



Tourism Development Strategy for Idlewild, Michigan

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**Michigan State University
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A winter landscape featuring a large, snow-covered frozen lake in the foreground. The background is filled with a dense line of evergreen trees, and several small, light-colored buildings are visible among them. The sky is bright blue with large, white, fluffy clouds, and a very bright sun is shining from the upper right, creating a lens flare effect. Bare tree branches are visible in the upper left corner, and a wooden fence post is in the lower right corner.

Introduction

Project Goal and Client

- **Goal**

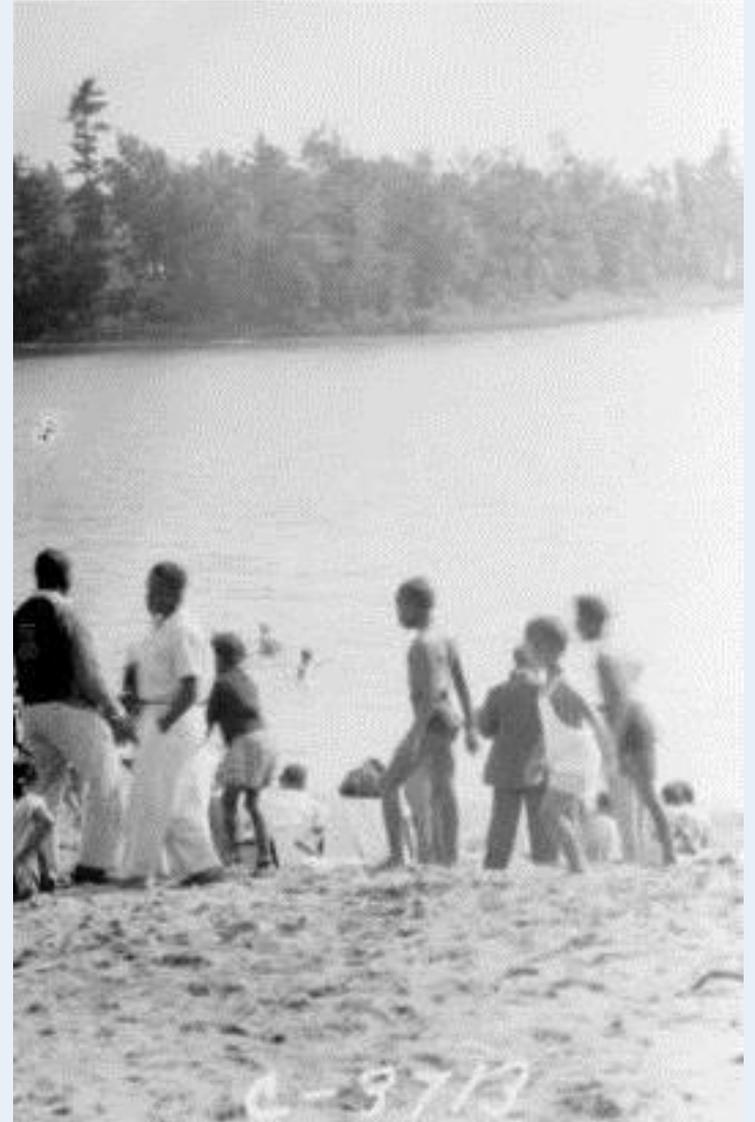
- Help the community of Idlewild, Michigan achieve community and economic prosperity by researching and creating a **tourism development strategy** that leverages Idlewild's cultural and natural assets to attract year-round visitors

