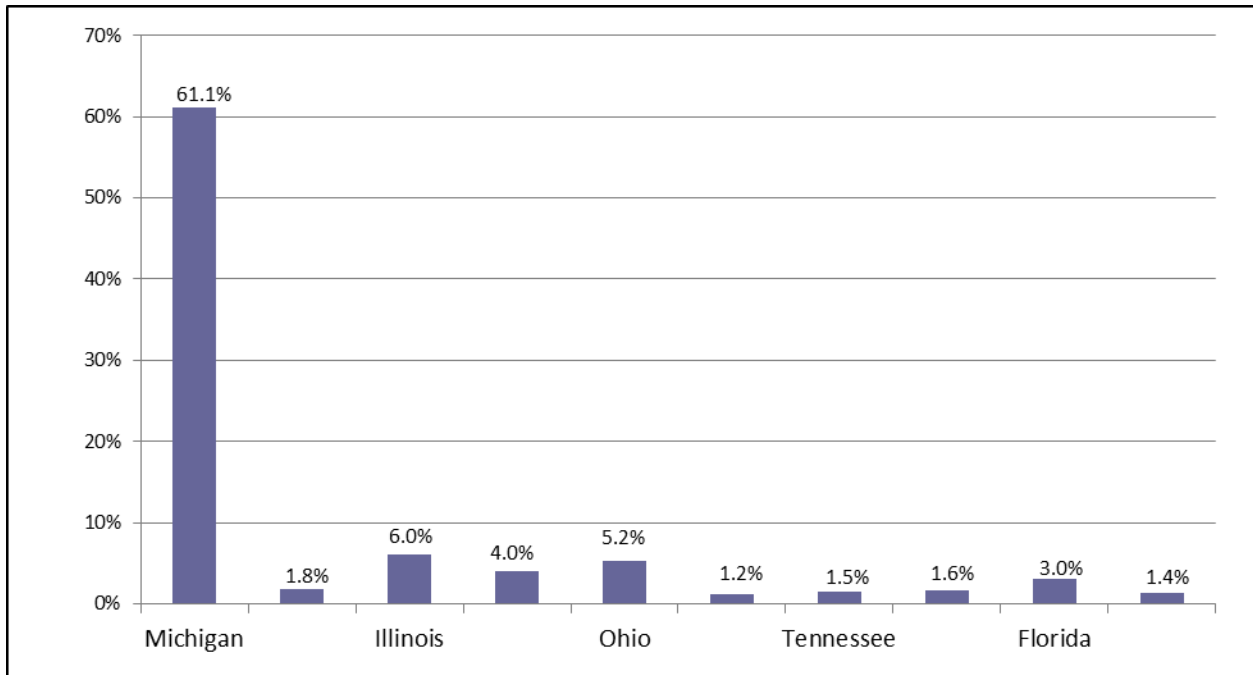


Figure 74: Top States of Origin for Michigan Tourism. D.K. Shifflet & Associates, 2010.

Figure 74 shows that in-state visitors contributed 61.1% of Michigan visitor days in 2009. The top ten origin markets were Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Florida, Wisconsin, Georgia, Tennessee, California and New York, accounting for 86.8% of Michigan Leisure visitor days in 2009. The next largest groups of tourists in Michigan are other Midwestern residents. This brings advantages and disadvantages: Many Michigan residents are contributing to the state economy by spending their leisure dollars here. However, Michigan is not drawing much tourism from outside the Great Lakes region. Michigan's strongest out-of-state tourism market is Illinois, accounting for six percent of its visitor days.

Tourist Volume Per County Visited

Table 27 shows visitor person-days and person-trips to the Lake County region. The total number of days spent is calculated by dividing the total number of person-days by total number of person-trips. Lake County has the smallest person-days per trip, and the total days spent for Lake County is the second lowest in the region. People stay an estimated 1.8 days per trip in Lake County.

**Table 27: Visitor Person-Days and Person-Trips in Lake County Region
Calculated from 2000-2004 Data**

County	Estimated Person-Trips	Estimated Person-Days	Estimated Total Days Spent Per Person
Mason	555,991	1,786,391	3.2
Newaygo	901,551	1,898,282	2.1
Manistee	822,050	1,576,783	1.9
Mecosta	900,401	1,322,720	1.5
Wexford	618,007	1,181,191	1.9
Lake	299,260	541,845	1.8

Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd, 2005.

Seasonal Travel to Northwest Michigan

Figure 75 ranks the seasonal frequency of travel to northwest Michigan. This pie chart was generated by calculating the average number of trips started in a month. The months were then divided into quarters, added, then divided to get the average trip start per quarter. The third quarter, which is comprised of the months of July, August, and September, is the most popular time to travel, followed by the second quarter. The fourth quarter—i.e., the winter months—is the least popular season for travel.

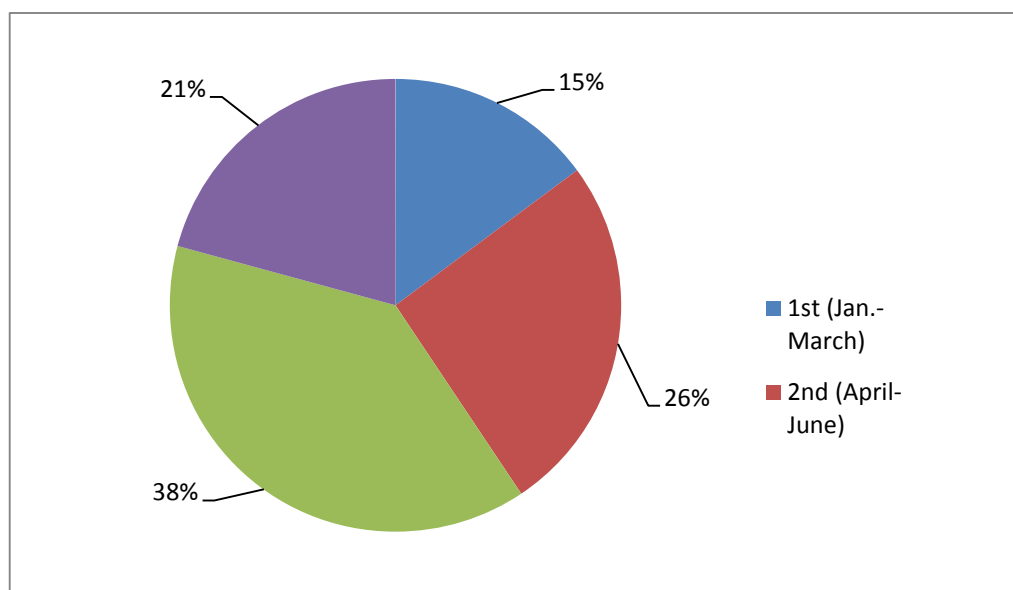


Figure 75: Quarterly Travel Patterns for Northwest Michigan. D.K. Shifflet & Associates, 2010.

Average Length of Stay

Figure 76 shows how long visitors stay in Michigan counties; the average length of stay (LOS) was calculated by averaging the days spent in each county in 2000-2004.

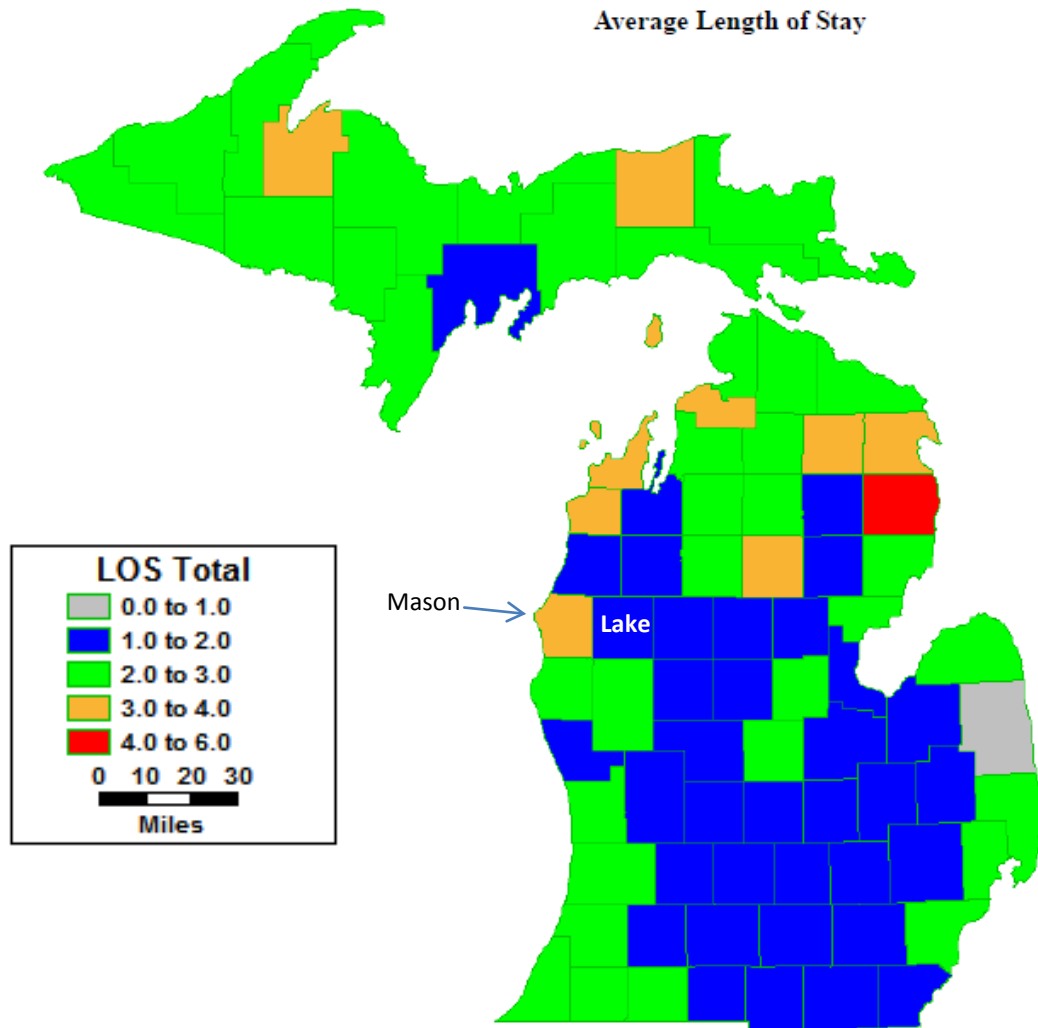


Figure 76: Average Length of Stay in Michigan Counties. MEDC and MSU Extension, 2005.

Figure 76 shows that visitors stay for an average of one to two days per trip to Lake County. In contrast, visitors to nearby Mason County (whose county seat is Ludington) stay for three to four days per trip; most of the counties with a length of stay greater than two days are located along Great Lakes shorelines. The lack of hotels and other accommodations in Lake County vis-à-vis the rest of the region (see the Tourism Asset Study) may help account for this discrepancy, as well as the fact that Lake County is landlocked. On the other hand, Idlewild's geographic location and picturesque lakes might help it capture the tourist traffic of its neighboring counties if new and unique attractions were developed.

Average Person-Trips

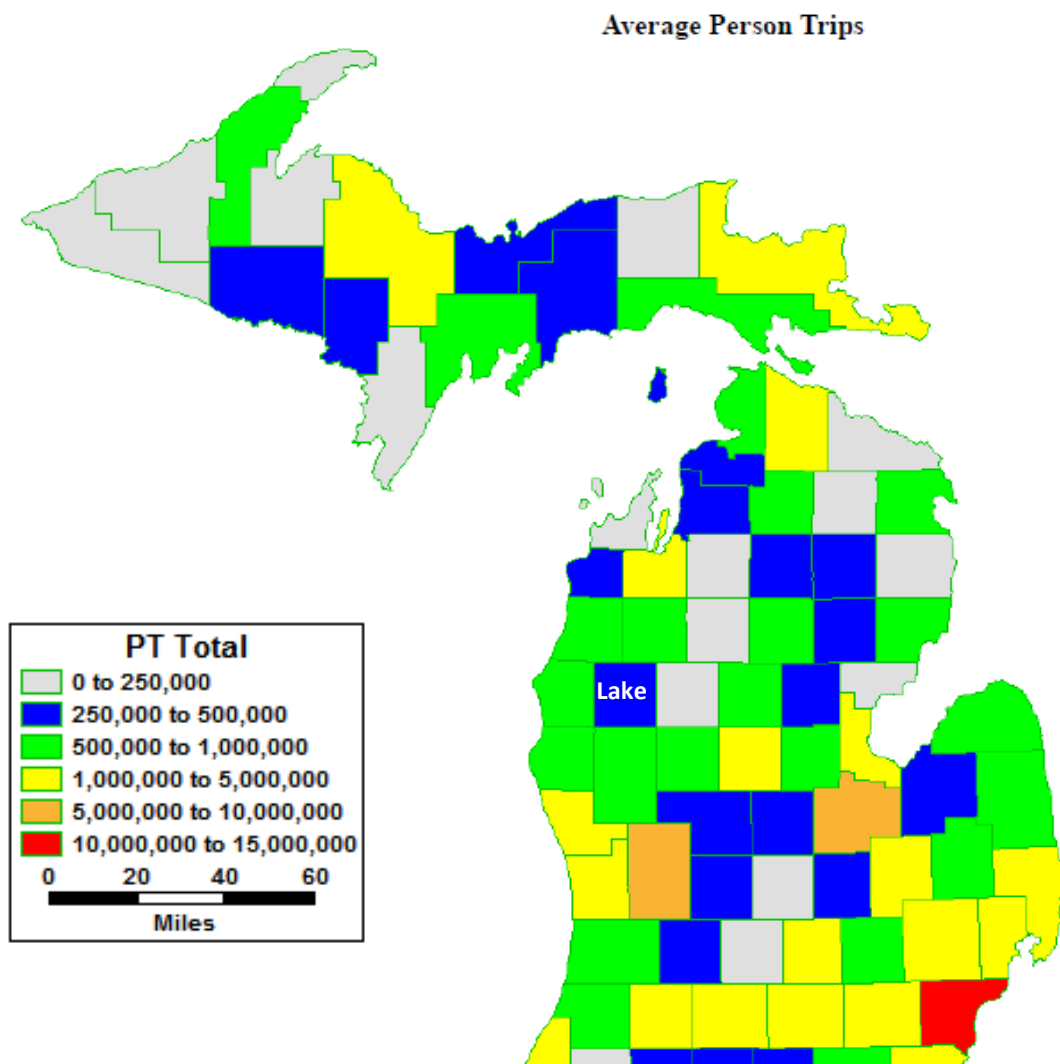


Figure 77: Average Person-Trips in Michigan Counties. MEDC and MSU Extension, 2005.

As shown in Figure 77, Lake County is also on the lower end of Michigan counties in the average number of person-trips; all but one of the counties bordering Lake County have more person-trips.

Cultural Tourism Market Data

This section provides data on patterns in cultural tourism. Due to the difficulty in finding recent cultural tourism data, these findings are not definitive.

According to the National Endowment of the Arts *1997 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, cultural tourists tend to have a higher education; for example, 70% of people with a graduate degree reported having visited an art museum or art gallery in the past year. The rate of visitation decreased as education level decreased:

- 70% for graduate degrees.
- 58% for college graduates.
- 43% for some college.
- 25% for high school graduates.
- 14% for some high school.
- 6% for grade school. (Smithsonian Institution Office of Policy & Analysis, 2001)

According to the same paper, 77% of visitors to the Anacostia Museum and Center for African American History and Culture, excluding visitors in organized groups, identified themselves as African Americans in a study conducted in the winter and spring of 1991.

The data on visits to the Smithsonian Museums are much more recent. As shown in Table 28, the National Museum of African Art and the Anacostia Museum receive far fewer visits than do most other Smithsonian Museums. However, the data still show evidence of public interest in African and African-American history.

Table 28: Visits to the Smithsonian Museums, January-February 2013

Museum	Total Visits
National Museum of African Art	33,870
National Air and Space Museum	542,229
National Air and Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center	137,839
National Museum of American History	460,237
National Museum of the American Indian (Washington, D.C.)	144,270
National Museum of the American Indian Heye Center (New York City)	65,032
Anacostia Community Museum	4,441
Arts and Industries Building	Closed for renovation
Cooper-Hewitt, National Museum of Design (New York City)	Closed for renovation
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden	99,476
National Museum of Natural History	810,776
Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum	17,990
S. Dillon Ripley Center	32,799
Smithsonian Institution Building, "The Castle"	125,065
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery	35,456
Freer Gallery of Art	44,514
National Postal Museum	45,915
National Zoo	79,212
Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture	137,211

Source: Smithsonian Institution, 2013.

