Tourism Development Strategy for Idlewild, Michigan

Cortney Dunklin - Corean Reynolds - Emilio Voltaire
Nathalie Winans - Matthew Wojciechowski

Michigan State University
UP 494/894: Student Practicum Project
Spring 2013
Introduction
Project Goal and Client

• Goal
  – Help the 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
  – Lead: Idlewild Community Development Corporation
  – Supporters:
    • Idlewild African American Chamber of Commerce
    • Yates Township, Lake County
    • Michigan State Housing Development Authority
    • Local Business Owners
Scope of Work

• Overview of Idlewild
• Socioeconomic Profile
• Tourism Asset Study
• Tourism Market Study
• Review of Planning Documents Completed Since 2006
• Case Studies
• Tourism Strategy

Target Area in Context

Composite of maps by Jacobsen Daniels Associates (2010) and Worldatlas.com (undated)
Target Area in Context

Composite of maps by Jacobsen Daniels Associates (2010) and Worldatlas.com (undated)
Target Area

Adapted from Google (2013)
Idlewild: An Overview
Brief History of Idlewild

• Founded as African American resort community in 1912
• Very popular for much of 20th century
• Decline with passage of Civil Rights Act
• 1979: Listing on National Register of Historic Places
• 1990s-2000s: Planning for revitalization

Zoning in Idlewild. Created by practicum team using maps from Yates Twp Comprehensive Plan.
Land Ownership

- 72% of Idlewild acreage is privately owned
- Collectively, land banks are the third largest property owner
- Average lot size in Idlewild: 0.34 acres
- National average lot size for new development outside metro areas: 0.66 acres—US Census, 2011

Key Sites: Williams Island

- First site settled in 1912
- Historical center of Idlewild commerce and social life
- Owned as park by Yates Twp
- One key structure remains: Flamingo Club (vacant)

Key Sites: “Downtown”

• Idlewild’s only Neighborhood Commercial District

Top: Idlewild Neighborhood Commercial District. Google Map (2013) with district boundaries and business names added.
Key Sites: “Downtown”

Key Sites: Broadway & US10 Entrance

- Key entry route for Idlewild
- Recommended for development as commercial corridor in 2010 Yates Twp Comprehensive Plan

Created by practicum team from Lake County GIS files, 2013.
Key Sites: Broadway & US10 Entrance

Clockwise from upper left: Casa Blanca Hotel (vacant) (Voltaire 2013); Rollins/Hudson House, (CRMP 2009); “Bayview” (CRMP 2009); Idlewild Sign at US-10 (CRMP 2009); Idlewild Lot Owners Assn/Robert Riffe Youth Center (CRMP 2009).
• **Area:** Yates Twp., Lake County. Comparison: MI.

• **Period:** 1990, 2000, 2010

• **Size of census tract encompassing Yates Township:**
  – Increased significantly from 1990 census to 2000 census
  – Shrank somewhat from 2000 census to 2010 census—but still larger than it had been at time of 1990 census
  – Lake County data provide useful frame of reference
    • Rural, low-density population like Yates Twp
    • Boundaries did not change during study period
Map of Census tract changes

Social Profile: Employment Status - 2010

Tourism Industry Patterns, 2000-2010

The number of attractions, amenities held steady in 2000-2010

### Total Number of Tourist Attractions (arts, entertainment, rec) in Lake County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: North American Industry Classification System

### Total Number of Tourism Amenities (accommodations, food svcs) in Lake County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: North American Industry Classification System
Tourism Industry Maps: Amenities

- Amenities are well distributed in region
- However, number of amenities is smaller in Lake County

Source: Esri.
Regional Tourism Highlights:
Selected Tourist Attractions Near Idlewild

• **Manistee**
  – Beaches, riverwalk, golf resort, outdoor concerts, historical museums, Victorian Sleigh Bell Parade

• **Traverse City**
  – Clinch Park Beach, outdoor recreation, shopping, wine, eateries

• **Ludington**
  – Close to Huron-Manistee National Forest and Idlewild
  – Fishing, hiking, lakeshore activities

Clinch Park Beach, Traverse City. Michigan.org, 2013a.
Leisure spending greatly exceeds travel spending in Michigan.
Travel Demographic by Age and Purpose of Stay

Age Distribution and Average Leisure Days Spent on Trip in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Michigan</th>
<th>USA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-54</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


• Purpose of Stay
  – Visit Friends and Relatives, Getaway Weekend, General Vacation
Most Popular Activities in Northwest Michigan

- Dining, Shopping, Entertainment, Beach/Waterfront, Gambling, Festival/Fair, National or State Park/Forest, Hunt/Fish

Top States of Origin of Michigan Visitors, 2009

- Michigan: 61.1%
- Wisconsin: 6.0%
- Illinois: 4.0%
- Indiana: 5.2%
- Ohio: 1.2%
- New York: 1.5%
- Tennessee: 1.6%
- Georgia: 3.0%
- Florida: 1.4%
• Visitors stay 1-2 days in Lake County on average.
• In contrast, they stay in nearby Mason County 3-4 days.
• The areas with more length of stay are Great Lakes coastal areas.