- **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

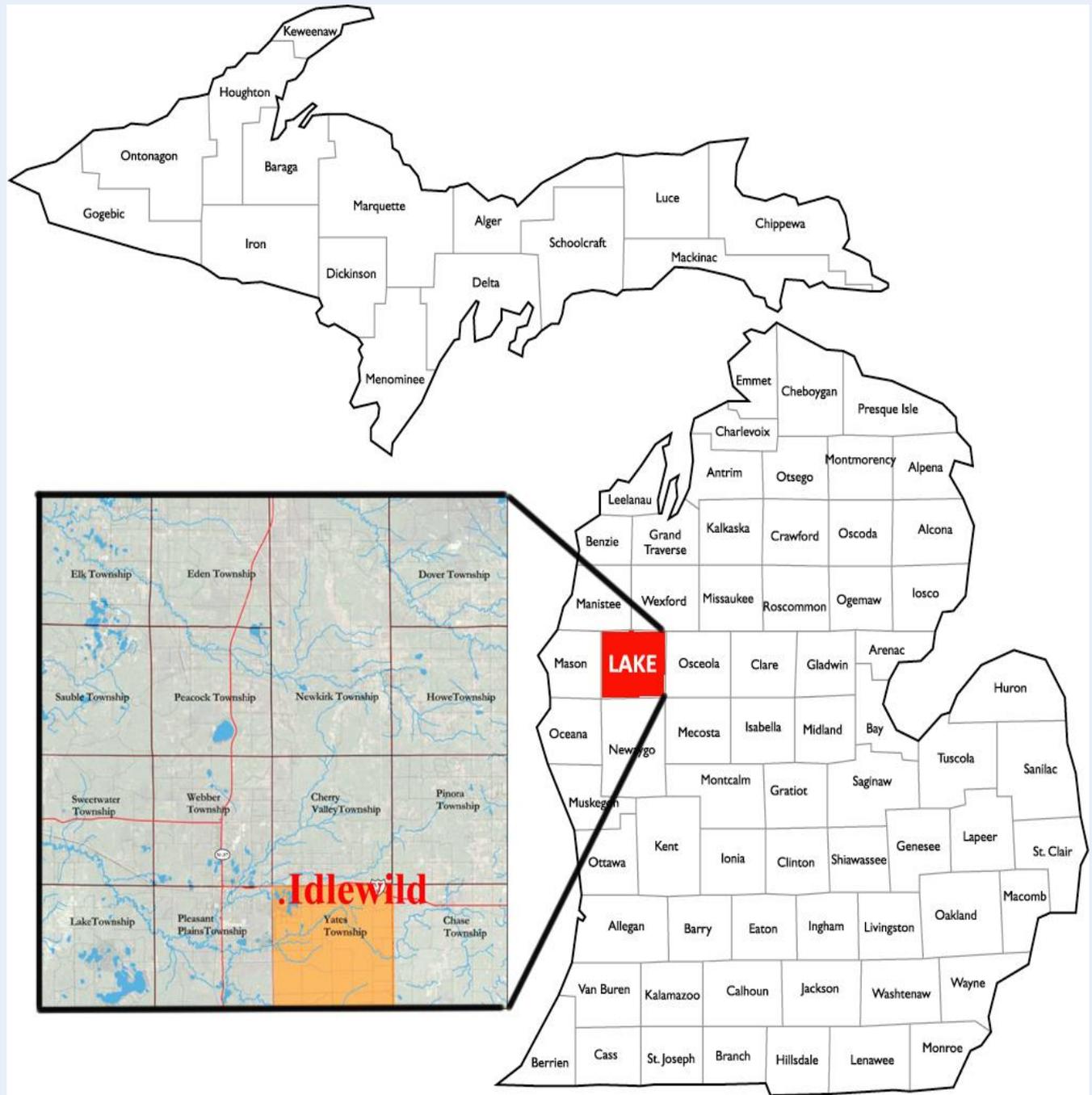
Scope of Work

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



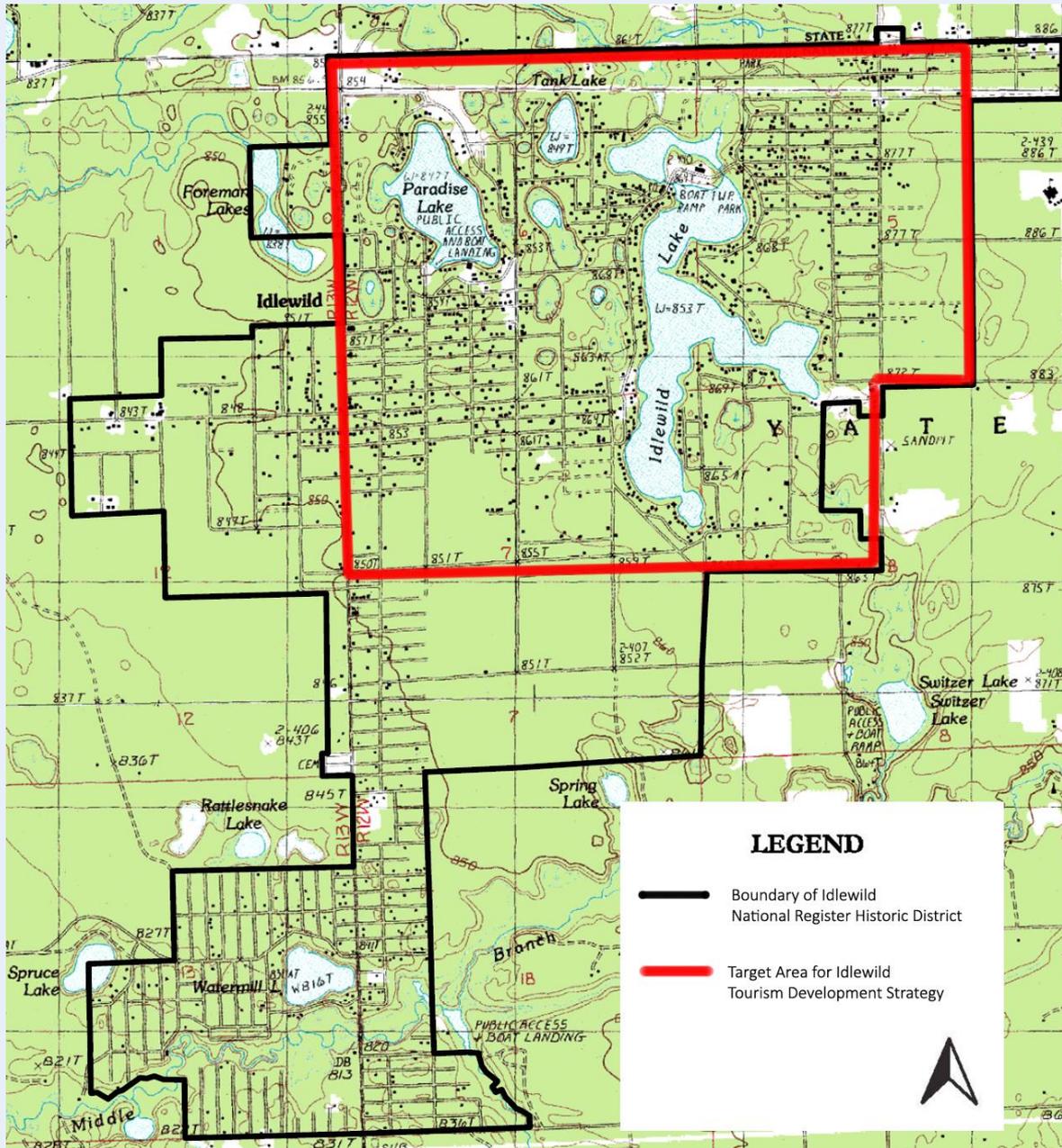
Undated photo of bathers on Lake Idlewild. Photo by Stanley Kufta. Retrieved from Seeking Michigan, 2013.