In relation to the data above, it is important to note the ongoing construction of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which is expected to open to the public in 2015 (Smithsonian Institution, 2013). This museum could be seen as an indication that African American history and culture are important and should be a part of the other national museums. With this new museum, people will be able to gain knowledge on African American history along with the other national museums on the Mall in Washington, D.C.

Eco-Tourism Market Data

This section provides data on visitation patterns for sustainable or eco-tourism through data on visitation patterns to national parks and national forests, comparing visits to the Huron-Manistee National Forest with visits to national forests across the country.

Purpose of Visit to Huron-Manistee National Forest

Figure 78 shows data on reasons for visiting Manistee National Forest, based on interviews with park visitors in 2011. Exactly two-thirds of visitors were there for recreational purposes.

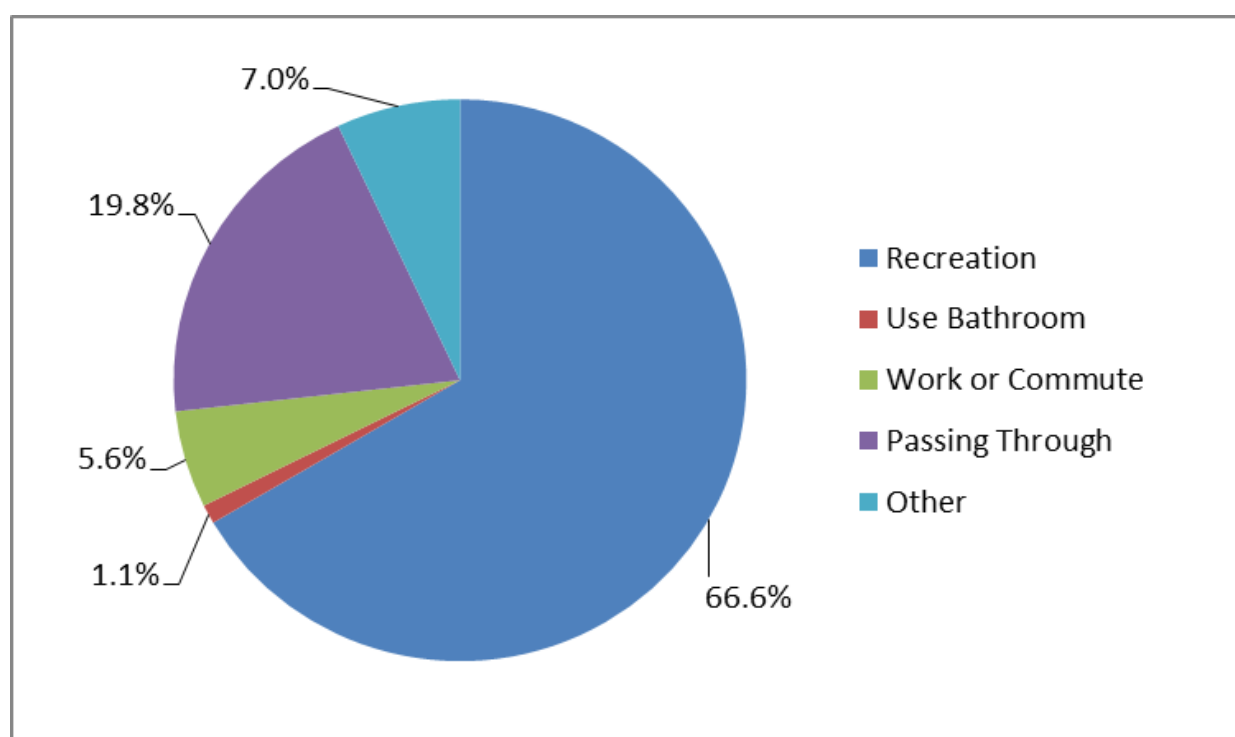


Figure 78: Purpose of Visit to Huron-Manistee National Forest, 2011. U.S. Forest Service, 2012.

Activity Participation at Huron-Manistee National Forest

Table 29 shows popular activities at Huron-Manistee National Forest. Viewing natural features is the most common, with high percentages of visitors viewing wildlife, hunting, relaxing, and hiking. These activities are similar to those reported for Northwest Michigan in Table 25.

Table 29: Huron-Manistee National Forest Activity Participation, 2011	
Activity	Participation*
Viewing Natural Features	43.7%
Viewing Wildlife	27.8%
Hunting	25.2%
Relaxing	24.9%
Hiking/Walking	24.5%
Driving for Pleasure	17.8%
Gathering Forest Products	16%
Fishing	13.1%
Camping	6.7%
Motorized Trail Activity	4.6%
Picnicking	4.4%
Non-motorized water activity	4.1%
Snowmobiling	3.3%
Nature Study	3.1%
Other non-motorized	3%
Visiting Historic Sites	2.5%
Backpacking	2.5%
Bicycling	2%
Motorized Water Activities	1.4%

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2012.

*The percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents were able to choose more than one activity.

Spending and Lodging Use at Huron-Manistee National Forest

According to the U.S. Forest Service (2012), the average spending per party at the Huron-Manistee National Forest was \$248 in 2011.

2011 lodging figures for the Huron-Manistee National Forest are shown in Table 30. Most of the people who visit the Huron-Manistee stay in a home that they own or an underdeveloped campground. No hotels are shown, presumably because the survey that gathered the data asked only about the use of lodging *within* the national forest.

Table 30: Lodging Use at Huron-Manistee National Forest, 2011

Lodging Type	Percentage
National Forest Service Campground	8.6%
Underdeveloped camping in National Forest	16.3%
National Forest cabin	0.8%
Other Public Campground	3.4%
Private Campground	6%
Rented Private Home	11.2%
Home of Friends/Family	14%
Own Home	38.5%
Other Lodging	0.1%

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2012.

Huron-Manistee National Forest Visitation by Household Income

Table 31 shows visitation to the Manistee National Forest by annual household income. Individuals earning \$50,000-\$74,999 comprise the highest percentage of visitors.

Table 31: Visitation at Huron-Manistee National Forest by Income, 2011

Annual Household Income	Percentage of Visits
Under \$25,000	6.1%
\$25,000-\$49,999	37%
\$50,000-\$74,999	36.7%
\$75,000-\$99,999	3.2%
\$100,000-\$149,999	13%
\$150,000 and up	4%

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2012.

National Forest Visitation by Gender

Table 32 shows national forest visitation by gender from 2007 through 2011, comparing data from the Huron-Manistee with data from all national forests. As shown in the table, more than three-quarters of visitors to the Huron-Manistee National Forest are male; for all national forests, nearly two out of three visitors are male.

Table 32: National Forest Visitation by Gender, 2011		
Gender	Huron-Manistee National Forest	All National Forest Visits
Female	24.1%	35.5%
Male	75.9%	64.5%
Total	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2012.

National Forest Visitation by Age

Table 33 shows national forest visitation by age. The age distribution for the Huron-Manistee is similar to that of other national forests. Overall, individuals between the ages of 40-59 comprise the highest percentage of national forest visitors.

Table 33: National Forest Visitation by Age, 2011		
Age in Years	Huron-Manistee National Forest	All National Forest Visits
Under 16	18.8%	17.3%
16-19	2.2%	3.5%
20-29	9.6%	13.2%
30-39	16%	15.3%
40-49	26.1%	18.9%
50-59	15.6%	17.3%
60-69	9.8%	10.9%
70 and older	1.9%	3.7%

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2012.

National Forest Visitation by Race or Ethnicity

Table 34 shows national forest visitation by self-identified race or ethnicity. For both the Huron-Manistee and the aggregate of national forests, more than 95% of visitors identify as white. However, the proportions of visitors who identify as American Indian, African American, and Hispanic or Latino are higher for the Huron-Manistee than for other national forests.

Table 34: National Forest Visitation by Race or Ethnicity, 2011

Self-Identified Race or Ethnicity	Huron-Manistee National Forest*	All National Forest Visits*
American Indian/ Alaska Native	8.1%	2.6%
Asian	0%	2.2%
Black/ African American	3.1%	1.2%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Not asked	1.1%
Spanish/Hispanic or Latino	6.9%	5.5%
White	96.9%	95.1%

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2012.

*The percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents were able to choose more than one race.

Distance Traveled to a National Forest

Table 35 shows the distances traveled to national forests. Slightly more than one-quarter (28.7%) of visitors travel under 25 miles to reach the Huron-Manistee, compared to more than one-third (35%) of visitors to all national forests. More than four in ten (40.6%) visitors to the Huron-Manistee travel 100 miles or more, compared to only 33.5% across all national forests.

Table 35: Distance Traveled to a National Forest, 2011

Distance Traveled	Huron-Manistee National Forest	All National Forest Visits*
Under 25 miles	28.7%	35%
25-49 miles	12.3%	16%
50-74 miles	7%	9%
75-99 miles	11.4%	6.5%
100-199 miles	33.2%	10.5%
200-499 miles	6.2%	9%
Over 500 miles	1.2%	14%

Source: U.S. Forest Service, 2012.

In summary, visitors to the Huron-Manistee National Forest tend to be there to view natural features and wildlife, hunt, relax, hike, or walk. They do not usually stay in paid lodging; however, the data do not reveal information about the use of lodging outside the national forest. Visitors tend to be white males aged 40-59 who earn \$50,000-\$75,000 per year, and they frequently travel 100 miles or more to visit the forest.

Retail Marketplace Profile

This section of the market study focuses on the market potential of Idlewild and its surroundings. This retail marketplace profile analyzes the supply and demand for retail businesses that could support a tourism market in Idlewild, based on the number of residents located within a one-mile, 10-mile, and 20-mile radius of Idlewild. It helps provide an understanding of the extent to which the retail demands of local residents are being met and, in so doing, provides a rough indication of potential retail opportunities. This is done by calculating the retail surplus and leakage within the study radii.

A retail *leakage* (i.e., a number higher than zero) for a given industry indicates that residents are traveling outside the study radius to obtain goods or services in that industry category. This could mean that a new retailer in that industry has potential for success if established within the study area. On the other hand, it could mean that there is a retailer in a nearby community that draws customers from throughout the region (Buxton, 2010).

A retail *surplus* (i.e., a number lower than zero) for a given industry indicates that residents are meeting their retail needs in that industry category and are also attracting shoppers from outside the area (ibid.). This could mean that the local market for that product or service is saturated and that a new retailer in that industry category would be unlikely to succeed. However, the study area might still be able to support additional businesses in that industry category—as long as those businesses were able to attract additional clients from outside the study area, as might be the case in what economic developers call an industry cluster (e.g., furniture or automobile sales).

Because of the potential differences in interpretation of retail surplus and leakage data, additional information is usually needed to interpret the findings. The findings of this retail marketplace profile are interpreted using information from the tourism asset study in the previous chapter.

Figure 79 shows the surplus (negative numbers) and leakage (positive numbers) for tourism-related retailers in a one-mile radius surrounding Idlewild. The chart shows near-complete leakage for tourism-related retail—that is, Idlewild’s residents meet nearly all of their needs outside the one-mile radius. The only exceptions are general-merchandise stores and limited-service eating places. This is not surprising, given that the tourism asset study found very few tourism-related businesses in Idlewild.

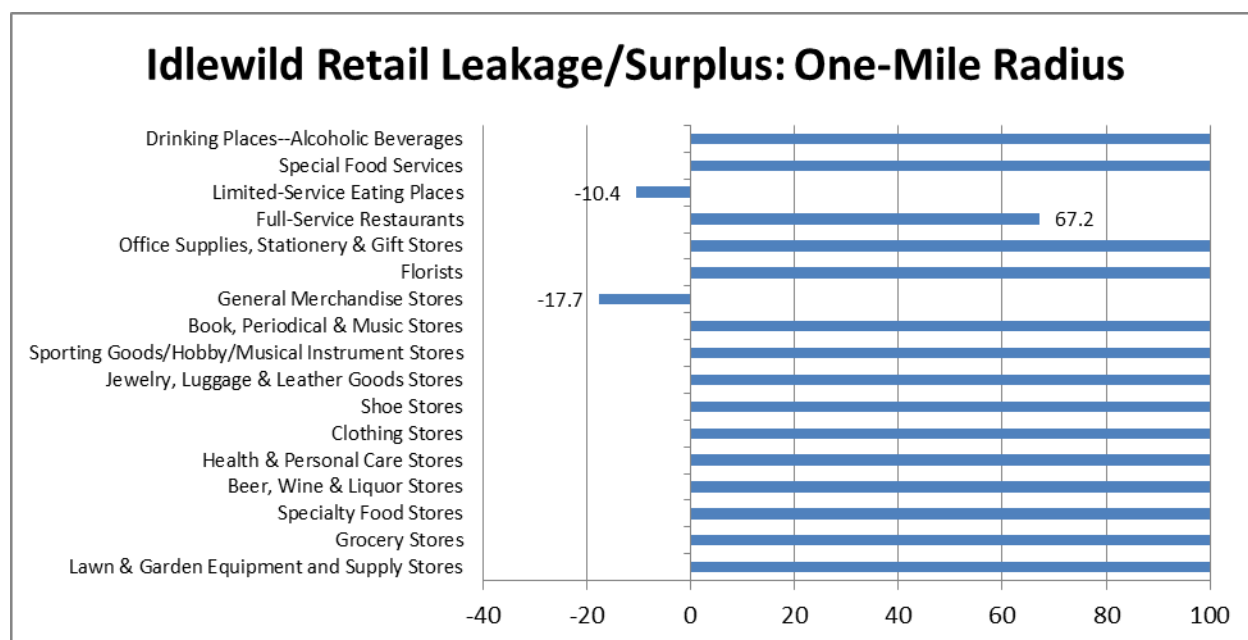


Figure 79: Retail Marketplace Profile for the One-Mile Radius Surrounding Idlewild. ESRI, 2010.

Figure 80 shows the surplus and leakage for tourism-supporting retailers in a ten-mile radius surrounding Idlewild. The retail leakage is not as significant in the ten-mile radius as in the one-mile radius; however, nearly all categories still show a retail leakage, with the only exceptions being general merchandise stores and beer, wine, and liquor stores.

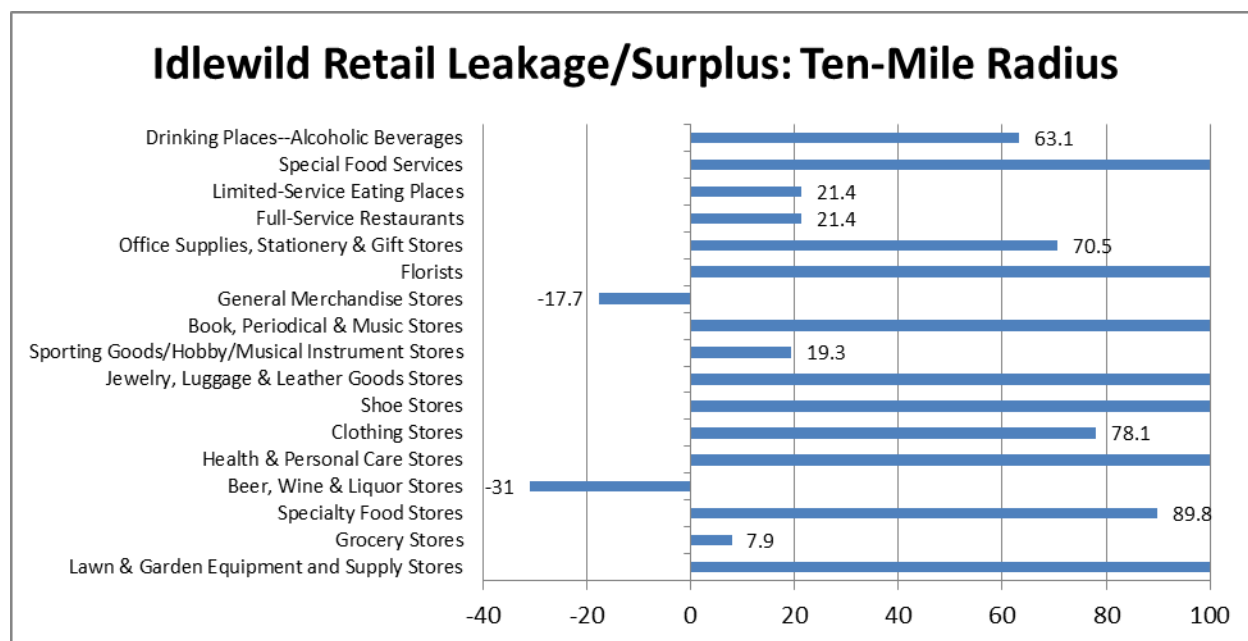


Figure 80: Retail Marketplace Profile for the Ten-Mile Radius Surrounding Idlewild. ESRI, 2010.