Idlewild Retail Marketplace Profile

- Indicates retail market potential in an area based on population density
- 1 mile, 10 mile, and 20 mile radius around Idlewild
- Leakage (positive numbers): Retail types that people in the study area are leaving the study area to obtain
- Surplus (negative numbers): Excess of a given type of retailer in the study area
- Data Source: Esri Geographic Information System
Retail Marketplace Profile: 20 Miles

Idlewild Retail Leakage/Surplus: 20-Mile Radius

- Drinking Places—Alcoholic Beverages: -5.6
- Special Food Services: 11.5
- Limited-Service Eating Places: 26.9
- Full-Service Restaurants: 45.5
- Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores: -4.8
- Florists: 13.8
- General Merchandise Stores: -23.9
- Book, Periodical & Music Stores: 64.6
- Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores: 29.5
- Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores: 58.5
- Shoe Stores: 56.5
- Clothing Stores: 78.8
- Health & Personal Care Stores: 37.6
- Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores: -9.5
- Specialty Food Stores: 82.1
- Grocery Stores: 48.9
- Lawn & Garden Equipment and Supply Stores

-40  -20  0  20  40  60  80  100
Recent Planning Activities
Recent Planning Activities

• Six plans done since 2006
  – Yates Township Comprehensive Master Plan (2010)
  – Flamingo Club Development Feasibility Study (2011)
  – Yates Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2012)

• Created matrix with summary of recommendations and status of plans
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Status in 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Idlewild CED Readiness Initiative</td>
<td>National Resource Team</td>
<td>1. Preserve Idlewild as inhabited functioning community</td>
<td>Numerous activities completed or in progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Strategic partnership between Idlewild and State of MI</td>
<td>Established 2006 and still active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Invest in community building process concurrent with master planning</td>
<td>Many plans &amp; strategic investments completed or ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Historic land/landscape prioritized as highly as historic buildings</td>
<td>Idlewild Cultural Resource Mgt Plan prioritizes both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Emphasize historic preservation and environmental stewardship</td>
<td>Yates Comprehensive Plan strongly emphasizes both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Establish legal self-governing structure for Idlewild</td>
<td>Not pursued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Encourage creative business formats (e.g., incubator, food co-op)</td>
<td>Grant received; work not completed yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Create “special projects” structure to facilitate interdept. collaboration</td>
<td>Idlewild, MI Transformation Initiative continues to be active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. Commit State funding/budget for major long-term involvement</td>
<td>Numerous/significant/ongoing commitments of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10. Planning work done by professionals with strong cultural competency</td>
<td>Most plans done by Jacobsen Daniels Assoc planning firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2008</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Studies
Summary of Case Studies

- **Special Events**
  - Eatonville, Florida
  - Silver Lake Apple & BBQ Festival
  - Traverse City Winter Comedy Arts Festival

- **Historic Preservation**
  - Nicodemus, Kansas
  - Martin Luther King Jr National Historic Site

- **Mixed Use Development**
  - Mashpee Commons
Recommendations
About the Recommendations

• Created matrix of recommendations
  • Short term/low cost (2013-2016)
  • Medium term/medium cost (2016-2019)
  • Long term/high cost (2020-2023)

• Six categories
  • Capacity building
  • Physical development
  • Marketing
  • Beautification
  • Special Events
  • Preservation and Stewardship
## Sample Tourism Development Recommendations, 2013-2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)</th>
<th>Medium Term/ Medium Cost (2016-2019)</th>
<th>Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Capacity building
- **Training**
  - Michigan Nonprofit Association, Michigan Historic Preservation Network, Center for Community Progress

### Capacity building—collaboration
- 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
  - Coordinate volunteers
  - Coordinate subcommittees for activities below
- **Meet regularly to discuss status of activities and address problems**
- Monthly conference call with state partners

### Physical development
- 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

### Medium Term/ Medium Cost (2016-2019)
- **Capacity building**
  - Hire part-time planning and development coordinator
  - Establish official ICDC/Idlewild Community Land Trust headquarters
  - Expand Idlewild Chamber of Commerce

### Physical development
- Community Land Trust 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

### Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)
- **Capacity building**
  - Hire full-time planning and development coordinator

### Physical development
- Hotel(s) established; commercial development occurring
- Raise funds locally to build permanent amphitheater on Williams Island

### Marketing
- 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

### Medium Term/ Medium Cost (2016-2019)
- **Marketing**
  - 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.g., newsletters
    - Idlewilders Clubs
    - Historically Black Colleges & Universities.
    - “Divine Nine” Fraternities & Sororities

### Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)
- **Marketing**
  - Establish Idlewild Convention & Visitors Bureau
  - Purchase ads in major North American markets
  - Advertise nationwide through Pure Michigan
  - TV commercials in major Midwestern cities
Sample Recommendations: Special Events

- **Purpose:** Accessible, non-bricks-and-mortar attractions to engage the community and generate regional attention for Idlewild

- **Short-Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)**
  - Form volunteer special events subcommittee
  - Begin Father’s Day BBQ Fest or other food festival
  - Seek additional sponsors for Idlewild Music Fest

- **Medium-Term/Medium Cost (2016-2019)**
  - Hire a part-time special events coordinator
  - Expand/seek additional sponsors for BBQ Fest
  - Seek major acts for Idlewild Music Fest

- **Long-Term/High Cost (2020-2023)**
  - Hire full time special events staff
Thank You

Full Report: http://ced.msu.edu/publications/reports/planning