Target Area in Context



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

Target Area in Context



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Target Area





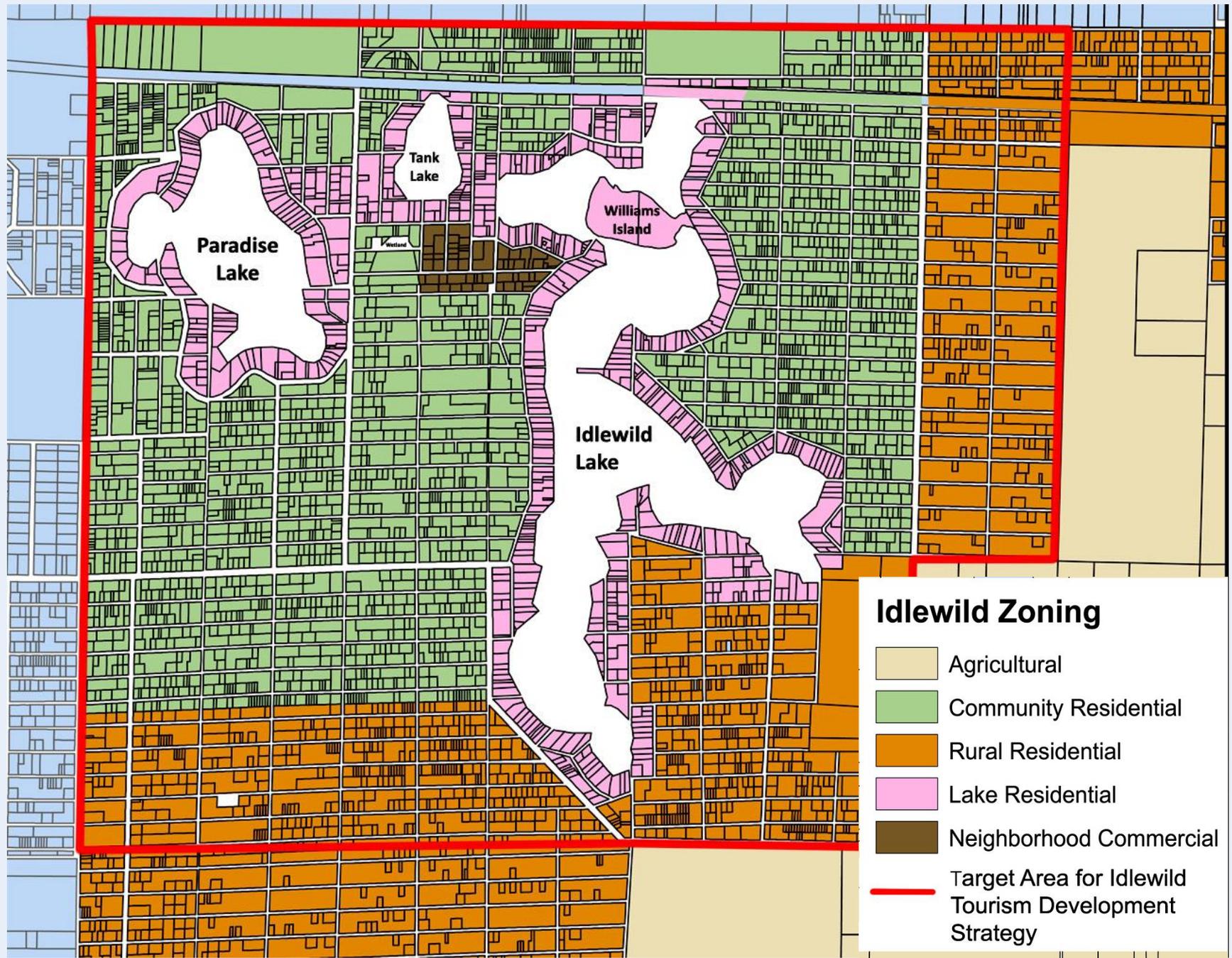
Idlewild: An Overview

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



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



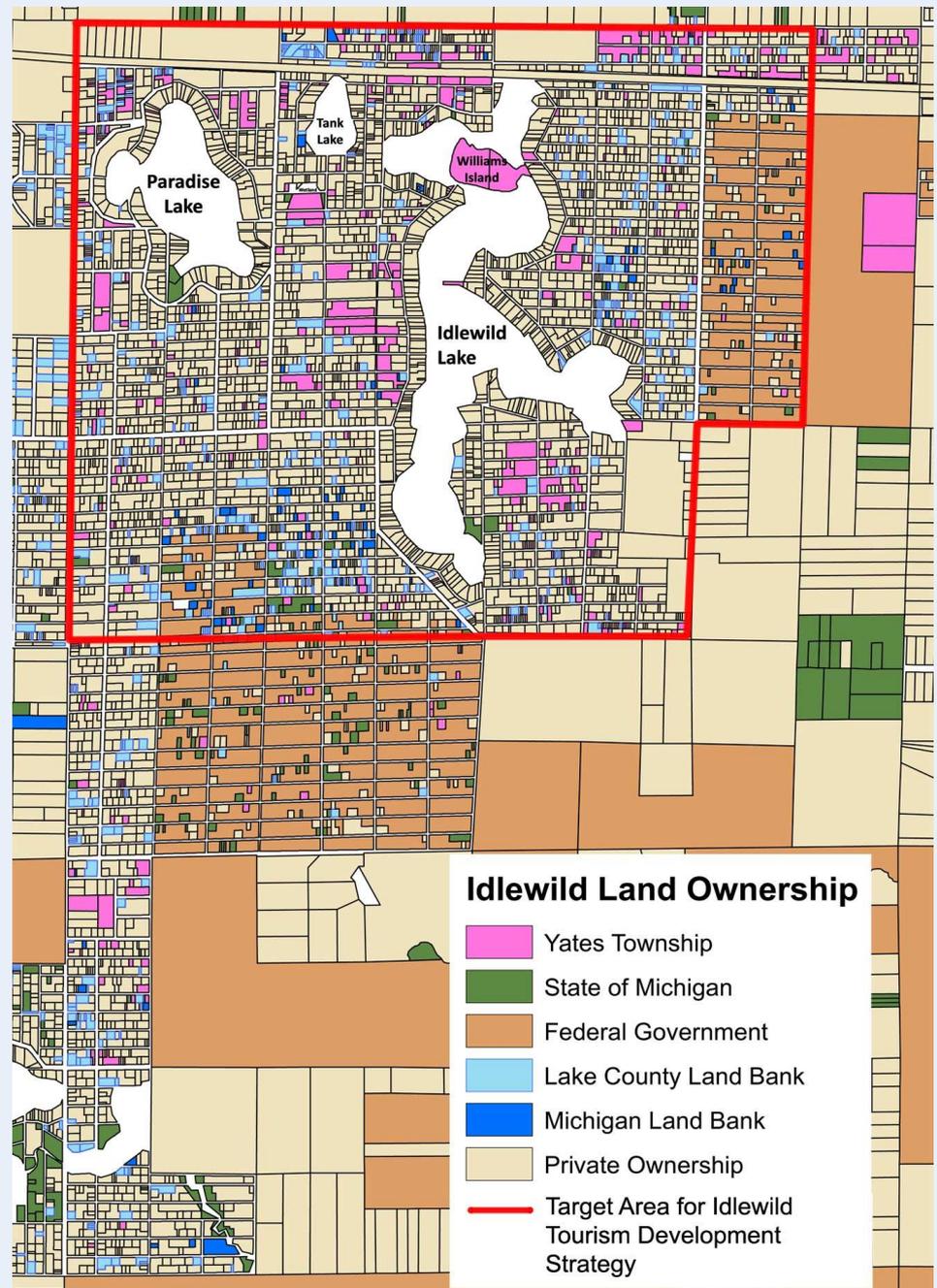
Idlewild Zoning

- Agricultural
- Community Residential
- Rural Residential
- Lake Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Target Area for Idlewild Tourism Development Strategy

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)



Land ownership in Idlewild. Jacobsen Daniels Associates, 2010.

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)



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



Clockwise from upper left: Nolan, 2002; Cultural Resource Mgt Plan, 2009; Voltaire, 2013; Jabosen Daniels Assoc., 2011.

Key Sites: “Downtown”

- Idlewild’s only Neighborhood Commercial District



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

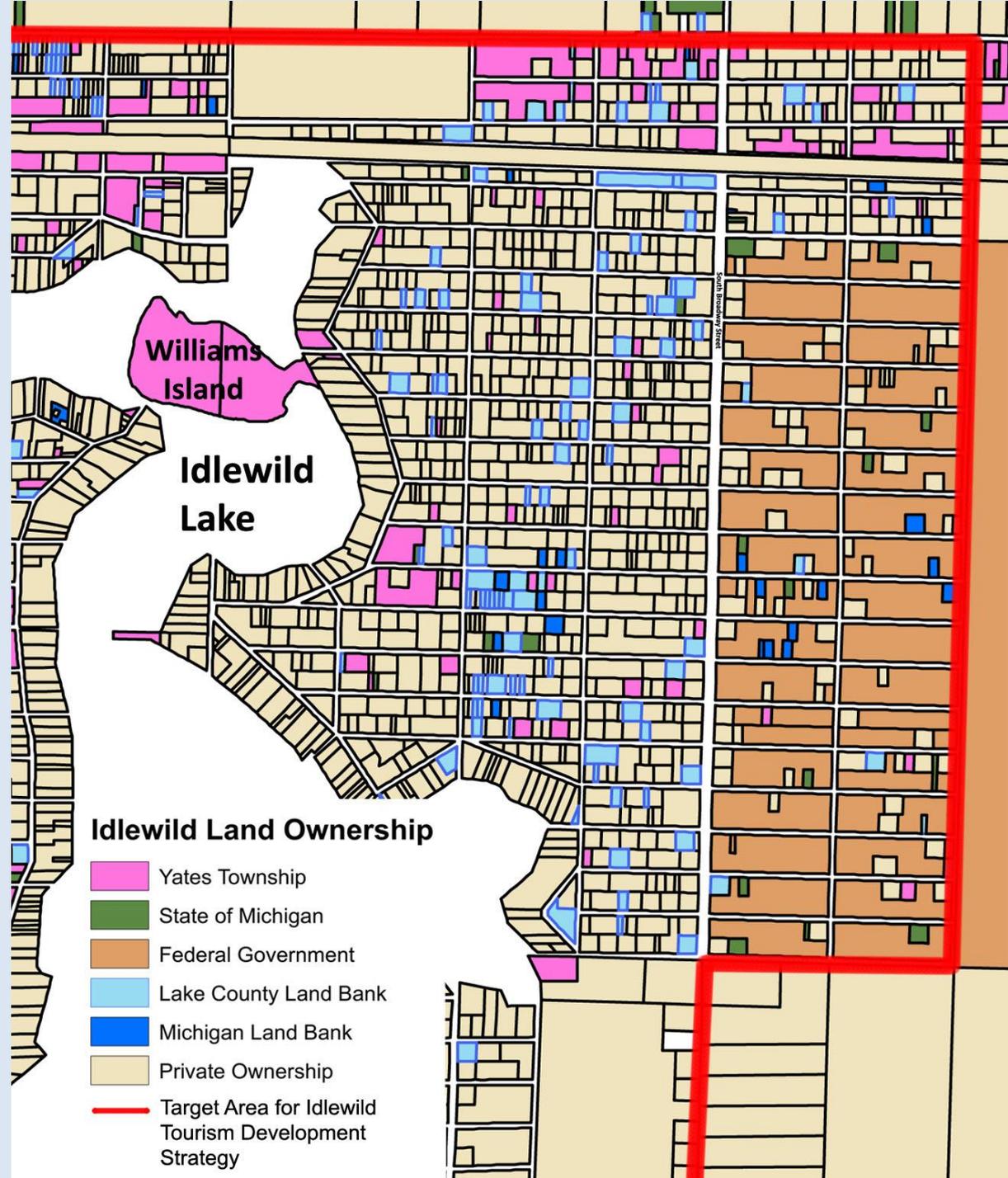
Key Sites: “Downtown”



Clockwise from top left: Former Idlewild Chamber of Commerce, Winans, 2013; LeeJon's Gift Shop, Cultural Resource Mgt Plan 2009; Idlewild Post Office, Winans, 2013; Tabernacle AME Church, Cultural Resource Mgt Plan, 2009.

Key Sites: Broadway & US10 Entrance

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



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).