Figure 81 shows the surplus and leakage for tourism-supporting retailers in a 20-mile radius surrounding Idlewild. Within this radius, a few more retail categories show a surplus; however, most still show retail leakage.

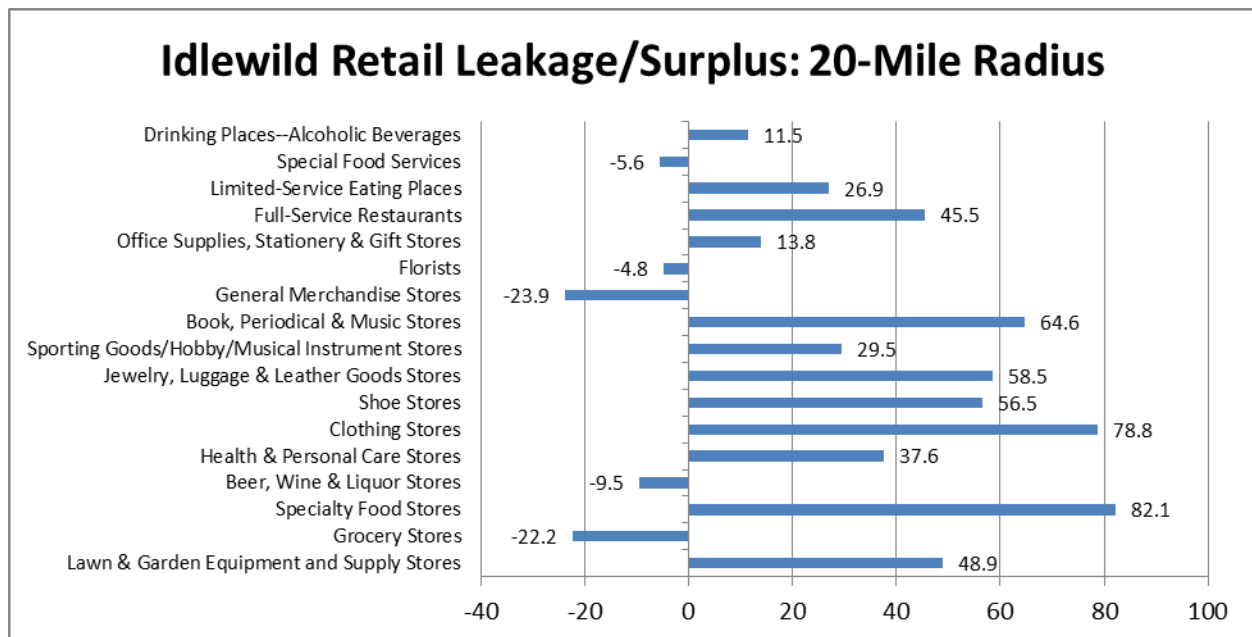


Figure 81: Retail Marketplace Profile for the 20-Mile Radius Surrounding Idlewild. ESRI, 2010.

Summary of Findings from the Market Study

Based on the wide array of data analyzed here, Idlewild has several potential markets for tourism. The northwest Michigan region is a strong tourism market, corroborating the findings from the tourism asset study. With increased tourism attractions, Idlewild could tap into this built-in market, which encompasses Idlewild and Lake County.

Entertainment and nature related tourism (sightseeing, water activities, visits to Manistee National Forest, hiking, fishing, camping) are popular activities throughout Northwest Michigan. Many people who visit the Northwest region of Michigan are there for to visit friends and family or for a weekend getaway, so people are in the area and Idlewild may be able to capture this existing market. Also, many people are staying in hotels and rented homes, which should be kept in mind. The data for the Huron-Manistee National Forest indicate a large number of middle aged white males visiting, but that does not mean that other demographics of people cannot travel to the area. In the Northwest region of Michigan, there are families and young couples traveling and spending money.

Also notable is the fact that Illinois is Michigan's largest source of out-of-state visitors. Chicago has been an important source of tourism for Idlewild since the earliest days of the resort. It is the home of two still-extant Idlewilders' Clubs. Furthermore, there appears to be an abiding interest in Idlewild among Chicagoans. According to an individual interviewed for this report, articles on Idlewild are still published regularly in Chicago. For example, a recent Chicago Tribune story profiled a group of Chicago teens who were preparing a performance about Idlewild for the Chicago History Fair (Trice, 2013).

The retail marketplace study found retail leakage in a wide variety of retail sectors that could have potential for supporting a tourist market—including full-service restaurants and bars, gift shops, book and music stores, clothing stores, and more. This suggests that tourism-related retailers could find possible success in Idlewild, attracting customers from throughout Lake County. This interpretation is supported by the tourism asset study, which found very few tourism-related amenities within Lake County. However, the asset study also found that the surrounding counties are much better supplied with tourism amenities than is Lake County. To entice customers from outside Lake County, Idlewild would need to provide unique retail offerings and/or attractions that are not available in the surrounding counties. For example, the combination of a refurbished Flamingo Club; new or enhanced seasonal festivals; and/or unique and interesting clothing, music, or gift stores could be a draw for visitors from throughout the region. With the numerous vacant lots in Idlewild's existing neighborhood commercial district and along the Broadway corridor, these locations could be logical places to locate additional retail businesses.

SUMMARY OF RECENT PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND REPORTS

Thanks in large part to the partnership established with the State of Michigan in 2006, several plans have been developed for the revitalization of Idlewild in the last several years. All of these plans contain important recommendations for Idlewild's community and tourism development, and all are recent enough to provide useful strategies and tactics for engineering Idlewild's revitalization. This paper contributes to that body of work by providing tourism asset and market data as well as additional strategies designed to expand tourism in Idlewild. However, the large volume of planning reports presents a very confusing array of recommendations, and many of these recommendations overlap across reports. The practicum team has developed this summary of recent planning documents in hopes that the client will find them useful for navigating and taking full advantage of the important information they contain.

This section provides an overview of planning activities and reports that were prepared for Idlewild and Yates Township in the last seven years. Each summary discusses the content and recommendations from each plan, with special emphasis on strategies pertaining to—or with implications for—tourism development in Idlewild. Page numbers are included to allow the reader to research individual sections in greater detail. Table 36 offers a shorthand reference to these plans, their recommendations, and the status of the recommendations as of early 2013.

Note of Caution on Status of Recommendations

The status of the recommendations was tentatively determined by the practicum team through consultation with the client and review of available documents; however, due to limitations in the time available for the project and the knowledge of the practicum team, the current status of some of the activities may not be accurately represented. Therefore, the status column only serves as a general guideline.

Table 36: Recent Planning Documents for Idlewild and Surrounding Community

Date	Title	Authors	Recommendations	Status in 2013
2006	Idlewild CED Readiness Initiative	National Resource Team	1. Preserve Idlewild as inhabited functioning community	Numerous activities completed or in progress
			2. Strategic partnership between Idlewild and State of MI	Established 2006 and still active
			3. Invest in community building process concurrent with master planning	Many plans & strategic investments completed or ongoing
			4. Historic land/landscape prioritized as highly as historic buildings	Idlewild Cultural Resource Mgt Plan prioritizes both
			5. Emphasize historic preservation and environmental stewardship	Yates Comprehensive Plan strongly emphasizes both
			6. Establish legal self-governing structure for Idlewild	Not pursued
			7. Encourage creative business formats (e.g., incubator, food co-op)	Grant received; work not completed yet
			8. Create "special projects" structure to facilitate interdept. collaboration	Idlewild, MI Transformation Initiative continues to be active
			9. Commit State funding/budget for major long-term involvement	Numerous/significant/ongoing commitments of resources
			10. Planning work done by professionals with strong cultural competency	Most plans done by Jacobsen Daniels Assoc planning firm
2008	Idlewild Economic Development Action Strategy	Jacobsen Daniels Associates Inc.	1. Priority Projects a. Hire Professional Economic Development and Planning Coordinator b. Update Yates Township Master Plan and Zoning Ordinances c. Establish the Idlewild Downtown Development Authority d. Develop a Branding and Marketing Strategy – "A Sense of Place" e. Initiate a 'Getting Ready' Initiative f. Establish a Lake County Land Bank Authority	a. Not pursued b. Master plan finished 2010; zoning ordinances in progress c. Not pursued d. Not pursued e. Not pursued f. Established 2012
			2. Community Projects a. Solicit Proposals for the Flamingo Club b. Develop Central Business District c. Construct a Yates Township Civic Complex d. Develop an Idlewild Contemporary Arts Center (ICAC) e. Expand the Idlewild Memorial Library	a. Feasibility study completed 2011; no proposals solicited b. CBD development plan done 2007 by Nederveld Inc. c. Yates Twp Hall moved to school building d. Not pursued e. Not pursued
			3. Business Projects a. Develop an Idlewild Website b. Create an Economic Development Informational Package c. Develop an Idlewild Resort Housing Directory d. Implement Wireless Idlewild e. Establish an Idlewild Convention and Visitor's Bureau f. Develop Retail Business Incubators g. Perform Economic Impact Study of Economic Development Strategy h. Develop an Idlewild Farmer's Market and Co-op	a. At least three exist; single main site needed b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Currently seeking grant funding e. Not pursued f. Grant received but not yet complete g. Not pursued h. Grant received but not yet complete
			4. Physical Development Projects a. Develop a Golf Range b. Construct a Lodge and Conference Center c. Create Architectural Design Standards d. Develop Eden Gardens and Parks	a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Design standards included in Cultural Resource Mgt Plan d. Not pursued
			5. Heritage Tourism Projects a. Apply for National Register and Landmark Status b. Apply for National Trust's Dozen Distinctive Destinations c. Create Idlewild Gifts and Souvenirs d. Become a Preserve America Community e. Develop the Idlewild Hall of Fame and Paradise Gardens f. Develop an Idlewild Walking Tour	a. National Register District expanded 2011 b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued e. Not pursued f. Two walking tour itineraries developed (Appendix C)

Table 36: Recent Planning Documents for Idlewild and Surrounding Community

Date	Title	Authors	Recommendations	Status in 2013
2008	Idlewild Economic Development Action Strategy, Cont'd.	Jacobsen Daniels Associates Inc.	6. Arts and Culture Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Host a Regatta at Lake Idlewild b. Host a Flamingo Festival c. Establish an Idlewild Arts and Cultural Council d. Host an Idlewild Arts Festival (p. 105) e. Implement an Idlewild Public Art Installation and Poetry Tour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued e. Not pursued
			7. Sustainability Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop an Idlewild ReCycle and ReUse Center b. Create a Natural Resource Management Plan c. Create an Idlewild Green Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Parks and Recreation Master Plan completed 2012 c. Not pursued
			8. Transportation Vision and Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish Bike Idlewild Program b. Develop Streetscaping and Fencing along Arterials c. Apply for US-10 Heritage Route Status d. Develop Signage Plan and Wayfinding System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Several signs installed—signage plan still needed
2009	Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan	Commonwealth Cultural Resource Group	1. Lakes and Waterways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Partner with MI Dept of Envir. Quality (DEQ) to Monitor Water Quality b. Seek Grant Funding to Replace Williams Island Culverts with Bridges c. Develop Idlewild Water Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued
			2. Entrances to Idlewild <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. US-10 and Broadway <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Add historic district signage and/or maps ii. Establish a visitor center b. Paradise Path at Baldwin Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Recruit a local group to restore garden medians ii. Add a state historical marker c. Forman Road and US-10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Add a state historical marker ii. Add a historic district map iii. Add directional sign for local businesses d. Broadway and Lake Drive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Expand hours of Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center ii. Add directional sign for local businesses iii. Expand painted map at Cultural Center e. Baldwin and Forman Roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Add a historic district map: Provide a large map of the historic district with selected destinations highlighted. ii. Add directional sign for local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued e. Not pursued
			3. Develop a Trail System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bicycle Loops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Establish a formal network of bicycle loops ii. Create tended bike trails (unpaved where possible) iii. Once established, add bike trails to maps, signage, and brochures iv. Add wayfinding signage to designate the bike route b. Walking/Jogging Trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Establish walking/jogging trails in areas not conducive to bicycling ii. Add wayfinding signage to designate the walking/jogging trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued
			4. Open Spaces and Woodlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop plan for Idlewild parks system b. Maintain large areas of unoccupied/undeveloped land as forest c. Consider acquiring more land for public use d. Create more public lake access, including handicapped accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parks & Recreation Plan completed 2012 b. No major removal of forestland as of 2013 c. Not pursued d. New public park on Idlewild Lake; boat launch on Paradise Lake

Table 36: Recent Planning Documents for Idlewild and Surrounding Community

Date	Title	Authors	Recommendations	Status in 2013
2009	Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, Cont'd.	Commonwealth Cultural Resource Group	5. Maintain Historic Views <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To Idlewild from US-10: Use gateway or marker to reinforce view of entrance park and state historical marker b. To Idlewild Lake from Williams Island & to Williams Island from shore: Maintain existing large trees but clear understory c. From lakefront properties to bodies of water: Keep most understory vegetation low d. To and from Pere Marquette Rail Trail: Develop Idlewild version of standard state trail marker where trail intersects with Broadway, Forman Drive, and recommended bicycle/walking/hiking trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued
			6. Williams Island <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop comprehensive master plan specific to Island b. Re-create bridges to island c. Install interpretive signage designating historical features of island d. Construct an outdoor amphitheater e. Enhance Williams Island beach as sand beach for swimming f. Create hub for bike & boat rentals in summer; ice skates in winter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. State historical marker for Flamingo Club installed d. Not pursued e. Further enhancement needed f. Not pursued
			7. Phil Giles' Flamingo Club <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reestablish existing club for formal and informal events b. Add modest amenities (e.g., snacks, picnic tables) c. Offer changing rooms and restrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Feasibility study completed 2011; further action needed b. Feasibility study completed 2011; further action needed c. Feasibility study completed 2011; further action needed
			8. Downtown Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Construct small-scale infill development; retain historic buildings b. Consider reuse of concrete block houses, Chamber of Commerce building, and former Idlewild Party Store as a cluster of souvenir and gift shops c. Offer walk-up dining facilities like ice cream stands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Some historic buildings remain; no infill yet b. Not pursued c. Not pursued
			9. Daniel Hale Williams Property (15712 Lake Drive) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop parcel across street from Williams House as open space, garden b. Link recommended walking/biking loops with this property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued
			10. Wilson's Grocery (332 E. Wilson Drive) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Work with current owners to identify appropriate use & historic preservation tax credits or other incentives b. Reestablish as a grocery store or other appropriate use c. Offer outdoor amenities and refreshments to visitors d. Maintain as independently owned/operated business, not franchise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued
			11. Casa Blanca Hotel (1362 E. Hall St.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reestablish as a working hotel, rental hall, office space, or medical facility b. Maintain as independently owned/operated business, not franchise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Owner interested in developing as hotel b. Property is locally owned
			12. Establishing a Local Historic District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consider establishing local historic district ordinances and historic district commissions for the sections of the historic district in Yates and Pleasant Plains Townships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued
			13. Revolving Funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consider establishing a revolving fund program to acquire, rehabilitate and sell buildings, then use the proceeds to repeat the process with more buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued
			14. Marketing Vacant Property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek assistance from State Historic Preservation Office or Michigan Historic Preservation Network on how to market historic properties b. Advertise properties in historic preservation media, Idlewild websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued