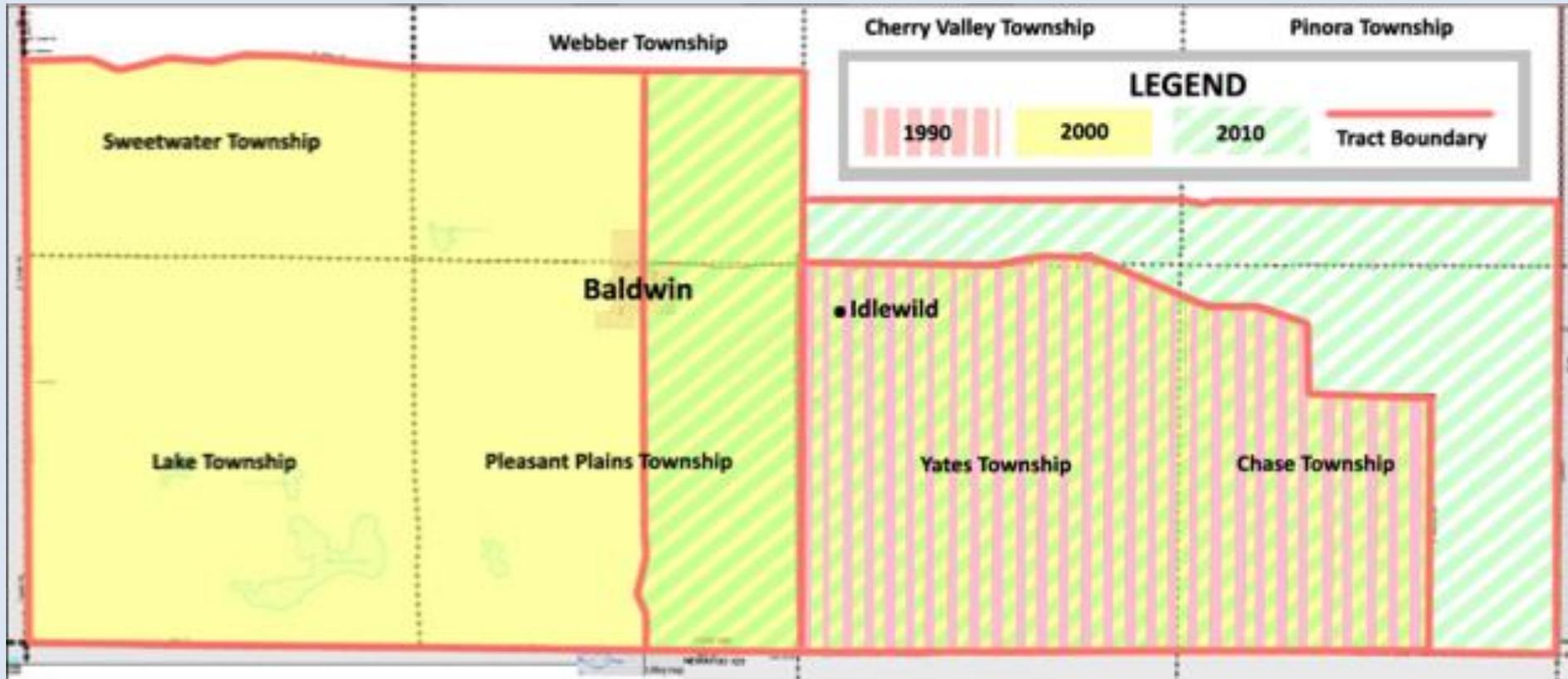
A winter landscape featuring a snow-covered field in the foreground, a line of evergreen trees in the middle ground, and a bright sun with scattered clouds in a blue sky. The sun is positioned in the upper right quadrant, creating a lens flare effect. The overall scene is serene and bright.

Socioeconomic Profile

Notes on the SEP

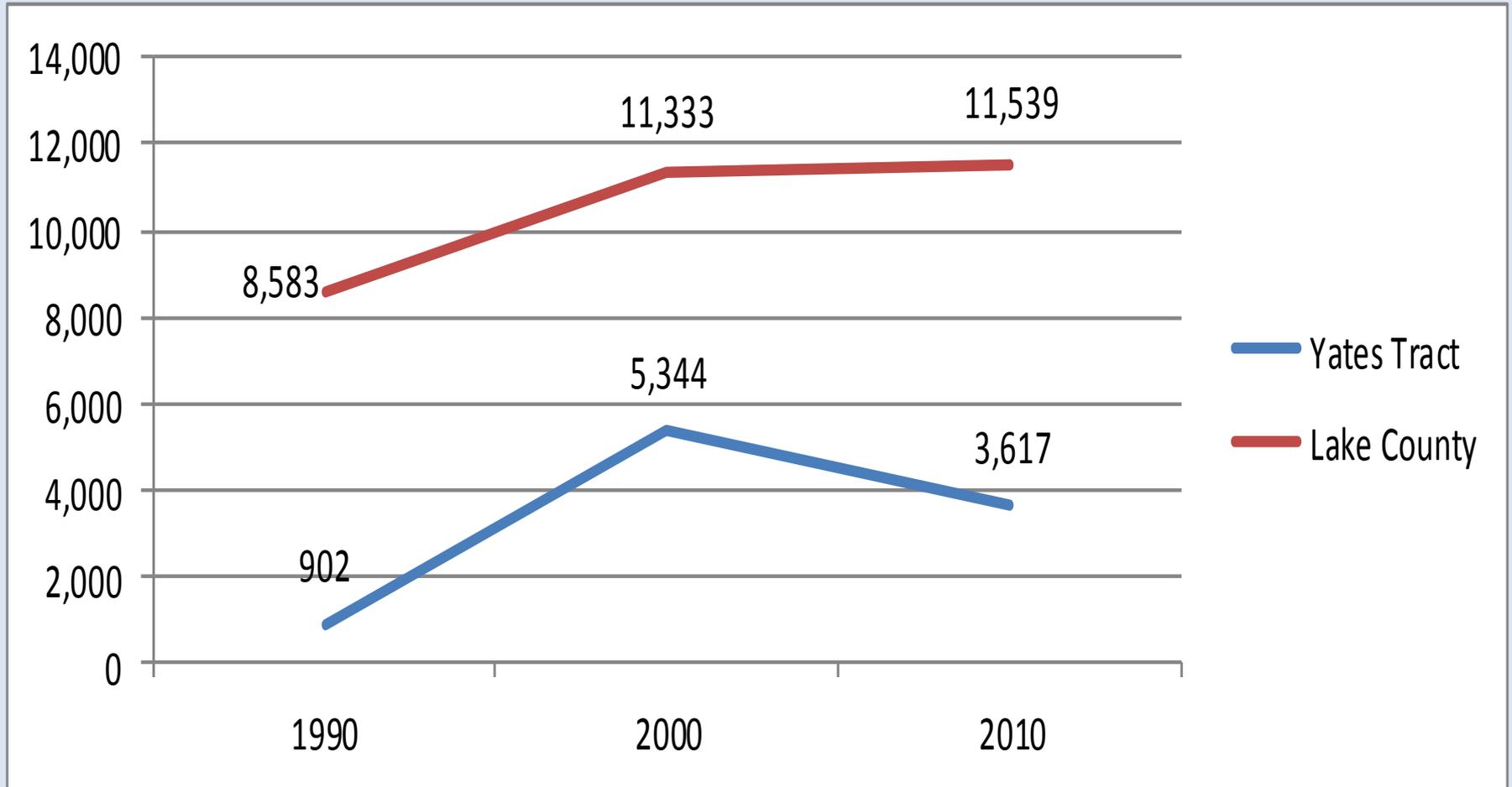
- **Area:** Yates Twp., Lake County. Comparison: MI.
- **Period:** 1990, 2000, 2010
- **Size of census tract encompassing Yates Township:**
 - Increased significantly from 1990 census to 2000 census
 - Shrank somewhat from 2000 census to 2010 census—but still larger than it had been at time of 1990 census
 - 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



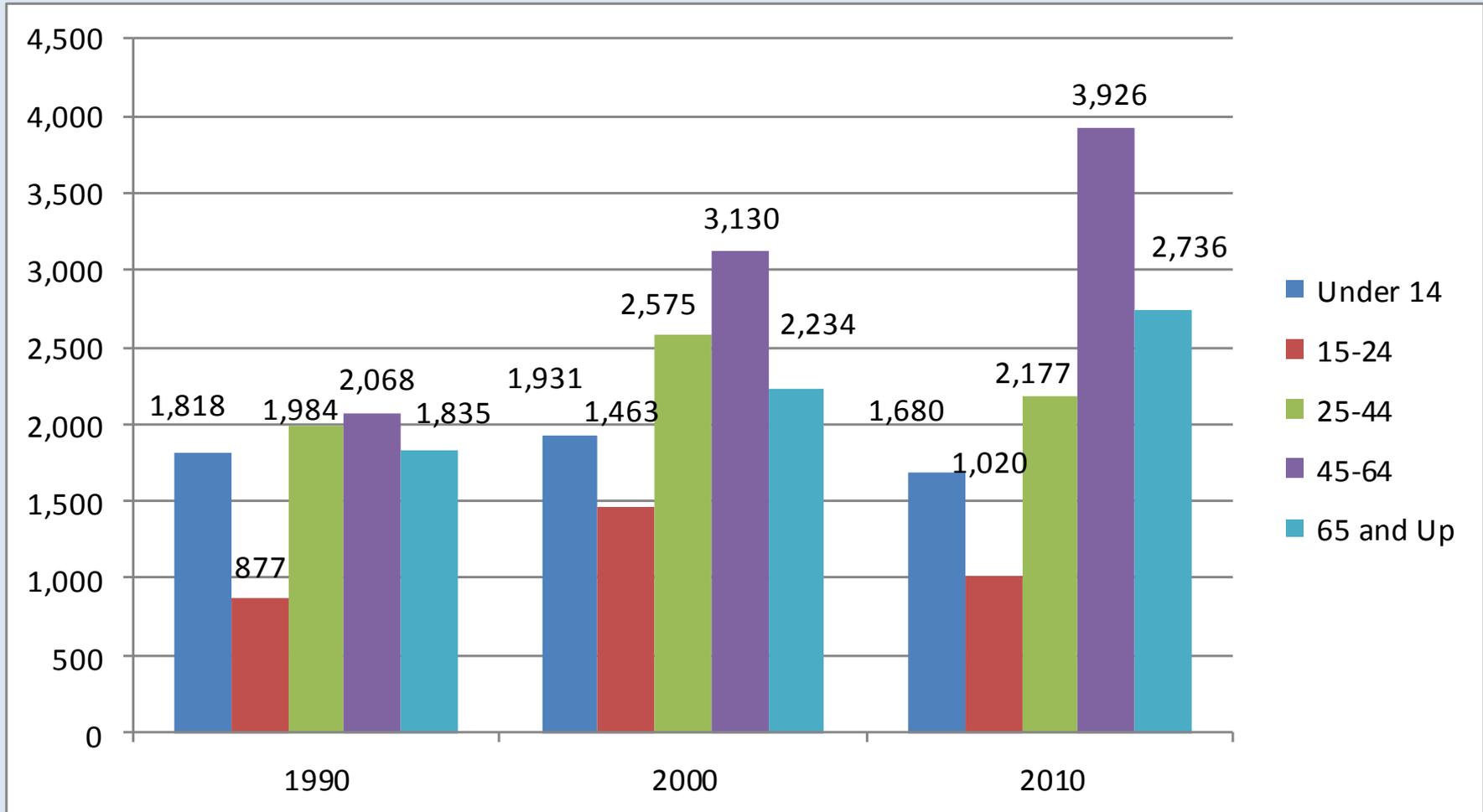
Created by practicum team using Census 1990, 2000, and 2010 maps of Yates tract.

Social Profile: Population



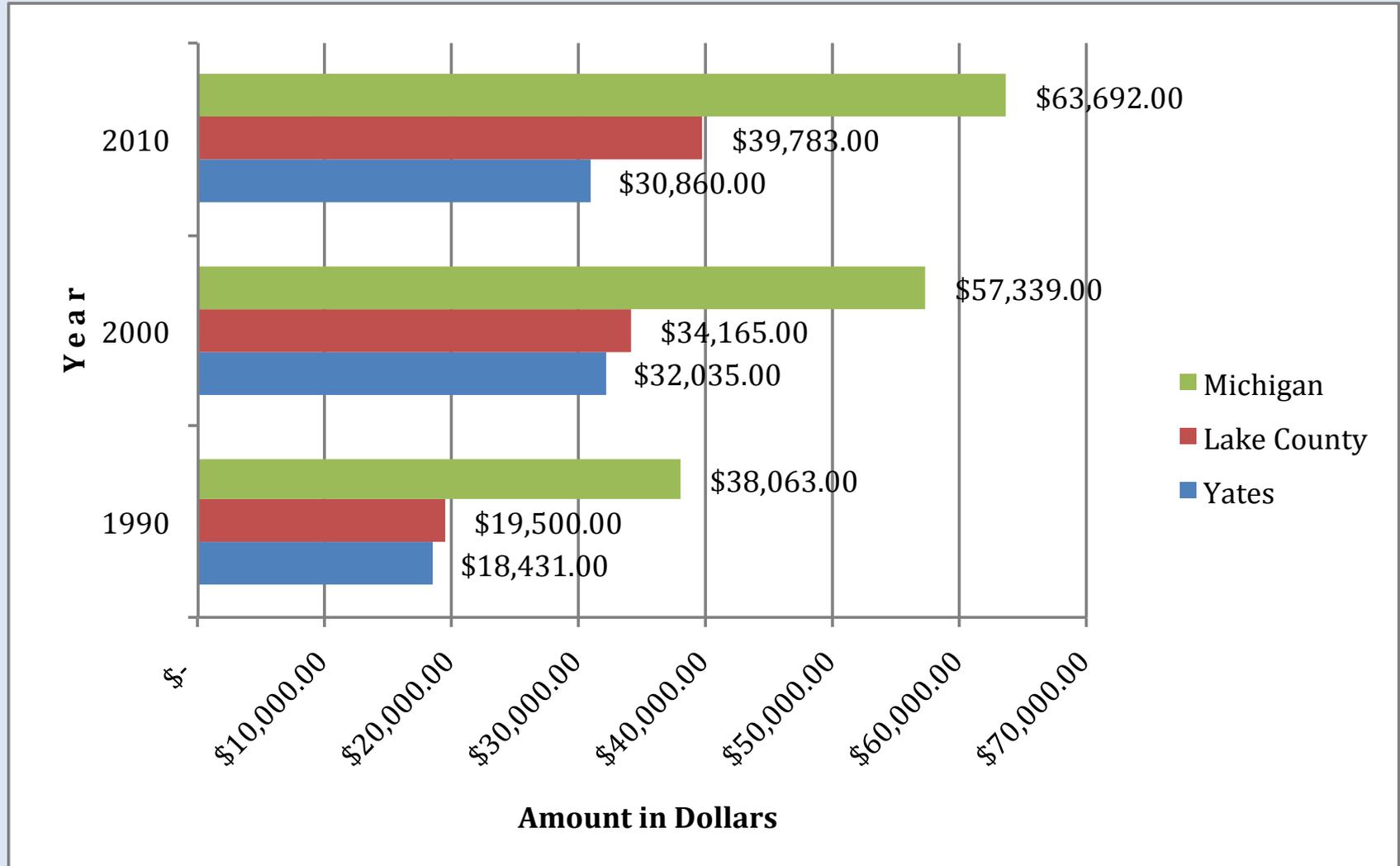
Population of Yates Tract and Lake County, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Social Profile: Age - Lake County



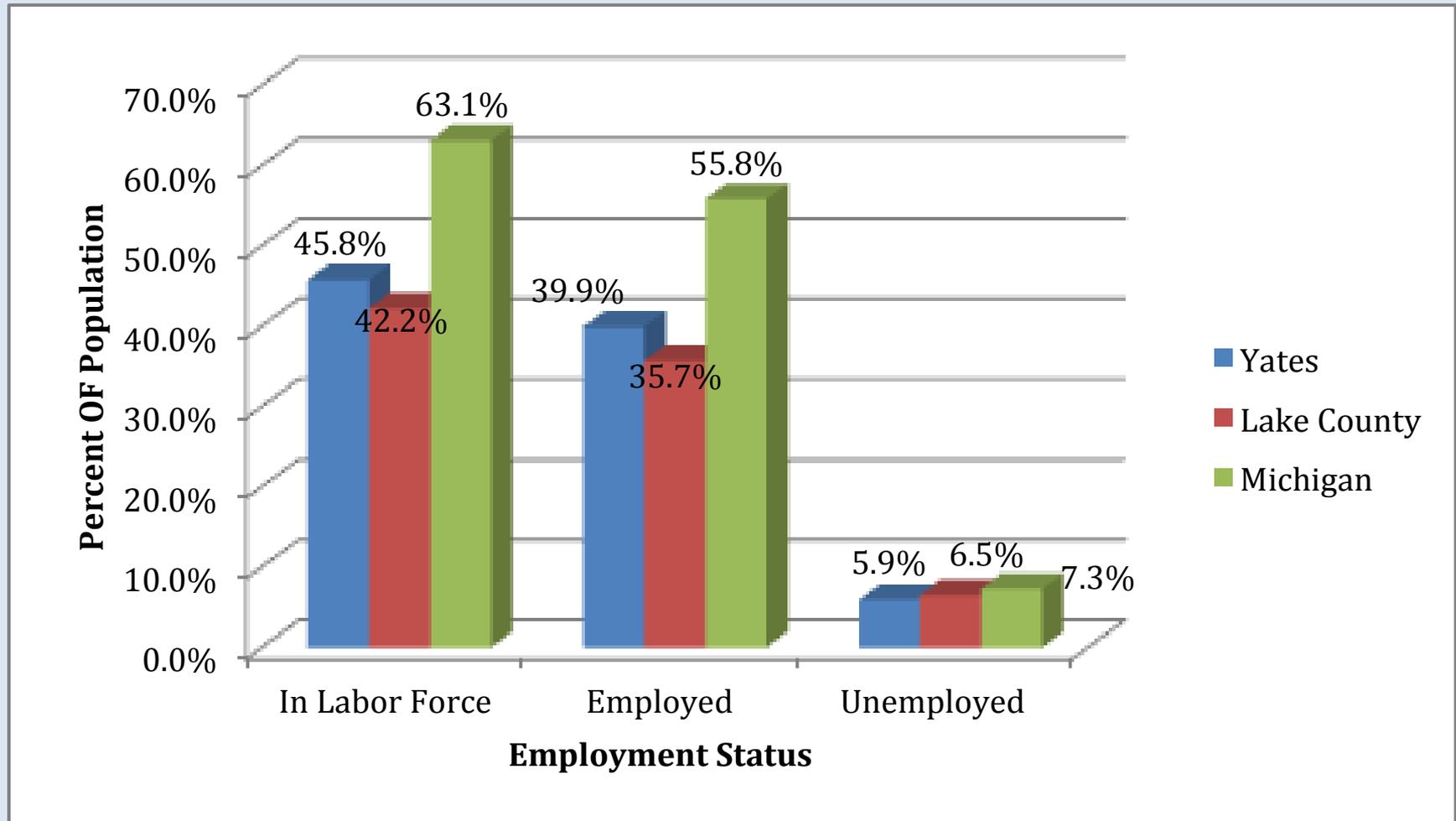
Population by age in Lake County, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Social Profile: Median Income