Table 36: Recent Planning Documents for Idlewild and Surrounding Community

Date	Title	Authors	Recommendations	Status in 2013
2009	Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan, Cont'd.	Commonwealth Cultural Resource Group	15. Vacant Property Programs/Affordable Housing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Seek partnerships, grants with MI chapter of Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC) Conduct neighborhood surveys/property assessments Identify community anchors/landmarks Communicate with public through articles, Web media, public meetings Adopt a "fix it first" policy establish a land bank in Lake County Establish CDC and/or community land trust 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Not pursued Conducted for historic asset inventory Identified in walking tour itineraries/maps (see Appendix C) Ongoing public communications from ICDC Not pursued Established 2012 ICDC established 2010; in process of establishing land trust
2010	Yates Township Comprehensive Master Plan	Jacobsen Daniels Associates	1. Land Use <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Update Yates Township Zoning Ordinance Develop Central Business District Develop Design Guidelines Develop a Green Belt along Pere Marquette River Transfer of Development Rights Purchase of Development Rights Develop Historic District Zoning Require Site Plans Develop a Natural Resource Management Plan 2. Transportation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Yates Township Public Parking Plan Develop Signage Plan and Wayfinding System Official and Honorary Street Names Re-Design Traffic Routes Develop Non-Motorized Facilities Plan Pave Road Segments as Recommended by Community 3. Infrastructure Development <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Water Service Expansion of Sewer Network 4. Community Development <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit Proposals for the Flamingo Club Develop New Yates Township Civic Complex Redevelopment of Casablanca Hotel Expand Yates Township Public Library Locate and Construct an Outdoor Amphitheater Develop a Yates Township Recreation Commission 5. Residential Development <ol style="list-style-type: none"> New Housing Development Infill Development 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work on new zoning ordinance will begin in 2013 Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued Cultural Resource Mgt Plan (2009) includes Not pursued Historic walking tour maps added by state DNR Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued At least one affordable housing development completed recently Several private infill developments completed or ongoing
2011	Flamingo Club Feasibility Study	Jacobsen Daniels Associates	6. Rehabilitate and Reopen Flamingo Club as Restaurant, Bar, and Multipurpose Venue <ol style="list-style-type: none"> First Scenario: Township develops and manages the facility alone Second Scenario: Township leases the facility to a third party Third Scenario: Township partners with a third party to develop and manage the facility 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued
2012	Yates Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Jacobsen Daniels Associates	1. Develop a Yates Township Parks and Recreation Commission <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve and expand snowmobile trails and RV parking Construct the Idlewild athletic field and perform playground improvements Provide improved facilities and landscaping on Williams Island Rehabilitation of the historic Flamingo Club on Williams Island Develop a five acre community park 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Snowmobile trail expansion proposed in 2013 Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued Not pursued

Table 36: Recent Planning Documents for Idlewild and Surrounding Community

Date	Title	Authors	Recommendations	Status in 2013
2012	Yates Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Cont'd.	Jacobsen Daniels Associates	2. Develop a Natural Resource Management Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Form a Natural Resource Management Plan Committee b. Identify and enlist key partner, i.e. MDNR, National Forest, MUCC, etc. c. Conduct inventory and survey of natural resources features d. Designate management plans for each natural resource feature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued
			3. Develop Non-Motorized Facilities Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide signage linking walking and bicycling facilities with points of interest; including Idlewild Historic Walking & Bicycling Tour b. Develop multi-use trails connecting central business district with community & recreation facilities around Paradise Lake, Idlewild Lake c. Provide bike parking at community & recreational facilities, sites of interest d. Create bike lanes or shared-use roadway signage along major transportation corridors e. Connect DNR trail to Central Business District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued e. Not pursued
			4. Encourage public/non-profit/private partnerships and improve the community's social and economic quality of life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consolidate community & recreational facilities so they are located near each other & supported by housing development b. Develop facilities that provide for the cultural needs of the community c. Serve existing and future demand for community and recreational facilities d. Provide a balance of recreational infrastructure to meet the present and planned needs of the community e. Develop areas for recreational purpose and restore areas that are currently used for recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued
			5. Locate and Construct an Outdoor Amphitheater <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. This permanent music facility would be located on Williams Island 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued
			6. Develop a Green Belt along Pere Marquette River <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Form a Pere Marquette Green Belt Commission b. Create conceptual plan involving public and key stakeholders c. Develop funding strategies and identify potential funding partners d. Contract with landscape architectural firm to develop plans e. Solidify financial planning per probable cost estimates f. Determine programmatic and maintenance responsibilities, objectives g. Execute plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Not pursued c. Not pursued d. Not pursued e. Not pursued f. Not pursued g. Not pursued
			7. Evaluate Existing Recreation Facilities (Natural & Man-Made) & Identify Needs & Service Gaps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish & execute a protocol for regularly evaluating recreation facilities to ensure their safety, upkeep, relevance/usefulness to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued

Idlewild Cultural Economic Development Readiness Initiative (2006)

The Idlewild Cultural Economic Development (CED) Readiness Initiative set the stage for all plans that have followed since its creation. It was a strategic exploration of Idlewild's potential for economic development based on cultural tourism—i.e., tourism oriented specifically toward the appreciation of cultural identity and historical resources. This project, funded by the Michigan Council on Arts and Cultural Affairs (MSHDA, 2006) and conducted by a multidisciplinary team of experts in cultural tourism, architecture and landscape architecture, and historic preservation, established an “initial body of thought, interpretation, process, structure, resources, networks and vision” for CED in Idlewild (National Resource Team, 2006, iii). Based on their research, the team concluded that Idlewild was “a national treasure [with] the physical resources, history, authenticity, and broad culture to achieve great success with economic development via cultural tourism.” (ibid.)

Working from this conclusion, the team developed ten recommendations to begin the process of leveraging and stewardship of Idlewild's unique heritage:

1. ***All efforts should be made to preserve Idlewild as an inhabited functioning community.*** Great care will be required to enhance the quality of life of the residents, preserve the dignity of the residents and authentic physical character while advancing economic growth. (p. SF 4)
2. ***The Idlewild community and State of Michigan must approach this project in a strategic manner.*** The strategic framework must include regional collaboration and partnerships (p. SF 22).
3. ***Invest in a community building process concurrent with major program and physical master planning.*** Local trust, organizational development, networking relationships, technical knowledge, conceptual mastery and problem solving capability require strengthening beyond current levels (p. SF 24).
4. ***Preservation of land, and landscape, must become as high a priority as preservation of structures.*** A detailed and comprehensive “land genealogy” should be created for each property in Idlewild. A local historic land resource plan should be prepared, and used to coordinate State and Federal management and disposal of “tax reverted properties” (p. SF 5).
5. ***Place greater local emphasis on environmental stewardship and historic preservation as integral with all quality of life issues in Idlewild.*** Protection and quality enhancement of natural resources must become the top community action item (p. SF 11).
6. ***A legal self-governing structure must be developed to allow Idlewild to plan and manage in its own behalf.*** Waiver of population requirements for charter township status or creation of a “special” governing district should be considered (p. SF 19).
7. ***Creative business formats, such as a small business incubator and locally owned food co-op, must be encouraged and evolve with traditional mature commercial scenarios and formats*** (p. SF 14).

- 8. *Develop a “special projects” structure to produce more effective State interdepartmental collaboration on Idlewild, and similar, projects. Full-time staffing, with assignment of some executive authority, will be essential (p. SF 22).***
- 9. *Commit strategic State funding/budget for a major long-term involvement (p. SF 23).***
- 10. *Ensure that all cultural, historic and physical planning will be facilitated by competent professionals experienced in African American historic cultural and community planning (p. 1:iv).***

Idlewild Concept Master Plan (2007)

In 2007, Nederveld Associates Inc. prepared a conceptual master plan for development in central Idlewild. This plan consisted only of a map, so it is not summarized here or in Table 36. However, the map visualizes many of the recommendations in the plans that have emerged since then and therefore is a useful tool for visualizing what a downtown development scenario for Idlewild could look like. The map is shown in Figure 82.

Notable elements of the map include the following:

- Relatively dense commercial development in the existing neighborhood commercial district, with retention of key historic structures and the conversion of the large vacant lots in the heart of the district into central gathering spaces with a fountain and public sculpture.
- The addition of an amphitheater to Williams Island, with retention of the historic Flamingo Club.
- Relatively dense commercial development along the Broadway corridor, with close building frontages and parking behind the buildings. This district would include a welcome center at the intersection of US-10 and Broadway as well as a conference center and miniature golf course.

CONCEPT MASTER PLAN
CITY OF IDLEWILD
YATES TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

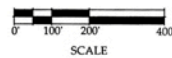


Figure 82: Concept Master Plan for Idlewild. Nederveld Associates, 2007.

Idlewild Economic Development Action Strategy (2008)

Pursuant to the recommendations from the Idlewild CED Readiness Initiative, Jacobsen Daniels Associates created a comprehensive Idlewild Economic Development Strategy with the support of a grant from the State of Michigan. The strategy consisted of a very ambitious five-year vision and action plan, covering the period from 2008 to 2012. Its main focus was on cultural/heritage tourism; however, the strategy also encompassed business development, human resource development, community-based development, and natural environment development. It was informed by significant public input, including public workshops, interviews, focus groups, and a survey.

The strategy was built around the following overarching vision for Idlewild in 2012:

By 2012, Idlewild will celebrate its centennial and be recognized as a beautiful, historic, safe, clean, welcoming community that offers quality of life for its residents, exceptional visitor amenities, and unique recreational and cultural experiences for all ages. Idlewild will achieve an appropriate balance between historic preservation and contemporary development. As zoning ordinances will be duly enforced, blight will be eliminated, there will be no tent or trailer living as permanent housing and property throughout the community will appear well maintained and attractive. Williams Island will be a historic focal point and designated entertainment and recreational area. A thriving downtown business district will host new specialty restaurants, shops, galleries, and services. Quality motel, hotel, RV and camping accommodations will be abundant. Businesses and jobs supporting Idlewild's unique culture and history will flourish throughout the community.

Good stewardship of Idlewild's lakes, forest and wildlife will be evident. Paying homage to the past, and honoring the legacies of former Idlewilders such as social activist and scholar W.E.B. Du Bois, entrepreneur Madame C.J. Walker, and writers Charles Waddell Chesnutt and Zora Neale Hurston, Idlewild will continue to serve as a nexus for artists, scholars, and other notables and host an exceptional music camp, exciting cultural festivals and events, educational and health retreats, and summer camps. Well designed signage, lighting, walking paths, by-ways and trails will efficiently guide residents and visitors through the community. The Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center will be open, active and routinely in use by the community. A special heritage trail and historical markers will help educate residents, visitors, educators, students, community activists and historians about Idlewild's unique role in our nation's history.

In 2012, Idlewild will be a strong, unified and thriving community which has the capacity to successfully accommodate visitors while serving as a cultural haven for seniors, retirees, young people and growing families. (Idlewild Economic Development Action Strategy, 2008, p. 4)

The strategy established five major economic development goals:

- *To encourage new businesses; retain existing businesses; and promote doing business in Idlewild*
- *To develop Idlewild's cultural assets as economic drivers*
- *To develop Idlewild's community human resources, leadership, and collaboration*
- *To provide good stewardship of Idlewild's physical and natural assets*
- *To foster connectivity and promotion of non-motorized forms of transportation* (Idlewild Economic Development Action Strategy, 2008, p. 13)

To achieve the five goals above, the strategy identified seven economic development initiatives around which 41 projects were organized. Each of the 41 projects included specific goals, action steps, timelines, estimated costs, and potential resources. The goals and projects are listed below, with page numbers for easy reference.

1. Priority Projects

- a. *Hire a Professional Economic Development and Planning Coordinator* (p. 41)
- b. *Update Yates Township Master Plan and Zoning Ordinances* (p. 43)
- c. *Establish the Idlewild Downtown Development Authority* (p. 45)
- d. *Develop a Branding and Marketing Strategy – "A Sense of Place"* (p. 47)
- e. *Initiate a 'Getting Ready' Initiative* (p. 49)
- f. *Establish a Lake County Land Bank Authority* (p. 51)

2. Community Projects

- a. *Solicit Proposals for the Flamingo Club* (p. 53)
- b. *Develop Central Business District* (p. 55)
- c. *Construct a Yates Township Civic Complex* (p. 57)
- d. *Develop an Idlewild Contemporary Arts Center (ICAC)* (p. 59)
- e. *Expand the Idlewild Memorial Library* (p. 61)

3. Business Projects

- a. *Develop an Idlewild Website* (p. 63)
- b. *Create an Economic Development Informational Package* (p. 65)
- c. *Develop an Idlewild Resort Housing Directory* (p. 67)
- d. *Implement Wireless Idlewild* (p. 69)
- e. *Establish an Idlewild Convention and Visitor's Bureau* (p. 71)
- f. *Develop Retail Business Incubators* (p. 73)
- g. *Perform an Economic Impact Study of the Economic Development Action Strategy* (p. 75)
- h. *Develop an Idlewild Farmer's Market and Co-op* (p. 77)

4. Physical Development Projects

- a. *Develop a Golf Range* (p. 79)
- b. *Construct a Lodge and Conference Center* (p. 81)
- c. *Create Architectural Design Standards* (p. 83)
- d. *Develop Eden Gardens and Parks* (p. 85)

5. Heritage Tourism Projects

- a. Apply for National Register and Landmark Status (p. 87)*
- b. Apply for National Trust's Dozen Distinctive Destinations (p. 89)*
- c. Create Idlewild Gifts and Souvenirs (p. 91)*
- d. Become a Preserve America Community (p. 93)*
- e. Develop the Idlewild Hall of Fame and Paradise Gardens (p. 95)*
- f. Develop an Idlewild Walking Tour (p. 97)*

6. Arts and Culture Projects

- a. Host a Regatta at Lake Idlewild (p. 99)*
- b. Host a Flamingo Festival (p. 101)*
- c. Establish an Idlewild Arts and Cultural Council (p. 103)*
- d. Host an Idlewild Arts Festival (p. 105)*
- e. Implement an Idlewild Public Art Installation and Poetry Tour (p. 107)*

7. Sustainability Projects

- a. Develop an Idlewild ReCycle and ReUse Center (p. 109)*
- b. Create a Natural Resource Management Plan (p. 111)*
- c. Create an Idlewild Green Map (p. 113)*

The strategy also incorporates a transportation vision and action plan for Idlewild and Yates Township. The vision is to “foster a historic and rural community focused on safety, sustainability, and non-motorized transit that successfully connects people to places through a safe, effective and accessible transportation network” (Idlewild Economic Development Action Strategy, 2008, p. 8). Specific transportation projects included the following:

- *Establish Bike Idlewild Program (p. 134)*
- *Develop Streetscaping and Fencing along Arterials (p. 136)*
- *Apply for US-10 Heritage Route Status (p. 138)*
- *Develop Signage Plan and Wayfinding System (p. 140)*

The strategy's appendices included the following:

- **Appendix A (p. 1 of Appendix section):** Overview of documents reviewed and sources cited
- **Appendix B (p. 8):** Physical and natural asset inventory, including an overview of businesses, public and quasi-public facilities, historic buildings, and natural assets
- **Appendix C (p. 25):** Results of community visioning sessions that helped guide the recommendations
- **Appendix D (p. 28):** Detailed recommendations of the Idlewild Downtown/Economic Development Committee for the development of the Idlewild Downtown Business District
- **Appendix E (p. 31):** Results of public workshops that helped guide the recommendations
- **Appendix F (p. 34):** Results of stakeholder surveys that helped guide the recommendations

- **Appendix G (p. 44):** Market analysis, focused mainly on national tourism trends rather than on data specific to Idlewild or Michigan
- **Appendix H (p. 58):** Members of the Idlewild Centennial Commission, assembled to plan activities for the 100-year anniversary of Idlewild in 2012.
- **Appendix I (p. 60):** Members of the Idlewild Economic Development Committee
- **Appendix J (p. 61):** Templates of a request for qualifications/request for proposals and contract for the provision of professional services

Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan (2009)

To implement the Cultural Economic Development Readiness Initiative's recommendation to prioritize the preservation of Idlewild's historic buildings and landscape, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) carried out an extensive historical asset inventory for Idlewild. Pursuant to the inventory, SHPO nominated Idlewild for an expansion of its National Register Historic District; this nomination was accepted by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior in 2010. The expansion of the National Register district fulfilled another recommendation in the CED Readiness Initiative report.

In connection with this work, the State of Michigan retained Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group (CCRG) to develop a cultural resource management plan for Idlewild. This document, titled Plan, Protect, and Promote: A Look at Idlewild's Cultural Resources and Their Management, identifies the cultural resources in Idlewild and provides both generalized and resource-specific recommendations for managing them. In addition, the plan provides practical guidelines on how to change regulations and raise funds for cultural resource management.

The plan's recommendations are based on the following central premise:

Although much of Idlewild has changed over the past decades, it remains an authentic, unspoiled testament to the once pre-eminent African American resort. The landscape continues to give voice to the rituals, traditions, and customs of generations past, and to fulfill their promise for future generations; it is imperative to preserve Idlewild's natural and built environments. Buildings that exist now should be protected; future construction should be built in harmony with Idlewild's intimate, neighborly character; and the lush forested environment, alive with lakes and rivers, should be defended.

-Cultural Resource Management Plan, 2009 (p. 1)

The guidelines and recommendations of the Cultural Resource Management Plan are summarized below. These include a mix of *general* guidelines and *specific* recommendations. For brevity, only the specific recommendations are included in Table 33.