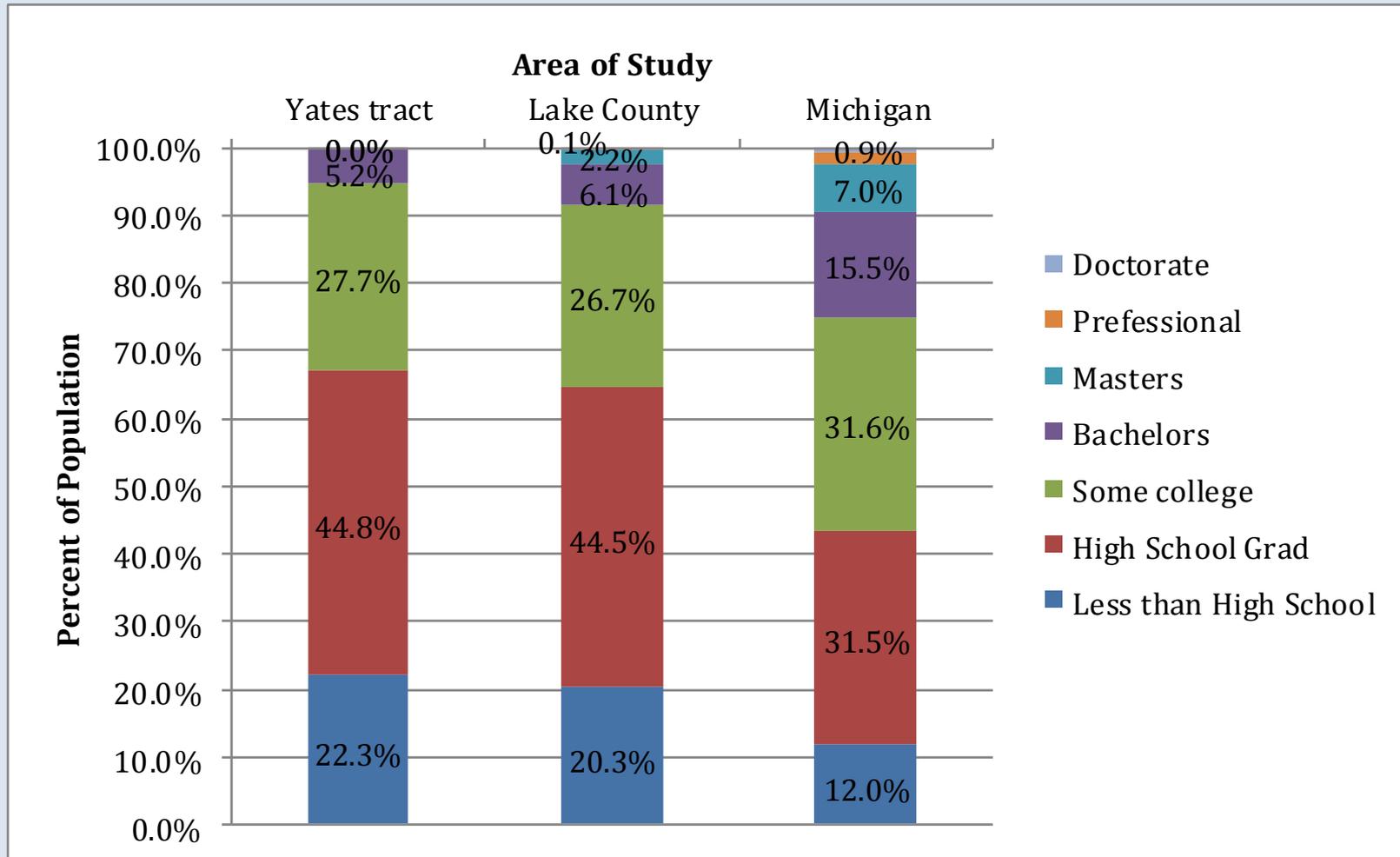
Average household income in the Yates tract, Lake County, and Michigan, 1990-2010. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Social Profile: Employment Status - 2010



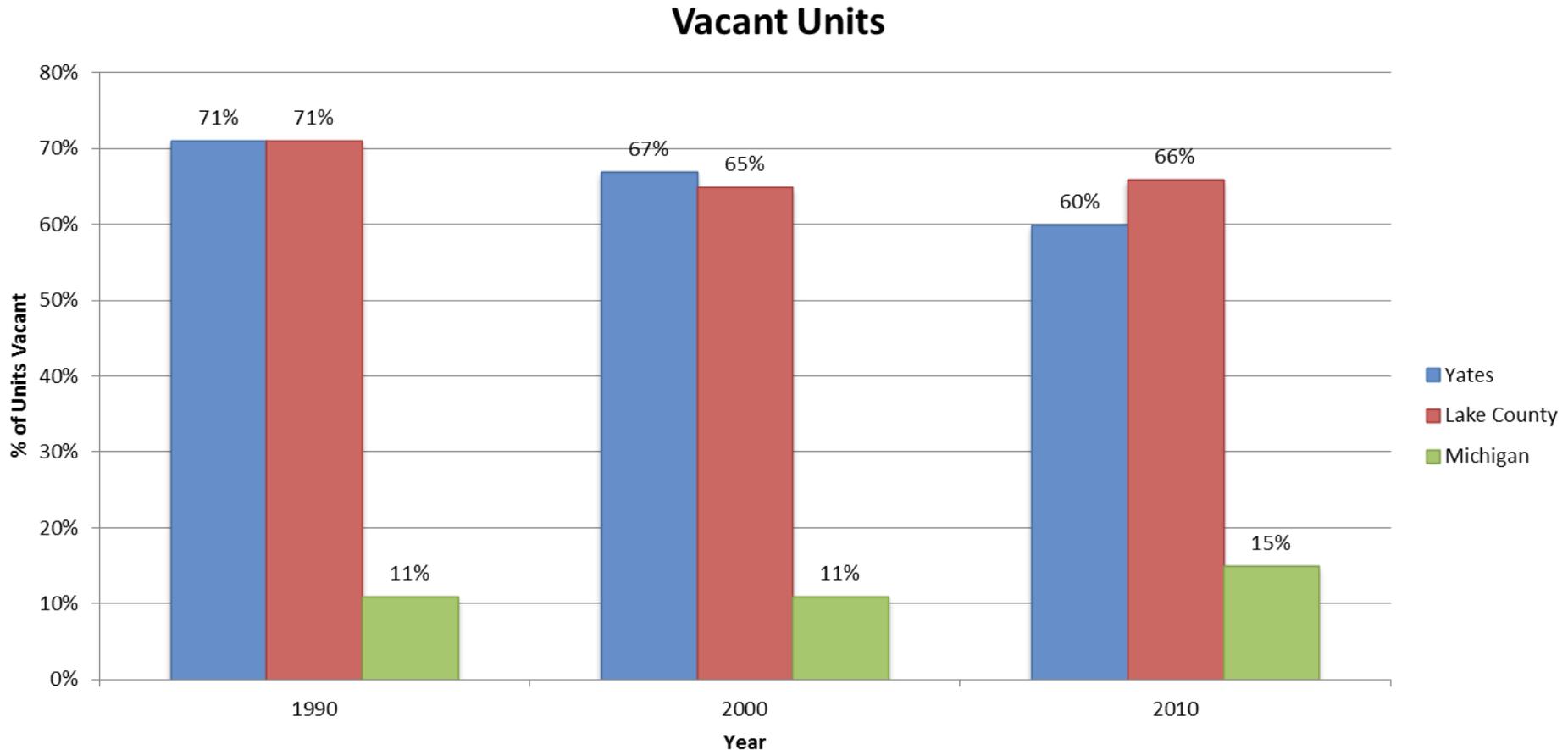
2010 employment, unemployment and labor force participation in the Yates tract, Lake County, and Michigan. Source: Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

Social Profile: Education 2010



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.

Social Profile: Vacant Units



Vacant units in Yates tract, Lake County, and Michigan. Census 1990, 2000, 2010, Social Explorer Dataset (SE), Social Explorer; U.S. Census Bureau.

A winter landscape featuring a snow-covered field in the foreground, a line of evergreen trees in the middle ground, and a bright sun with scattered clouds in a blue sky. The sun is positioned in the upper right quadrant, creating a lens flare effect. The trees are dark against the lighter sky and snow. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Tourism Asset Study

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

Source: North American Industry Classification System

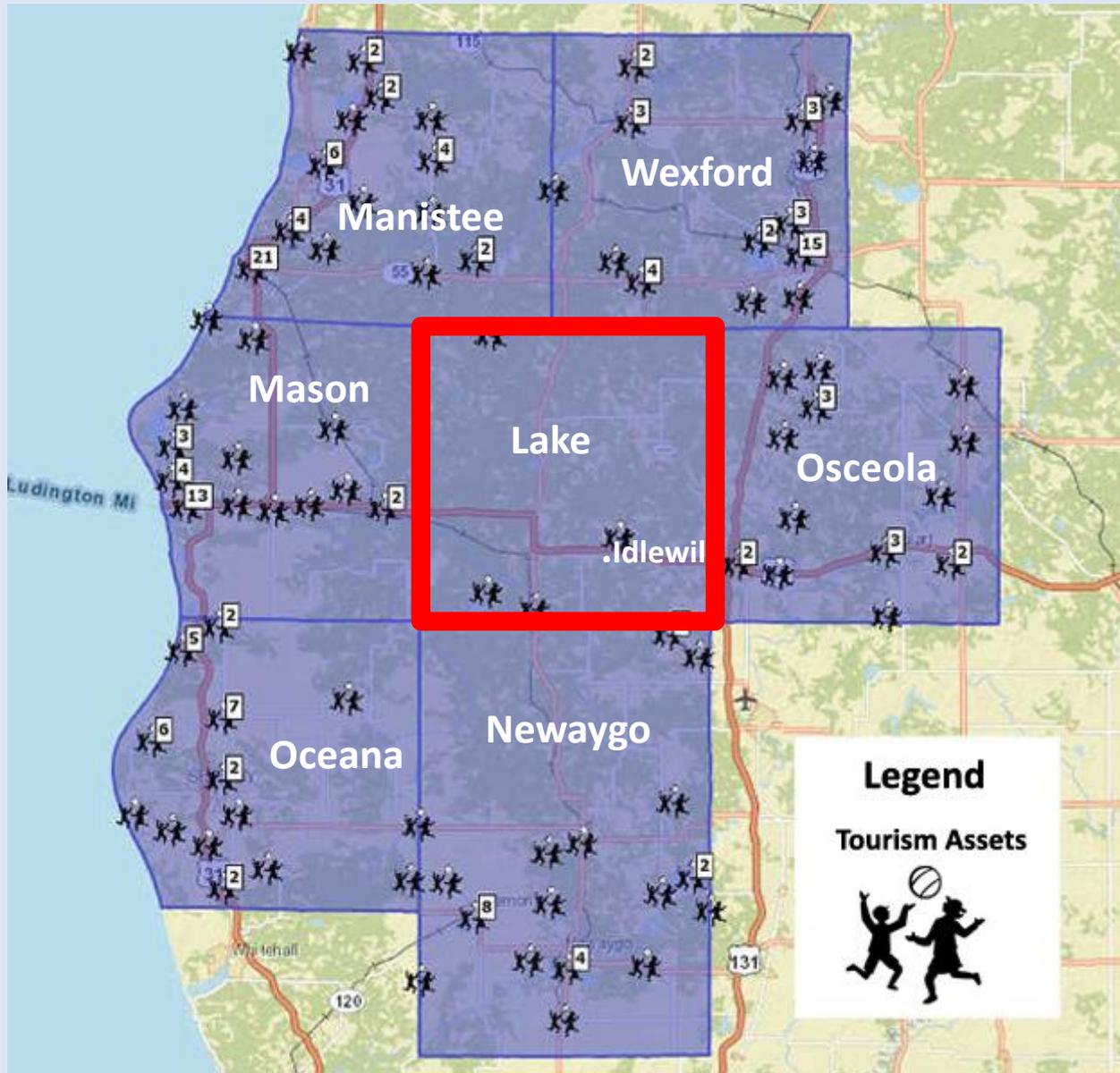
Year	Number of Businesses
2000	9
2005	6
2010	6

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

Source: North American Industry Classification System

Year	Number of Businesses
2000	31
2005	28
2010	31

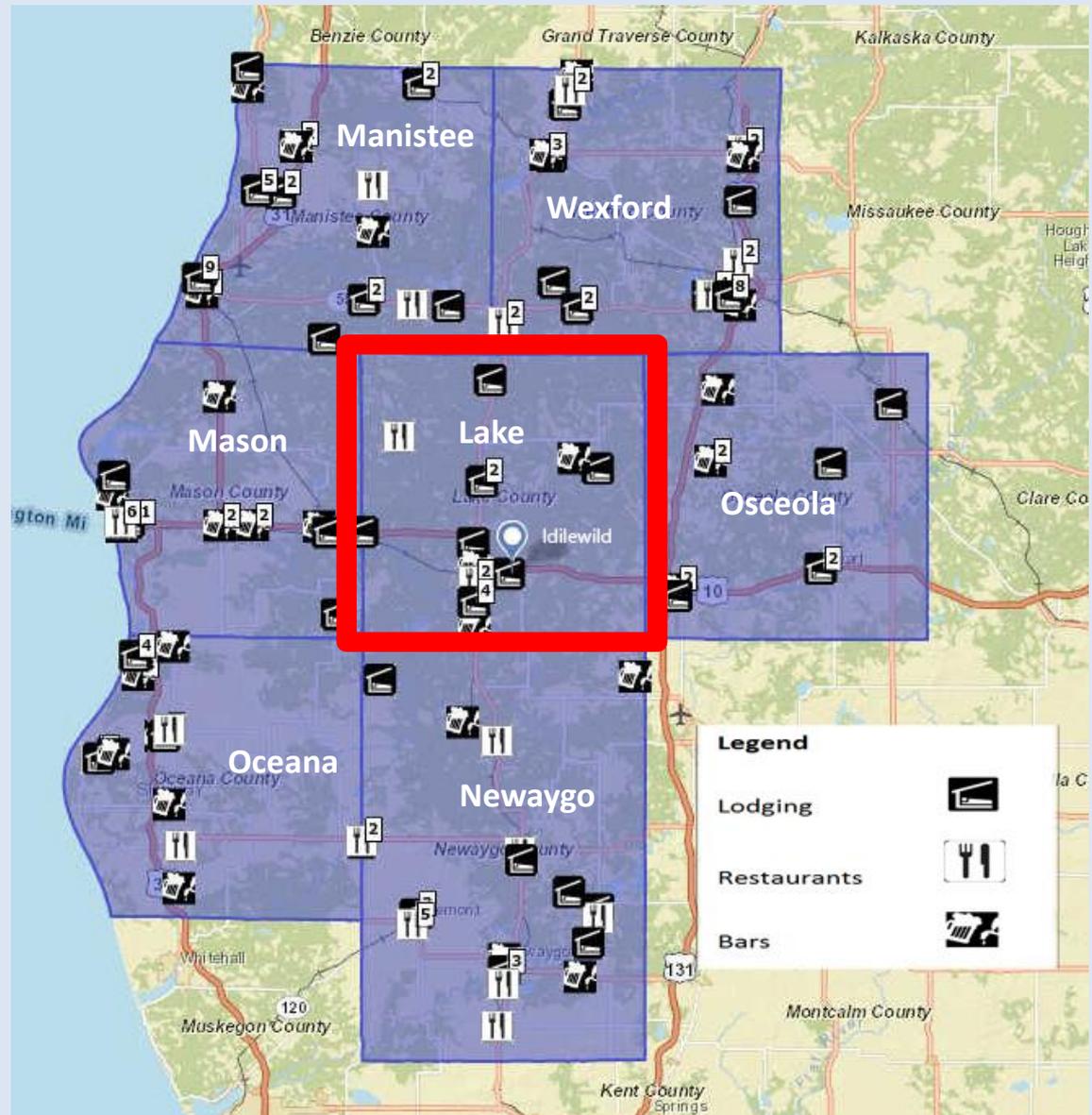
Tourism Industry Maps: Attractions



Source: Esri.