1. Guidelines and Recommendations (p. 52)

- a. **Natural Resources (p. 52):** Because Idlewild's natural resources are integral to its character and beauty, the plan considers Idlewild's natural features to be a

contributing historic resource in the Idlewild Historic District. As such, they should be treated with as much respect as Idlewild's historic structures, and any significant changes to these features should be evaluated carefully to minimize negative impacts.

i. Lakes and Waterways (p. 52):

1. Partner with Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) or similar organization to monitor water quality.
2. Seek assistance and grant funding from the DEQ to study the condition of the north section of Idlewild Lake, which is separated from the south section by culverts that connect Williams Island to the mainland. The plan recommends that these culverts be replaced with bridges. In addition to restoring the beauty of the entrances and exits to the island, this will improve water flow to the north section of Idlewild Lake.
3. Develop a long-range plan for the management of Idlewild's water features, and for the management of impermeable surfaces that affect water quality.

ii. Trees and Vegetation (p. 53):

1. Evaluate the impacts of tree removal and other vegetation changes before performing work. Protect the health of existing vegetation. Seek guidance from DEQ and Huron-Manistee National Forest on how to do this.
2. Maintain formal plantings near buildings and roadways; retain character-defining landscape features (e.g., fences, stone piers, etc.) in same.
3. Where major development occurs, limit changes to surrounding areas.
 - a. When trees are trimmed to prevent their overhanging the roadways, the overhang should be similar to that of adjacent trees.
 - b. When opening areas to new construction, retain trees and vegetation comparable to nearby developed areas.
 - c. Retain distinction in vegetation between the northern and southern sections of the historic district. The northern section of the historic district [i.e., the focus area of the Idlewild Tourism Development Strategy] is more densely developed and has fewer trees and vegetation than the southern sections of the district. This distinction should be maintained.

iii. Wildlife (p. 54)

1. Minimize impacts on Idlewild's natural wildlife by current and future owners and visitors.

2. Minimize damage by tent caterpillars (gypsy moth larvae) and other pests. Partner with Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR), DEQ, Huron-Manistee National Forest, or similar.
- b. ***Cultural Resources of the Idlewild Historic District (p. 54): Preserve, Rehabilitate, Restore, Reconstruct.*** The plan recommends the following overarching standard for the stewardship of historic resources: “It is better to preserve than repair, better to repair than restore, and better to restore than reconstruct.” Definitions of these concepts include the following:
 - i. *Preservation: Maintenance and repair of existing historic materials; retention of the property’s form as it evolved over time.*
 - ii. *Rehabilitation: Adapting a historic property to ongoing or new uses while retaining its historic character.*
 - iii. *Restoration: Returning a property to its appearance at a particular historical period; removing evidence of its appearance at other periods.*
 - iv. *Reconstruction re-creates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property for interpretive purposes. (National Park Service 1995:63).*
 - c. ***When Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, Follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (p. 55):*** Because rehabilitation is the most commonly applied guideline for the treatment of historic resources, the plan espouses the Standards for Rehabilitation of the Secretary of the Interior. In addition to being available on page 55 of the plan document, the Secretary’s Standards can be found by searching the Internet for the terms “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.”
 - d. ***General Cultural Resource Guidelines (p. 57):*** In addition to espousing the Secretary’s Standards, the plan lays out several general guidelines for the stewardship of Idlewild’s historic resources:
 - i. *Establish flexible preservation priorities that recognize the changing threats to each resource. If a unique but modest resource is threatened with destruction, its preservation may take precedence over the preservation of a more elaborately styled resource that occurs more frequently in the district.*
 - ii. *Recognize that the district is a dynamic resource, continuously changing, and preservation activities and new development can reflect this.*
 - iii. *Add to a resource rather than subtract from it. For example, it is better to preserve a small porch and add a gazebo than to demolish the porch to construct a large deck in its place.*
 - iv. *Interpret the story of Idlewild for visitors while protecting the spaces of traditional residents.*
 - v. *Plan new development to physically fit within the framework of a town in a rural setting.*
 - vi. *Follow the historic precedent of low-impact creation of places of leisure when planning new development.*
 - vii. *Focus on land use that reflects Idlewild’s original back-to-nature philosophy.*

- e. **Cultural Resource Design Guidelines (p. 58):** The plan includes the following design guidelines for new development projects or for the modification of existing cultural resources:
- i. *Consider scale and proportion when undertaking new construction or changing existing resources. Most of the buildings in the Idlewild Historic District are modest single-story structures, so elaborate multi-story buildings would not fit with the existing built environment.*
 - ii. *Consult the National Park Service’s Preservation Briefs for information on the preservation and treatment of construction materials. [The Preservation Briefs can be found online using the search term “National Park Service Preservation Briefs.”]*
 - iii. *Consult with professional architects, landscape historians, and architectural historians before beginning any large-scale project. The Michigan State Historic Preservation Office maintains a list of qualified historic preservation professionals.*
 - iv. *Evaluate resources and their preservation in the context of their own time and place in history. In other words, avoid creating a false sense of history by creating new development or changing existing resources to reflect a history that did not exist.*
 - v. *Consider historic land use when planning for future development. A large franchise hotel might provide lodging and amenities for visitors, but such a land use would not fit with the modest resort character of the Idlewild Historic District.*
 - vi. *Design additions to be constructed at rear-facing locations, whenever possible. Building a detached garage at the rear of a house, where it would not interfere with the historic character of the building, would be preferable to building a prominent addition on the building’s façade.*
 - vii. *Continue the historic trend of placing buildings perpendicular to the lake edges and roads.*
 - viii. *Create twenty-five-foot by one hundred-foot development modules that replicate the early lot sizes.*
 - ix. *Limit building heights to one or two stories; most residences were built as one-story dwellings.*
 - x. *Create building footprints that occupy no more than thirty-three percent of any property to maintain the open, rustic character of the historic district.*
 - xi. *Avoid consolidating properties any more than necessary to form larger lots.*
 - xii. *View new development as an opportunity to demonstrate the scale and special spatial qualities of this particular place.*
- f. **Resource-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations (p. 59):** This section provides guidelines for the management of specific individual cultural resources, or categories of resources.

- i. **Archaeological Resources (p. 59):** *When a possible site is discovered, its location should be noted and then reported to the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA).*
- ii. **Entrances (p. 60):** *Physically enhance entrances to Idlewild. Focus new development on main gateways and corridors.*
 - 1. **US-10 and Broadway (p. 60):**
 - a. Add historic district signage and/or maps.
 - b. Establish a visitor center with brochures, maps, etc.
 - 2. **Paradise Path at Baldwin Road (p. 61):**
 - a. Recruit a local group to restore garden medians.
 - b. Add a state historical marker.
 - 3. **Forman Road and US-10 (p. 61):**
 - a. Add a state historical marker.
 - b. Add a historic district map.
 - c. Add directional sign for local businesses.
 - 4. **Broadway and Lake Drive (location of Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center) (p. 62):**
 - a. Expand hours of Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center
 - b. Add directional sign for local businesses
 - c. Expand painted map at Historic and Cultural Center to include full historic district
 - 5. **Baldwin and Forman Roads (p. 63):**
 - a. Add a historic district map: *Provide a large map of the historic district with selected destinations highlighted.*
 - b. Add directional sign for local businesses: *Include a sign similar to the present sign at Broadway and East Martin Luther King Drive where some of the area businesses have placards. This may also be done with directional arrows*
- iii. **Roads and Parking Areas (p. 63):**
 - 1. **Retain Unpaved Roads:** Maintain most existing roads as unpaved, which diminishes runoff and benefits Idlewild's lakes and rivers. Retain pavement on primary routes like US-10, Broadway, Forman Drive, Lake Drive, Baldwin Road, and Martin Luther King Drive.
 - 2. **Maintain Grid Pattern:** Continue existing grid pattern of narrow roadways and small blocks. When platting new subdivisions, follow the street pattern of the original plat to the extent possible.
 - 3. **Road Features:** Avoid modern road features like curved streets, cul de sacs, traffic circles, and excessive traffic signs.
 - 4. **Parking Lots:** Keep parking lots small and unpaved where possible; retain large trees where possible.
 - 5. **Shared Parking Areas:** Consider shared parking areas where the concentration of businesses or traffic is expected (e.g., downtown).

iv. Develop a Trail System (p. 64): Work with Michigan DNR and/or Department of Transportation to develop a trail system that accommodates a variety of uses.

1. Bicycle Loops (p. 65):

- a. Establish a formal network of bicycle loops through the Idlewild Historic District.
- b. Create tended bike trails (unpaved where possible) that complement Idlewild's rural character.
- c. Once established, add bike trails to community maps, signage, and brochures.
- d. Add wayfinding signage to designate the bike route. (Sample bicycle loop sign provided on p. 66.)

2. Walking/Jogging Trails (p. 67):

- a. Establish a variety of walking/jogging trails in areas not conducive to bicycling.
- b. Add wayfinding signage to designate the walking/jogging trails. (Sample walking/jogging trail sign provided on p. 66.)

g. Open Spaces and Woodlands (p. 68)

- i. Collaborate with DNR, Lake County, and townships to plan for an Idlewild parks system
- ii. Maintain large areas of unoccupied/undeveloped land as forest
- iii. Consider acquiring more land for public use
- iv. Create more public lake access, including handicapped accessibility

h. Maintain Historic Views (p. 68):

- i. To Idlewild from US-10: Use gateway or marker to reinforce view of entrance park and state historical marker
- ii. To Idlewild Lake from Williams Island & to Williams Island from shore: Maintain existing large trees but clear understory.
- iii. From lakefront properties to bodies of water: Keep most understory vegetation low.
- iv. To and from Pere Marquette Rail Trail: Develop Idlewild version of standard state trail marker where trail intersects with Broadway, Forman Drive, and recommended bicycle/walking/hiking trails.

i. Williams Island (p. 69)

- i. Develop comprehensive master plan specific to Island
- ii. Re-create bridged connections to island. To raise funds, consider offering inscription of family, business, or organization names on footboards/rails.
- iii. Install interpretive signage designating the past historical features of the island.
- iv. Construct an outdoor amphitheater.
- v. Enhance Williams Island beach as sand beach for swimming.
- vi. Create hub for small-scale/low-impact recreation such as bike and paddleboat rentals in summer and ice skates in winter.

- j. *Phil Giles' Flamingo Club (p. 70):***
 - i. Reestablish existing club for formal and informal events.
 - ii. Add modest amenities (e.g., snacks, picnic tables).
 - iii. Offer changing rooms and restrooms.
- k. *Downtown Area (p. 71):***
 - i. Construct small-scale infill development and retain surviving historic buildings.
 - ii. Consider reuse of concrete block houses, Chamber of Commerce building, and former LeeJon's/Idlewild Party Store as a cluster of souvenir and gift shops.
 - iii. Offer walk-up dining facilities like ice cream stands.
- l. *Daniel Hale Williams Property (15712 Lake Drive) (p. 71):***
 - i. Develop the parcel across the street from the Williams House as a small open space and garden.
 - ii. Link recommended walking/biking loops with this property.
- m. *Wilson's Grocery (332 E. Wilson Drive) (p. 73):***
 - i. Work with current owners to identify appropriate use and historic preservation tax credits or other incentives.
 - ii. Reestablish as a grocery store. If not possible, consider other appropriate uses, e.g., retail, professional service, food service, museum or gallery space, or visitor center.
 - iii. Offer outdoor amenities and refreshments to visitors.
 - iv. Maintain as an independently owned/operated business, not a franchise.
- n. *Casa Blanca Hotel (1362 E. Hall St.) (p. 75):***
 - i. Reestablish as a working hotel, rental hall, office space, or medical facility.
 - ii. Maintain as an independently owned/operated business, not a franchise.
- o. *Idlewild's Motels (p. 75):***
 - i. Reopen surviving motels, reconfiguring interior rooms to create larger facilities without altering exterior architecture.
 - ii. Convert small, well-situated motels into offices.
- p. *Lakeshore Houses and Cottages (p. 78):***
 - i. Retain/protect spacing of cottages along bodies of water.
 - ii. For new construction, maintain similar setbacks, scale, and density to existing construction.
 - iii. Limit construction of boathouses, docks, etc. that detract from historic resources, water, and landscape.
- q. *New Construction in the Idlewild Historic District (p. 78):***
 - i. General: Maintain the historic "look and feel" of Idlewild
 - ii. Houses: Not over two stories; shallow-pitched roofs; deep form and narrow frontage; simple form and decorative elements
 - iii. Condominium Complexes: Not over two stories; no long rows of units where possible; deep form and narrow frontage; only locate where no houses or cottages exist; no interference with lake viewsheds

- iv. Hotels and Motels: Consider rehabilitating surviving hotel/motels first; develop master plan for hotel and motel siting and development; one-story height by lakes.
- v. Commercial Buildings: Seek a variety of retailers rather than a single “big box” store; follow overall form of historic Idlewild commercial buildings (small street frontage, low height, close to street); locate most commercial buildings in “downtown” area; new parking lots should have narrow street frontages and be unpaved where possible; retain/adaptively reuse original buildings where possible.
- vi. Subdivisions: Streets similar in size, grid, surface materials, and block size to nearby housing; houses of similar building density, orientation to road, number of trees, etc.

r. Material Conservation for Cultural Resources in Idlewild Historic District (p. 82)

- i. General: Documentation review, field survey, testing, and analysis of results to diagnose and treat building conservation problems.
- ii. Concrete Block Material Conservation and Maintenance: Provides several guidelines on how to clean, maintain, diagnose and treat problems with concrete block, a common building material in Idlewild
- iii. Building Mothballing: Stabilize and secure vacant buildings to prevent damage from weather, pests, and vandalism. Includes structural stabilization (exterminating rodents and pests; protecting against moisture infiltration) and securing the building (providing adequate ventilation; securing mechanical systems and utilities; carrying out monitoring and maintenance strategies).

2. The Practical Side to Preserving Resources: Funding Options and Economic Benefits (p. 88)

a. Zoning (p. 88):

- i. General: Carefully review zoning ordinances to find changes that balance the protection of existing cultural resources with the need to promote new development
- ii. Consider revising zoning regulations to protect viewsheds and allow residential uses in commercial districts (e.g. in mixed-use buildings)

b. Tax Incentives (p. 89): Provides guidelines on how to seek federal historic preservation tax credits and Michigan historic preservation tax credits. Note: Michigan’s 25 percent historic tax credit is no longer available; a federal 20% tax credit and a combined state/federal tax credit of 25% is still available (Michigan State Housing Development Authority, 2011). The client is urged to contact MSHDA for more information about current historic tax credit guidelines

c. Establishing a Local Historic District (p. 91): Consider establishing local historic district ordinances and historic district commissions for the sections of the historic district in Yates and Pleasant Plains Townships.

d. Revolving Funds (p. 92): Consider establishing a revolving fund program to acquire, rehabilitate and sell buildings, then use the proceeds to repeat the

- process with more buildings. The plan provides a case study of Boston-Edison Development Incorporated, a successful revolving fund program in Detroit.
- e. **Marketing Vacant Property (p. 93):** Consider seeking assistance from State Historic Preservation Office or Michigan Historic Preservation Network on how to market vacant properties in the historic district in a way that promotes their character-defining features. Advertise properties in historic preservation publications or Idlewild websites.
 - f. **Vacant Property Programs/Affordable Housing (p. 94):** Seek partnerships and grants with Michigan chapter of Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC); conduct neighborhood surveys/property assessments; identify community anchors/landmarks; communicate with the public through articles, Web media, and public meetings; adopt a “fix it first” policy; establish a land bank in Lake County; establish a community development corporation and/or community land trust.
 - g. **Stop Wasting Abandoned Properties (SWAP) (p. 97):** Case study of a CDC in Providence, Rhode Island that purchases abandoned properties and finds buyers at multiple income levels to renovate and live in them.
 - h. **Grants (p. 98):** General guidelines and considerations for seeking grant funding for community projects and activities.
 - i. **A Word About Cultural Heritage Tourism (p. 100):** Information on cultural heritage tourism and the types of amenities that would likely appeal to heritage tourists—e.g., historic buildings, businesses willing to adapt their development patterns to suit the look and feel of the Idlewild Historic District.
3. **For Further Reading (p. 103):** List of publications relevant to Idlewild’s history and stewardship.
 4. **Preservation Agency and Organization Contacts (Appendix A):** Contact information for the State Historic Preservation Office, the Michigan Office of the State Archaeologist, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Yates Township Comprehensive Master Plan (2010)

The Yates Township Comprehensive Master Plan is the overarching blueprint and community vision for development in Yates Township—including Idlewild—from 2010 to 2020. This document received public input through meetings with the township planning commission and state partners as well as a public hearing and open house. According to a township planning commissioner interviewed for this project, work on a new zoning ordinance based on the comprehensive plan will begin in 2013.

The master plan is highly amenable to tourism-oriented commercial development that protects Idlewild’s historic structures and natural resources. The plan includes five goal statements, each with specific objectives and recommendations. The goals are shown below, with recommendations that seem especially relevant to tourism development under the goals to which they apply.

1. **Land Use (p. 19):** *Promote the orderly development and protection of the Township's rivers, lakes, streams, forestlands, wetlands and open spaces and reinforce sustainability efforts.*
 - a. *Update Yates Township Zoning Ordinance*
 - b. *Develop Central Business District*
 - c. *Develop Design Guidelines*
 - d. *Develop a Green Belt along Pere Marquette River*
 - e. *Transfer of Development Rights*
 - f. *Purchase of Development Rights*
 - g. *Develop Historic District Zoning [i.e., local historic district/historic district commission]*
 - h. *Require Site Plans*
 - i. *Develop a Natural Resource Management Plan*
2. **Transportation (p. 22).** *Develop accessible street networks, improve and maintain Yates Township's streetscape and signage.*
 - a. *Develop a Yates Township Public Parking Plan*
 - b. *Develop Signage Plan and Wayfinding System*
 - c. *Official and Honorary Street Names*
 - d. *Re-Design Traffic Routes*
 - e. *Develop Non-Motorized Facilities Plan*
 - f. *Pave Road Segments as Recommended by Community*
3. **Infrastructure Development (p. 29).** *Encourage commercial, residential and industrial development through improved utilities and infrastructure.*
 - a. *Municipal Water Service*
 - b. *Expansion of Sewer Network*
4. **Community Development (p. 32).** *Encourage public/non-profit/private partnerships and improve the community's social and economic quality of life.*
 - a. *Solicit Proposals for the Flamingo Club*
 - b. *Develop New Yates Township Civic Complex*
 - c. *Redevelopment of Casablanca Hotel*
 - d. *Expand Yates Township Public Library*
 - e. *Locate and Construct an Outdoor Amphitheater*
 - f. *Develop a Yates Township Recreation Commission*
5. **Residential Development (p. 40).** *Provide resources to improve housing standards and residential life. (Jacobsen Daniels Associates, 2010, p. 8)*
 - a. *New Housing Development*
 - b. *Infill Development*

The comprehensive master plan also includes several appendices. These include statements and resolutions regarding the legal standing for creating the plan, a plat history of Idlewild, an overview of community characteristics, a copy of the Idlewild Historic District tour brochure developed for the 2009 Cultural Resource Management Plan, and a very early draft of the Yates

Township Recreation Master Plan, which was completed in 2012 and is described in detail below.

Flamingo Club Development Feasibility Study (2011)

In 2011, Jacobsen Daniels Associates was asked to assess the possibility of revitalizing the former Flamingo Club, a vacant but historic nightclub on Williams Island, as a community centerpiece and entertainment venue. The redevelopment of the Flamingo Club was one of the recommendations of the Yates Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The project involved conducting a detailed physical assessment of the building, soliciting public input to generate ideas on new uses, and developing construction cost estimates. The goals of the project were to establish an appropriate identity for the site, to create a facility with year-round programming that benefited the community, and to create a plan that was affordable to implement and maintain.

The study found that the building was in need of approximately \$1.5 million in renovations to interior and exterior finishes, wiring, bathrooms, and windows. However, it was structurally sound, could be made ADA-accessible, was of sufficient size to accommodate large gatherings, and still contained original interior murals in good condition. In consultation with community members, the authors found that local residents wanted the Flamingo Club to be a restaurant, bar, and multipurpose venue, providing space for entertainment, recreation, community meetings, receptions, casino games, and more. The authors noted that because there were no other large entertainment and dining facilities in Lake County, a renovated Flamingo Club could be a countywide attraction.

To assist the community in pursuing this development, the authors included complete information on how to obtain a liquor license for the venue. They provided information on charitable gaming (e.g., bingo or poker tournaments to raise funds for nonprofits) that was permitted by the state. They discussed three different development scenarios, in which (a) the township developed and managed the facility alone, (b) the township leased the facility to a third party, and (c) the township partnered with a third party to develop and manage the facility. Finally, they provided a conceptual site plan for the development.

Status: As of early 2013, no further action has been taken on the rehabilitation of the Flamingo Club.

Yates Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2012)

The Yates Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan is of great interest for the development of tourism assets and amenities in Idlewild. It was created pursuant to the Cultural Economic Development Readiness report of 2006 (summarized above) and was subjected to public review

and comment as well as a public hearing. The recreation master plan was a requirement for the township to be eligible for funding from the Michigan DNR, and it contains important recommendations for creating or enhancing the recreational amenities of Yates Township and Idlewild. Some of these recommendations may be incorporated into action timelines as part of the larger tourism development strategy in this report.

The recreational master plan includes an inventory of current recreational assets and amenities (discussed in greater detail in the Tourism Asset Inventory in this paper), goals and objectives for improving Idlewild's parks and recreation resources, and a brief description of actions steps for achieving those goals and objectives.

The parks and recreation master plan does not discuss timelines, logistics, or potential funding sources for fulfilling the goals, objectives, or action steps.

All of the plan's goals and objectives are relevant to tourism development. They include the following:

I. Develop a Yates Township Parks and Recreation Commission (p. 18)

- A. Improve and expand snowmobile trails and RV parking*
- B. Construct the Idlewild athletic field and perform playground improvements*
- C. Provide improved facilities and landscaping on Williams Island*
- D. Rehabilitation of the historic Flamingo Club on Williams Island*
- E. Develop a five acre community park*

II. Develop a Natural Resource Management Plan (p. 18)

- A. Form a Natural Resource Management Plan Committee*
- B. Identify and enlist key partner, i.e. MDNR, National Forest, MUCC, etc.*
- C. Conduct inventory and survey of natural resources features*
- D. Designate management plans for each natural resource feature*

III. Develop Non-Motorized Facilities Plan (p. 18)

- A. Provide signage linking walking and bicycling facilities with points of interest; including the Idlewild Historic Walking and Bicycling Tour.*
- B. Develop multi-use trails connecting the central business district with community and recreation facilities around Paradise Lake and Idlewild Lake.*
- C. Provide bicycle parking at community and recreational facilities and sites of interest.*
- D. Create bicycle lanes or shared-use roadway signage along major transportation corridors.*
- E. Connect the DNR trail to the Central Business District.*

IV. Encourage public/non-profit/private partnerships and improve the community's social and economic quality of life (p. 19)

- A. Consolidate community and recreational facilities so that they are located near each other and are supported by housing development.*
- B. Develop facilities that provide for the cultural needs of the community.*
- C. Serve the existing and future demand for community and recreational facilities.*

D. Provide a balance of recreational infrastructure to meet the present and planned needs of the community.

E. Develop areas for recreational purpose and restore areas that are currently used for recreation.

V. Locate and Construct an Outdoor Amphitheater (p. 19)

This permanent music facility would be located on Williams Island.

VI. Develop a Green Belt along Pere Marquette River (p. 19)

A. Form a Pere Marquette Green Belt Commission

B. Create conceptual plan involving public and key stakeholders

C. Develop funding strategies and identify potential funding partners

D. Contract with landscape architectural firm to develop plans

E. Solidify financial planning per probable cost estimates

F. Determine programmatic and maintenance responsibilities and objectives

G. Execute plan

VII. Evaluate Existing Recreation Facilities (Natural & Man-Made) and Identify Needs and Service Gaps (p. 19)

Establish and execute a protocol for regularly evaluating recreation facilities to ensure their safety, upkeep, and relevance/usefulness to the community.

(Yates Township, 2012, pp. 18-20)

Status. According to interviewees, none of the actions recommended in this plan had been implemented as of early 2013.

CASE STUDIES

The following section provides examples of strategies for tourism development and historic preservation that may provide valuable examples for Idlewild. With a few exceptions, the case studies focus on accessible, grassroots approaches for initiating tourism development, as the practicum team believes that these approaches would be of the most value to the client at this time.

Special Events

This section provides examples of special events that are being conducted by other communities in Michigan. Special events could be especially relevant to Idlewild because they do not necessarily require significant bricks-and-mortar investments and can be started at small scale. In addition, they may offer ideas that Idlewild could use for organizing new events—or for enhancing existing events such as the Idlewild Music Festival.

Zora Neale Hurston Festival for the Arts & Humanities (Eatonville, FL)

Located just six miles north of Orlando in central Florida, the town of Eatonville is home to about 2,000 people and is the oldest incorporated African American municipality in North America (Town of Eatonville, 2010).

Eatonville is known as one of the first incorporated black towns in the United States and was formed after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. The town is named after Union Army Captain Josiah Eaton, who owned the land and sold it to twenty-seven African-American men who wanted to start their own city. These men built their town under the legacy, “In the name of freedom and self-government.” (ibid.)

The town primarily thrived in music and arts, and in 1897 the Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School was founded. For years, the school was the most important school for blacks in the state of Florida because boys and girls from all over the state came to Eatonville to learn about great poets, writers, painters, and composers. The school stayed a private school until 1950, when the courts gave it to Orange County as a public trust. Today the school is known as Robert Hungerford Preparatory High School and is Orange County's first all-magnet high school.



Figure 83: Official Seal of the Town of Eatonville.

Today, the town is best known for its annual showcase of arts, literature and culture that celebrates its native daughter Zora Neale Hurston. The purpose of this showcase, called the Zora Neal Hurston Festival for the Arts & Humanities (Zora! Festival), is “To make Eatonville an internationally-recognized tourism destination of the arts and culture from throughout the African Diaspora, with special emphasis on the multidiscipline as represented in the life and work of Zora Neale Hurston.” (ibid.)

The festival is organized by Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc. (PEC), a nonprofit historic preservation and arts organization. PEC raises funds for the festival by getting sponsorships and by requesting cash donations from adult attendees.

The community is relatively quiet year-round until the winter months, when thousands come from all over the country to the festival. The festival is built upon three main things. The first and most important is the celebration of the life and work of the writer, folklore, and anthropologist Zora Neal Hurston, a key figure of the Harlem Renaissance. The second is the celebration of the historic significance of Eatonville as the oldest African American municipality.

The third is to celebrate the cultural contributions that African Americans have made to the United States and to world culture (Zora! Festival, 2012).

The festival is unique and such a success because vendors from the town and even from all over the country come and sell tradition African-American clothing, art, paintings, and of course music. The event lasts one week and is free and open to the public. It unveils many aspects of African American culture that most people are unaware of.

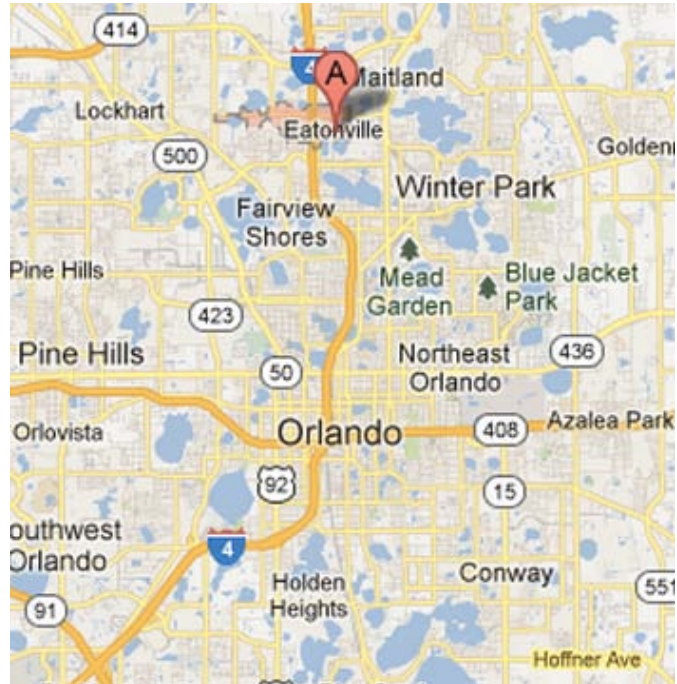


Figure 84: Map of Eatonville Showing its Proximity to Orlando. Google Maps, 2013.



Figure 85: Eatonville entry arch. Town of Eatonville, 2012.

Analysis

Much like Idlewild, Eatonville is rich in African American history, and the residents of this municipality use its historical significance strategically. Eatonville is best known for three things: it is the oldest incorporated African American municipality in America, it is the hometown of Zora Neale Hurston, and is the location where the annual commemorative festival takes place.

Eatonville has other similarities to Idlewild. It has only one motel, the 30-room Smith's Eatonville Motel. According to one of the individuals interviewed for this project, this is not an impediment to the success of the festival; the attendees simply use accommodations in surrounding communities. Attendees at festivals in Idlewild may do the same, even if no new accommodations are developed within Idlewild.

Eatonville is similar to Idlewild in several other ways. Apart from the festival, Eatonville has only a few attractions, including two small museums (the Zora Neale Hurston National Museum of Fine Art and the Wells Museum of African American History) and a modest downtown corridor. Like Idlewild, it also contains several lakes and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Based on this information, it may be possible for an organization such as the Idlewild Community Development Corporation, or a partnership consisting of ICDC, Yates Township, local business owners, and others to develop one or more seasonal festivals with themes that capitalize on Idlewild's history and intrinsic characteristics, without major up-front investments in bricks-and-mortar amenities such as hotels.

Contact Information for Eatonville, Florida and Zora! Festival

Eatonville Town Hall

307 East Kennedy Blvd.

Eatonville, FL 32751

Phone: (407) 623-8900

<http://www.townofeatonville.org/>

<http://zorafestival.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zora-Neale-Hurston-Festival-of-the-Arts-and-Humanities/163989369933>

Silver Lake Sand Dunes Apple & BBQ Cook-Off Festival (Hart, MI)

This Oceana County cook-off is held every September. Located about an hour's drive from Idlewild, it features Kansas City-style barbecue and locally grown apples. In 2012, over 15,000 visitors attended the event (Apple and BBQ Cook Off Festival, 2013).

The Apple & BBQ Cook-Off Festival is sanctioned by the Kansas City BBQ Society (KCBS). KCBS representatives attend and provide judges for the contest, which includes both professional and amateur categories.

The professional category has an entry fee of \$225. Prizes include a \$1,100 “Grand Champion” prize and trophy, and a \$700 “Reserve Grand Champion” prize and trophy. The amateur category has an entry fee of \$50 and offers a \$100 “King of the Dunes” grand prize as well as first-, second-, and third-place prizes in smaller dollar amounts for ribs and chicken wings.

To generate added interest, the festival also includes several associated events. These include a homemade apple pie contest, a rib eating contest, a classic auto and truck show, a dune buggy show, a Beautiful Baby Contest, and a craft show.

The festival takes advantage of several fundraising strategies. There is a vendor space where festival patrons can buy food; the festival collects 20% of the proceeds from food sales. The pies entered in the apple pie contest are either auctioned or sold piece by piece. In addition, the festival obtains business sponsorships. These are divided into several categories, based on the amount of money donated:

- “Smokin’ Big Apple” - \$1,000
- “Upper Crust BBQ” - \$750
- “Grillin’ Apple Crisp” - \$500
- “Saucy Apple Of My Eye” - \$250
- “Blazin’ Apple” - \$100

The festival also benefits from the coordination of volunteers, who are given assignments prior to the event. The festival’s definition of a volunteer is shown in Figure 87.

Analysis

A barbecue or other food festival could be a great attraction for Idlewild. This is an event that people of all ages from anywhere in Michigan



Figure 86: Apple & BBQ Cook-Off Event Photos. Apple & BBQ Cook-Off Festival, 2013.

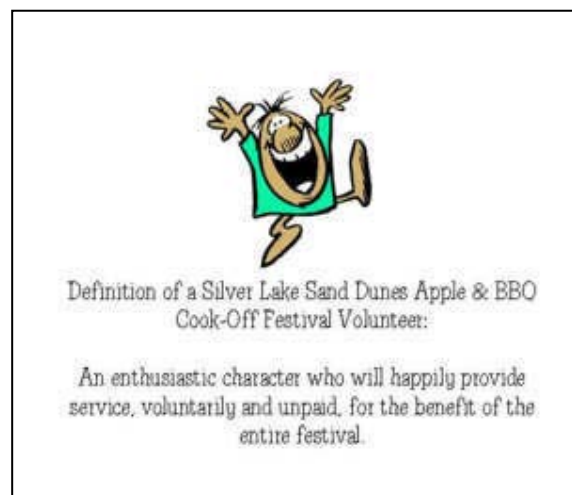


Figure 87: Definition of a Volunteer. Apple & BBQ Cook-Off Festival, 2013.

or the U.S. can enjoy. It could start small and grow over time. Charging entry fees and obtaining sponsors would keep costs at a minimum for the host.

Because the Apple & BBQ Cook-Off Festival takes place only about an hour from Idlewild, an Idlewild food festival would need to differentiate itself in some way. For example, Idlewild's festival could take place at a different time of year, feature a different type of food, be associated with a particular holiday, or include additional events that were unique to Idlewild. The Apple & BBQ Cook-Off Festival features apples, an important West Michigan food crop, as a selling point for the festival. An Idlewild food festival could use the community's musical heritage as a selling point to set itself apart from other festivals.

Contact Information for Apple & BBQ Cook-Off Festival

P.O. Box 82

Hart, MI 49420

Phone: (231) 873-2247

<http://www.applebbqfestival.com/>

Traverse City Winter Arts Comedy Festival

The festival was the first event put on by filmmaker Michael Moore and comedian Jeff Garlin. The festival was so popular that it is now an annual event, occurring next year on February 13-16, 2014. In its first year there were almost one hundred sponsors for the event. The festival had several different venues in Traverse City for stand-up comedy shows, films, competitions, and other free family events.

The four-day event featured more than 50 comedians and filmmakers and was very well attended despite the poor weather. The festival was assisted by more than 600 volunteers and received sponsorships from some 250 businesses and individuals. According to the Traverse City-area online news site MyNorth.com (2013), "The four-day celebration of good humor surrounded by large drifts of snow logged 16,000 admissions indoors, and saw outdoor crowds that far exceeded the festival's wildest expectations for this first-ever collaboration between the festival organizer—Michael Moore's Traverse City Film Festival—and their new partner, the National Cherry Festival."

The website for the festival includes hotel information for various hotels in the area and after hours dining in Traverse City. In addition to comedy, the event included competitions for dog pulling, soup making, hot chocolate, and best downtown display for businesses. These fun competitions were open to local businesses and individuals to participate. Engaging local business exposed the city to out of town visitors. There were a lot of free events for families and tickets were available for films, other activities, and stand-up comedy.



Figure 88: Front door of comedy venue. Traverse City Winter Comedy Arts Festival, 2013.

Analysis

Traverse City is in close proximity to Idlewild. Possible visitors to Traverse City could travel to attractions in Idlewild. Also, this was the first year of the festival and it did so well that it is already scheduled for next year and plans to become an annual event. Just as this event draws visitors from around the region, a well-organized Idlewild event in Idlewild could draw visitors from the Northwest Michigan region as well. Idlewild has no operating theaters at present; however, a restored Flamingo Club and/or band shell could host a winter music event with regional appeal similar to that of the Traverse City Winter Comedy Arts Festival. Given that such a festival would require the establishment of a music venue, this would be a long-range goal for Idlewild.

Contact Information for Traverse City Winter Arts Comedy Festival

PO Box 4064

Traverse City, MI 49685

Phone: 231-392-1134

info@wintercomedy.org

<http://wintercomedy.org/>

Historic Preservation

The following section illustrates two important African American landmarks that have become National Historic Sites. These examples may illustrate potential approaches Idlewild could take for designating a National Historic Site, National Monument, or National Park; currently, there are 27 National Parks/Sites/Monuments that relate to African American history (National Park Service, 2013).

For this section, it is important to note the distinction between a National Historic Landmark and a National Historic Site, Park, or Monument. “National Historic Landmark” is a symbolic title designated by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior that indicates that a property is of national historic significance; it is a higher level of significance than the National Register of Historic Places, a designation Idlewild already has. Like a National Register property, a National Historic Landmark may be eligible for federal historic tax credits and other benefits, but it remains under the jurisdiction of its owner and is not regulated or managed by the federal government. A National Historic Site, Park, or Monument is usually authorized by an Act of Congress and is managed as a park by the National Park Service. The National Park Service provides additional details on how a National Park designation is made:

Additions to the National Park System are now generally made through Acts of Congress, and national parks can be created only through such Acts. But the President has authority, under the Antiquities Act of 1906, to proclaim national monuments on lands already under Federal jurisdiction. The Secretary of the Interior is usually asked by Congress for other recommendations on proposed additions to the System. The Secretary is counseled by the National Park System Advisory Board, composed of private citizens, which advises the Secretary on possible additions to the System and policies for its management. (National Park Service, 1991)



Figure 89: Visitor Center in Nicodemus, Kansas. National Park Service, 2013.

Nicodemus, Kansas

Nicodemus is a small unincorporated village in Northern Kansas, and was founded as a Western village for African Americans in 1877 after the American Civil War (Kansas Historical Society, 2013). The village was founded by freed slaves from Kentucky and served as a haven for several years in the Central United States. The village's growth faltered when it was passed over by the railroad companies, and it soon fell into decline (Washburn

University, 2012). In 1976, Nicodemus was designated as a National Historic Landmark (Kansas Historical Society, 1913). In 1996, the town, now with a population of just over 40, was designated by the U.S. Congress as a national historical site under the management of the National Park Service (Washburn, University, 2012). Today, many tourists come to Nicodemus

to learn about the history of black settlement in the western United States.

Analysis

This area faces similar challenges to those of Idlewild. Nicodemus is a small African American village tucked in the plains of northern Kansas, and has faced economic woes for many years. The town is reliant on its visitor center and National park status. The National Park service provides funding and other support. The costs for managing the historic site are covered by the National Park Service, which provides free admission to any visitors. Idlewild, being located in a national forest, could also seek funding from the National Forest for managing facilities; however, this probably would require an Act of Congress, which may be a significant challenge. In addition to the contact information for site staff at the Nicodemus National Historic Site, contact information for the Midwest Regional Office of the National Park Service is provided below to facilitate inquiry on Idlewild's potential for National Historic Site designation.

As an alternative to designation as a National Historic Site/Park/Monument, Idlewild could seek designation as a National Historic Landmark. As noted above, such a designation does not entail active management by the National Park Service, but it is an important symbolic honor. The website of the National Historic Landmark Program is provided below; the staff at the Midwest Regional Office of the National Park Service can provide information about the program.

Contact Information for Nicodemus, Kansas and National Park Service

Nicodemus National Historic Site
510 Washington Ave. Apt. B1
Nicodemus, KS 67625-3015
Superintendent: (785) 839-4321
Administration: (785) 839-4321
Visitor Information: (785) 839-4322
<http://www.nps.gov/nico/index.htm>

National Park Service—Midwest Region
Michael Reynolds, Regional Director
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, NE 68102-4226
(402) 661-1736
<http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/contactinformation.htm>
National Historic Landmarks: <http://www.nps.gov/nhl/>

Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site & Preservation District, Atlanta

The Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District is located in Atlanta, Georgia, near the boyhood home of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and was founded in 1980. The site, located on Auburn Avenue in the Sweet Auburn Historic District, includes a 35-acre

property housing a visitor center, Dr. King's boyhood home, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and the old Firehouse, which now houses the gift shop. Like Idlewild, the concentration of African Americans in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood was the result of segregation laws, but it enjoyed a measure of prosperity during the early to mid-20th century because African Americans had few other places to live in Atlanta. As with Idlewild, Sweet Auburn's fortunes changed in the 1960s after the Civil Rights Act made housing discrimination illegal; as residents migrated to other neighborhoods, Sweet Auburn's housing and commercial buildings fell into disrepair. Sweet Auburn also fell victim to the larger trends in urban disinvestment and freeway construction of the 1960s and 1970s. (Janiskee, 2008)

Like Nicodemus, Sweet Auburn was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976. Shortly thereafter, intensive lobbying by civil rights and political leaders resulted in the 1980 designation of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site by the U.S. Congress. The original site included only Dr. King's birth home, his grave, and the Ebenezer Baptist Church. However, the district was later expanded to encompass a 68-acre area designed to preserve the core of the Sweet Auburn neighborhood, and the National Park Service began strategically acquiring selected properties there. Thus, the site became known as the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District. The establishment in 1994 of a community land trust (CLT) called the Historic District Development Corporation (HDDC) also helped facilitate the preservation of the surrounding neighborhood while maintaining affordability for low-income residents (*ibid.*). Finally, the Trust for Public Land assisted with the preservation of the district by purchasing and preserving more than a dozen properties (Trust for Public Land, 2013).



Figure 90: Birth home of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library of Congress, undated.

Analysis

Like Idlewild, the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site & Preservation District covers a large land area with a large stock of historic housing. The approach taken in Sweet Auburn—strategic acquisition of a few selected sites by the National Park Service, with a historic district and CLT stepping in to protect the rest—may be applicable to Idlewild. Given that Idlewild sits within a national forest and already includes significant federally owned land holdings within its borders, perhaps the National Park Service would be interested in establishing an Idlewild National Historic Site that protects a few important properties such as the Daniel Hale Williams house or the Casa Blanca Hotel. However, even if it were not feasible for Congress to designate a National Historic Site in Idlewild, the establishment of a CLT may be a more reachable goal. For more information about CLTs and their potential for Idlewild, please see Appendix B.

Contact Information for MLK National Historic Site, HDDC, and Trust for Public Land

Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site & Preservation District

450 Auburn Avenue, NE

Atlanta, GA 30312-1525

(404) 331-5190

<http://www.nps.gov/malu/index.htm>

Historic District Development Corporation

522 Auburn Avenue, NE

Atlanta, Georgia, 30312

(404) 556-7544

info@hddc.net

<http://www.hddc.net/>

Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land

101 Montgomery Street, Suite 900

San Francisco, CA 94104

(415) 495-4014 or 1-800-714-LAND

<http://www.tpl.org/>

Mixed-Use Development**Mashpee Commons**

Mashpee Commons is a mixed village center in Mashpee, Massachusetts that has been nationally and internationally recognized for its smart growth design. Mashpee Commons is comprised of commercial, residential, and conservation-oriented development. It contains housing, dining options with live music, shopping, a movie theater, and weekly events. Also, Mashpee Commons houses festivals, fairs, and ceremonies throughout the year to attract tourists and to attract new organizations to the area. (Mashpee Commons, 2013)

Analysis

This project is more of a long-term aspiration to be pursued after Idlewild has already begun to attract new business and tourism, as it would require very significant private investment. The population of Mashpee in the 2010 Census was 14,006, which is closer to Lake County's population of 11,539. In our recommendations we suggest developing a relationship with Lake County. After a relationship is developed with the county and the other townships/cities within Lake County, development similar to Mashpee Commons could be a hub for the area. The

development could attract tourists as well as residents from surrounding counties and strengthen the area economically and culturally. The tourism market study shows that shopping and entertainment are important draws to the area, and the retail marketplace profile shows that most businesses are outside of the Idlewild area. A development project that has the involvement of the whole county would benefit not just Idlewild but the areas where most of the leakage of businesses are located. A project similar to Mashpee Commons would be most appropriate in the Idlewild neighborhood commercial district or along the Broadway corridor. To make a project like this feasible and retain a measure of consistency with Idlewild's historical character, such development should occur at relatively small scale and low density, with buildings no taller than two stories; the Cultural Resource Management Plan (2009) offers design guidelines to harmonize new construction with the existing historic structures in Idlewild.

Contact Information for Mashpee Commons

2 Market St.

Mashpee, MA 02649

(508) 477-5400

<http://mashpeecommons.com/>



Figure 91: Mashpee Commons, Massachusetts. Source: Buildabetterburg.org.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research in this paper, Idlewild is very well suited for a tourism initiative. It boasts the same natural beauty that attracted buyers from across the country a century ago, and that beauty is now overlaid with a long and rich history. Idlewild's socioeconomic condition is in need of improvement but does not appear to be in crisis. Idlewild sits at the center of an important regional tourism economy and appears to have strong potential for contributing to—and benefiting from—that economy.

However, as the client knows, more attractions are needed to make this happen. In the midst of a region overflowing with tourist attractions and natural beauty, Idlewild has few attractions to draw the volumes of tourist traffic that would ensure long-term prosperity.

The recent plans that have been done for Idlewild are of paramount importance. They provide a wide array of well-informed recommendations for developing Idlewild as a prosperous tourism destination while ensuring the stewardship of the cultural resources that make Idlewild unique and attractive. However, these plans seem lacking in accessible, inexpensive, small-scale strategies for initiating a community-driven effort to set the stage for tourism. In addition, some of the proposed implementation timelines may have been overly ambitious in retrospect. Finally, while they were prepared by highly competent planning professionals and were *informed* by community input, the extent to which they were *driven* by local initiative is unclear.

To that end, the practicum team proposes that Idlewild begin with an array of small-scale, low-cost, grassroots approaches that set the stage for the important but costly bricks-and-mortar investments that will help sustain Idlewild's tourism economy in the long run. In addition to being accessible for a cash-strapped community, these approaches are devised to generate maximum participation, collaboration, and buy-in from all sectors of the community—including local citizens, Yates Township and Lake County officials, nonprofits, and business owners. This will be important for ensuring that the full community takes ownership in Idlewild's identity as a 21st-century historical tourism attraction.

In general, the practicum team recommends that Idlewild focus on developing unique and interesting tourist *attractions* before exerting significant efforts to pursue additional tourism *amenities* such as hotels and motels. As shown by the case study of Eatonville, Florida, it is not necessary to have a hotel in order to attract tourism; visitors to the Zora! Festival use accommodations in surrounding communities. The practicum team's market study has demonstrated that the counties near Idlewild boast large numbers of lodging facilities. By focusing first on the attractions, tourists will have compelling reasons for visiting Idlewild and will be able to use these existing accommodations. As Idlewild's attractions grow, the market for additional amenities may grow in kind.

The same is true of marketing. While marketing is of utmost importance for attracting new visitors of all ages and demographic groups, it should not be unveiled prematurely. The addition of promotional highway signs or billboards seems unlikely to generate repeat visits if the tourist attractions are not sufficiently enticing.

This set of recommendations carries over several of the recommendations from the previous plans, but attempts to provide a more realistic time frame for implementation. Most of the original recommendations by the practicum team are concentrated toward low-cost or no-cost, grassroots strategies to be completed in the next three years. In addition to achieving modest gains in capacity building, community beautification, and other areas, these strategies are designed to generate community engagement and support for the work so that the residents of Idlewild are involved in Idlewild's development. The public engagement and momentum from the implementation of the grassroots strategies may increase the feasibility of the more ambitious recommendations featured in the earlier planning documents.

The recommendations are presented first in narrative form, and then are summarized together in Table 37.

Capacity Building

Local capacity building activities will help nonprofits like the Idlewild Community Development Corporation as well as Yates Township public officials to build the expertise to organize, work together, and generate locally driven tourism investment. Capacity building often requires little or no investment; it simply involves taking advantage of available training opportunities and working together to create an atmosphere of collaboration.

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)

Capacity Building—Training. Many organizations hold annual conferences which highlight strategies that are relevant to the development and stewardship of Idlewild. Often these organizations offer scholarships to waive part or all of the attendance fees. In addition, all of these organizations provide free or low-cost technical assistance and capacity building resources on their websites.

- **Land Trust Alliance** www.landtrustalliance.org
 - *Training Portal:* <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/training>
- **Michigan Historic Preservation Network** www.mhpn.org
 - *Education and Outreach Portal:* http://www.mhpn.org/?page_id=182
- **Center for Community Progress** www.communityprogress.net
 - *Technical Assistance and Capacity Building:*
<http://www.communityprogress.net/capacity-building-pages-45.php>
- **Michigan Nonprofit Association** www.mnaonline.org
 - *Nonprofit Resource Center:*
<http://www.mnaonline.org/nonprofitresourcecenter.aspx>
 - *Upcoming Capacity Building Events:*
<http://www.mnaonline.org/capacitybuilding.aspx>
- **MI Place** www.miplace.org
 - *Tools and Resources for Community Development:*
<http://www.miplace.org/resources>

Capacity Building—Collaboration. According to the SWOT analysis and interviews, development in Idlewild has been challenged by internal conflicts within the community. To initiate a tourism development initiative that reflects a strong community consensus and takes advantage of the important resources that all stakeholders have to offer, an atmosphere of strong communication and collaboration is needed. The practicum team proposes the following approach for building collaboration around tourism:

- Establish an Idlewild Tourism Committee with Yates Township and county officials; Lake County Land Bank; Lake County Chamber; Lake County MSU Extension District 5; West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission; Idlewild Chamber; nonprofits; and business representatives
 - Coordinate volunteers

- Coordinate subcommittees to carry out specific activities
- Meet regularly to discuss status of activities and address problems
- Conduct a monthly conference call with State of Michigan contacts to provide updates on the status of activities and coordinate strategic assistance from the State

Medium Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)

At this stage, it is hoped that the initial capacity building work will lead to the ability to expand the operations of the ICDC. With the resources generated through fundraising, conduct the following activities:

Hire a part-time planning and development coordinator. This staff position would increase the capacity of the ICDC to engage in the strategic acquisition and management of properties as well as other community development work. It will be essential for the expansion of the organization's impact on the community.

Establish official ICDC headquarters. This will give the organization a more permanent identity in Idlewild, as well as a base of operations for conducting business. The headquarters could be in a historic building acquired through the Lake County Land Bank or the Michigan Land Bank, thus illustrating the ICDC's commitment to preservation and stewardship.

Expand Idlewild Chamber of Commerce. As the number of businesses in Idlewild increases, it should be feasible to expand the operations and business-support capacity of the Idlewild Chamber of Commerce.

Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)

Hire a full-time planning and development coordinator. At this stage, it is hoped that the growth of Idlewild's tourism economy will be sufficient to merit additional staff capacity increases. Increased tourism revenues should make this possible.

Physical Development

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)

Although bricks-and-mortar development projects are very expensive, several projects could be completed in the near term through private investment or grant funding. These are described below.

Issue request for qualifications for reopening the Flamingo Club. The rehabilitation and reopening of the Flamingo Club is prioritized in several of the recent plans that have been completed for Idlewild. Based on the research for this report, the practicum team concurs that a revitalized Flamingo Club could serve as an anchor for tourism development in Idlewild. With private investment, this could be done at little or no cost to Yates Township. The Economic Development Action Strategy (2008) includes sample request for proposals (RFP) language in its appendices; however, a request for qualifications (RFQ) may allow better chances for execution. Unlike an RFP, in which the community requests a highly specific proposal, an RFQ is much shorter and focuses more on the qualifications and practical experience of the developer. After the developer is selected, the community enters into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the developer, which is a statement of mutual understanding about the general parameters of the project and is not legally binding. Under the MOU, the community works with the developer to design the project and explore its feasibility in a manner that balances the needs of the community and the site with the profit motive of the developer. Based on the findings from this work, the community enters into a legally binding Development Agreement with the developer, which details the specific project to be completed. (Van Ravensway, 2011.)

Appendix D provides a sample RFQ, MOU, and Development Agreement for East Village, a proposed development in East Lansing. Although the materials are from a much larger community and project, the RFQ and MOU are short, simple documents in a format that should be easy to adapt to the search for a developer for the Flamingo Club. The Development Agreement is much more detailed, but a qualified developer may have the necessary expertise to help complete such an agreement. If further assistance is needed to complete the RFQ, MOU, or related documents, an economic development organization like the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC) may be able to provide assistance or a referral. WMSRDC's contact information is provided below.

West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, MI 49440
Stephen Carlson, Senior Planner, Community Development & Local Government Services
(231) 722-7878 ext. 11
scarlson@wmsrdc.org

Solicit public grant funding for specific development projects. Several development projects would help set the stage for tourism development in Idlewild and could potentially be carried out with public funds.

- ***Solicit Michigan Department of Natural Resources funding for Williams Island bridge replacement.*** This is a recommendation of the Cultural Resources Management Plan. It would increase the water flow and health of the north section of Idlewild Lake while reinforcing the scenic identity of Williams Island as an island.
 - ***Contact information for Michigan DNR Waterways Program Grants:***
Paul Petersen, Waterways Grant Program Manager
DNR, Parks and Recreation Division
P.O. Box 30257, Lansing, MI 48909
(517) 335-3033
petersenp@michigan.gov
http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-58225_37985-124962--,00.html
- ***Solicit U.S. Department of Agriculture or other funding for broadband development.*** Broadband development will be critical for attracting a 21st-century tourism economy and also for reinforcing the connectivity of Idlewild's residents. The client was actively pursuing this funding at the time this report was written.
 - ***Contact information for USDA Rural Development Telecommunications Programs, Broadband Division:***
USDA - STOP 1599
1400 Independence Ave., SW, Rm 2868-S
Washington, DC 20250-1599
Ken Kuchno, Director
(202) 690-4673
kenneth.kuchno@wdc.usda.gov
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/RUSTelecomPrograms.html>

Medium Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)

Solicit State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) grant for evaluation, stabilization, and/or rehabilitation of Casa Blanca Hotel. This is a recommendation of the Cultural Resources Management Plan. Although the development of a hotel may not be advisable until Idlewild has more tourist attractions to provide a consistent flow of guests for a hotel, a small-scale first step would be to evaluate and stabilize the historic Casa Blanca hotel building, which is one of Idlewild's most striking historic structures. It may be possible to obtain state funding to carry out this work. The SHPO Historic Preservation Fund is a 60/40 matching grant (SHPO, 2013), which makes this a medium-term/medium-cost recommendation.

Contact Information for Michigan SHPO Historic Preservation Fund Grants:

Michigan State Historic Preservation Office
702 W. Kalamazoo St., P.O. Box 30740
Lansing, MI 48909-8240
(517) 373-1979

preservation@michigan.gov

http://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,4641,7-141-54317_19320_61958---,00.html

ICDC partners with Lake County Land Bank to redevelop or rehabilitate strategic properties in target area. By this time, it is hoped that the ICDC will have built sufficient capacity to begin the strategic acquisition and management of properties. In collaboration with the Lake County Land Bank and the Michigan Land Bank, the ICDC will acquire properties for rehabilitation or redevelopment, focusing especially on (a) commercial properties in the neighborhood commercial district and the Broadway corridor, and (b) historic housing throughout the district. The acquisition of Idlewild's historic homes by the ICDC will carry out a dual function: the provision of affordable housing and the preservation of the modest cottages that typify historic Idlewild.

Construct welcome center at US-10 and Broadway. The Cultural Resource Management Plan recommends that a welcome center be constructed at US-10 and Broadway to provide brochures and other resources to visitors. The acquisition of land and the construction of a welcome center could be a medium-term project of the ICDC.

Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)

Hotel(s) established. Commercial development occurring. By this time, it is hoped that market-driven commercial development will be occurring in the neighborhood commercial district and the Broadway corridor. The Casa Blanca Hotel and/or other lodging facilities will have been established.

Build amphitheater on Williams Island. With increased revenue from tourism and also an increased business presence in Idlewild, it may be possible by this time to raise funds locally to match grants from the state for the construction of a permanent amphitheater on Williams Island.

Marketing

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)

Engage volunteers for social media awareness building. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest are free and popular. Add new content often—daily if possible. If event information is not available, post interesting historical information, videos, etc.

Establish a central Idlewild website. This should be Idlewild’s main point of contact. The website should have a domain that is short and easy to remember. For example, “visitidlewild.com” was available for \$43.97 in April 2013 (Godaddy.com, 2013).

During Idlewild Week, gather contact information (emails, addresses, phone) of all Idlewilders Club members. This will allow the ICDC to reach out to the Idlewilders about special events in the community and could also offer the possibility of conducting research to better understand the characteristics, preferences, and future prospects of this market.

Research Historically Black Colleges & Universities and the Divine Nine. This is another potentially important target market. As shown by the market study, educated individuals are more likely to visit cultural tourism sites. The website www.blackgreek.com/divinenine has information on the “Divine Nine” historically black fraternities and sororities that make up the National Pan-Hellenic Council—an audience of highly educated African Americans.

Medium Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)

Increase investment in marketing. As events and attractions grow and diversify, it should be feasible to make the following investments in marketing by the 2016-2019 time frame:

- Hire a part-time marketing coordinator.
- Hire a marketing firm to create promotional videos.
- Purchase ads in major Northwest Michigan markets as well as Detroit, Chicago, Grand Rapids.
- Advertise in-state through Pure Michigan.
- Generate targeted marketing materials, e-newsletters.
 - Idlewilders Clubs
 - Historically Black Colleges & Universities
 - “Divine Nine” Fraternities & Sororities

Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)

Reach out to major markets. By this time, the growth in tourist attractions and amenities may justify broader outreach to major markets and the establishment of a more permanent marketing agency. This could consist of the following:

- Establish Idlewild Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Purchase ads in major North American markets
- Advertise nationwide through Pure Michigan
- TV commercials in major Midwestern cities

Beautification

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)

Form a volunteer beautification subcommittee to set ongoing local priorities for beautification. This would be a subcommittee of the Idlewild Tourism Committee in the Capacity Building task.

Wildflower Day. Wildflowers are one of Idlewild's hidden treasures. To highlight this seasonal feature, organize local residents to plant native wildflowers at entrances to Idlewild and along major corridors. To supply seeds/plants, seek donations or sponsorships from greenhouses around the region.

Engage local artists to make decorative signs and other promotional materials. During the SWOT analysis, residents pointed out that Idlewild's promotional materials use clip art. The Cultural Resource Management Plan (2009) noted that several of Idlewild's street signs are used signs from Grand Rapids that still have logos specific to that city. Where possible, seek out local artists and artisans to develop these promotional materials. To compensate the artists for their work, seek mini-grants such as the Lighter Quicker Cheaper grants offered by the Michigan Association of Realtors (<http://www.michiganhomeownersalliance.com/lqcchallenge.htm>).

Medium Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)

Work with DNR/DEQ to coordinate ongoing evaluation and maintenance of the lakes. Idlewild's lakes are a critical tourism asset, and their long-term health is related to the health of Idlewild's economy. Their condition should be evaluated, and issues rectified, on a regular basis.

Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)

Establish a program for sustained evaluation and maintenance of beautification activities. This program would be a long-term initiative of the Idlewild Community Development Corporation or Yates Township. It could be established through a business improvement district, in which businesses in the target area pay a small tax or fee that is applied to general evaluation and maintenance as well as specific beautification initiatives; alternatively, it could solicit donations from businesses to carry out such projects. Because such a program would require a critical mass of businesses to be viable, this is considered a long-term approach.

Special Events

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)

Special Events. The practicum team feels that special events could be a critically important early-stage approach for cultivating tourism. They can start small and be scaled up gradually, and they do not necessarily require a large up-front investment. Idlewild has already had an annual music festival for several years, and this festival could be expanded. In addition, new festivals could be established.

- **Form a volunteer special events subcommittee; set priorities and assign tasks.** This would be a subcommittee of the Tourism Development Committee.
- **Begin a Father's Day BBQ Festival.** Based on Internet research by the practicum team, the closest major barbecue festival is in Hart (profiled in the previous section) and occurs in the fall. An Idlewild Father's Day Barbecue Festival could bring together not just members of the Idlewilders' Clubs, but also their children and grandchildren. It also could attract other residents from Lake County and the surrounding region. The timing of the festival in June would help differentiate it from the festival in Hart, and it could include additional events and branding unique to Idlewild, perhaps tied to music or to imagery connected with the Flamingo Club. (The Idlewild Economic Development Action Strategy proposes a "Flamingo Festival" with this theme; for information about that concept, see page 101 of the Economic Development Action Strategy.)
- **Seek additional sponsors to expand the Idlewild Music Fest.** The scope of this festival could be expanded by seeking additional sponsors with the help of the special events subcommittee. The addition of sponsorships from businesses outside Lake County would both increase the available operating funds for running the event and contribute to generating interest in the festival among visitors throughout the region.

Medium Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)

Increase investment in event coordination. As events and attractions grow and diversify, it may be feasible to make the following investments in event coordination by the 2016-2019 time frame:

- Hire a part-time special events coordinator
- Expand/seek additional sponsors for Barbecue Festival
- Seek major acts for Idlewild Music Festival
- Establish a Flamingo Club Summer Concert Series (pending reopening of Flamingo Club)

Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)

Establish full-time events coordination staff. If the growth of and interest in Idlewild's special events continues, it may be feasible to establish a full-time special events coordinator and staff.

Preservation and Stewardship

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)

Provide nonbinding design guidelines using language from Cultural Resource Management Plan. The Comprehensive Master Plan and the Cultural Resource Management Plan both advocate for the establishment of a local historic district to protect the historic structures that make Idlewild unique. However, the establishment of a local historic district is difficult because local historic districts are a regulatory tool that requires landowners to obtain local government permission to alter the exterior appearance of their properties. To provide landowners with education about the features that define Idlewild's historic resources and build support for historic preservation, it may be more feasible to post nonbinding design guidelines for the treatment of historic structures. These can be readily adapted from the Cultural Resource Management Plan.

Medium Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)

Begin initial steps toward establishing a Local Historic District. As knowledge and support of historic preservation increases, it may be feasible to take initial steps toward establishing a local historic district. This is done by establishing a Historic District Study Committee consisting of local officials, interested citizens, and historic preservation specialists. The committee would develop a report of the historic resources that the historic district would protect. For Idlewild, the committee could use the State Historic Preservation Office's existing historic resource inventory as starting point, updating the inventory to reflect demolitions and other changes to the properties since the Cultural Resource Management Plan was written.

Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)

Establish local historic district. Once the historic district study committee's report is complete and sufficient support exists among local residents and officials, it may be feasible to establish a local historic district. This would require a public hearing and comment period, followed by a vote of the township board.

Table 37: Tourism Development Recommendations, 2013-2023

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)	Medium Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)	Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)
Capacity building—training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michigan Nonprofit Association, Michigan Historic Preservation Network, Center for Community Progress Capacity building—collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Idlewild Tourism Committee with Yates Twp, county officials; Lake County Chamber, Land Bank; Lake County MSU Extension District 5; West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission; nonprofits; business reps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate volunteers Coordinate subcommittees for activities below Meet regularly to discuss status of activities and address problems Monthly conference call with state partners 	Capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire part-time planning and development coordinator Establish official ICDC headquarters Expand Idlewild Chamber of Commerce 	Capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire full-time planning and development coordinator
Physical development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue RFQ for Flamingo Club and Williams Island band shell Solicit DNR/DEQ funding for Williams Island bridge replacement Solicit USDA funding for broadband development 	Physical development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICDC partners with Lake County Land Bank to redevelop strategic properties in target area Construct welcome center at US-10 and Broadway Issue RFQ for redevelopment of Casa Blanca Hotel Solicit SHPO grant for Casa Blanca Hotel 	Physical development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel(s) established; commercial development occurring Raise funds locally to build permanent amphitheater on Williams Island
Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage volunteer for social media marketing—start with historical information and existing events. Content updates at least 3x/week Establish central Idlewild website (e.g., “visitidlewild.com”) During Idlewild Week, gather contact information (emails, addresses, phone) of all Idlewilders Club members Research Historically Black Colleges & Universities, Divine Nine 	Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire part-time marketing coordinator As events & attractions grow/diversify, increase marketing investment Hire marketing firm to create promotional videos Purchase ads in major Northwest Michigan markets as well as Detroit, Chicago, Grand Rapids Advertise in-state through Pure Michigan Targeted marketing materials, e-newsletters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idlewilders Clubs Historically Black Colleges & Univs. “Divine Nine” Fraternities & Sororities 	Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Idlewild Convention & Visitors Bureau Purchase ads in major North American markets Advertise nationwide through Pure Michigan TV commercials in major Midwestern cities
Beautification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a volunteer beautification subcommittee to set local priorities Wildflower Day—each year, plant native wildflowers at entrances and major corridor (seek donations from area greenhouses) Engage local artists to make decorative entry signs, wayfinding signs 	Beautification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with DNR/DEQ to coordinate ongoing evaluation and maintenance of the lakes 	Beautification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate sustained beautification activities through business improvement district or donations from local businesses
Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form volunteer special events subcommittee; set priorities and assign tasks Begin Father’s Day BBQ Fest or other food festival Seek additional sponsors for Idlewild Music Fest 	Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a part-time special events coordinator Expand/seek additional sponsors for BBQ/food fest Seek major acts for Idlewild Music Fest Establish Flamingo Club Summer Concert Series (pending reopening of Flamingo Club) 	Special Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-time special events staff
Preservation and Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose nonbinding design guidelines using language from Cultural Resource Management Plan 	Preservation and Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Historic District Study Committee Develop updated report using existing historic resource inventory as starting point 	Preservation and Stewardship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish local historic district

SUMMARY

This report provides the client with an array of data, maps, resources, contacts, and recommendations for initiating and sustaining a community-driven tourism development strategy in Idlewild, Michigan. It is the product of extensive research and analysis on the part of the practicum team as well as the support of many partners who contributed time, background information, and thoughtful commentary.

The practicum team has learned a great deal about the history, characteristics, and potential of Idlewild, and the recommendations in this report are the product of that accumulated knowledge. It is the hope of the practicum team that this report will provide a point of departure for a tourism initiative that is defined and driven by the local residents and organizations of Idlewild, with support from external partners such as Lake County and the State of Michigan. As time passes, the recommendations in the report should be evaluated, adapted, and updated to suit the changing needs and local realities of the community members who will implement them and will be affected by their results.

The practicum team is grateful for the opportunity to learn about the beautiful community of Idlewild and to make this small contribution in support of its revitalization.