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



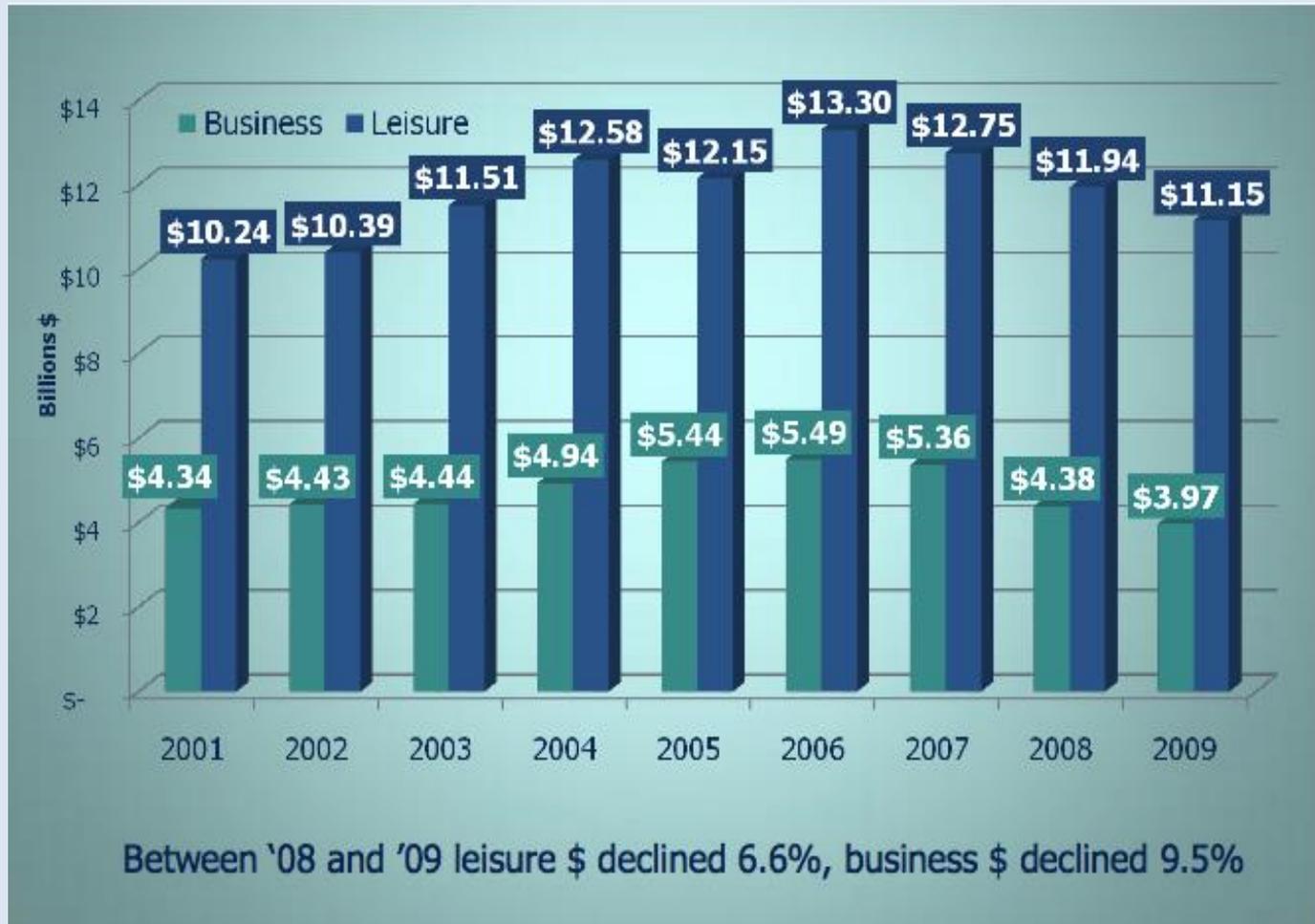
Clinch Park Beach, Traverse City.
Michigan.org, 2013a.

A winter landscape featuring a snow-covered field in the foreground, a line of evergreen trees in the middle ground, and a bright sun shining through a blue sky with scattered white clouds. Bare tree branches are visible in the upper left corner.

Tourism Market Study

Michigan Travel Spending— Business & Leisure

- 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

Age	Michigan	USA
18-34	40	34
35-54	36	38
55+	24	29

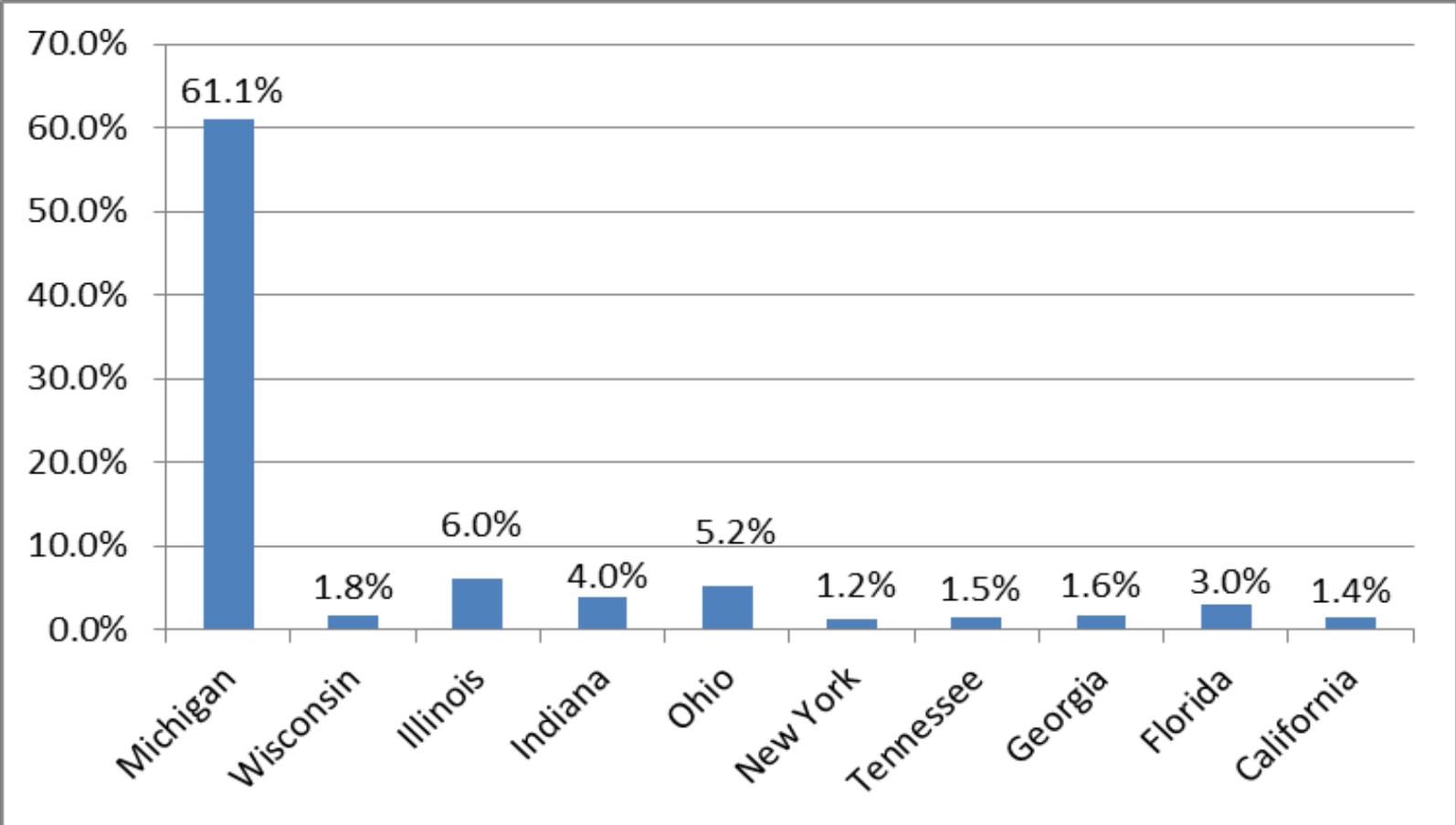
- D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., 2010.
- Purpose of Stay
 - Visit Friends and Relatives, Getaway Weekend, General Vacation
 - D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd., 2010.

Popular Activities and Origin State of Visitors

Most Popular Activities in Northwest Michigan

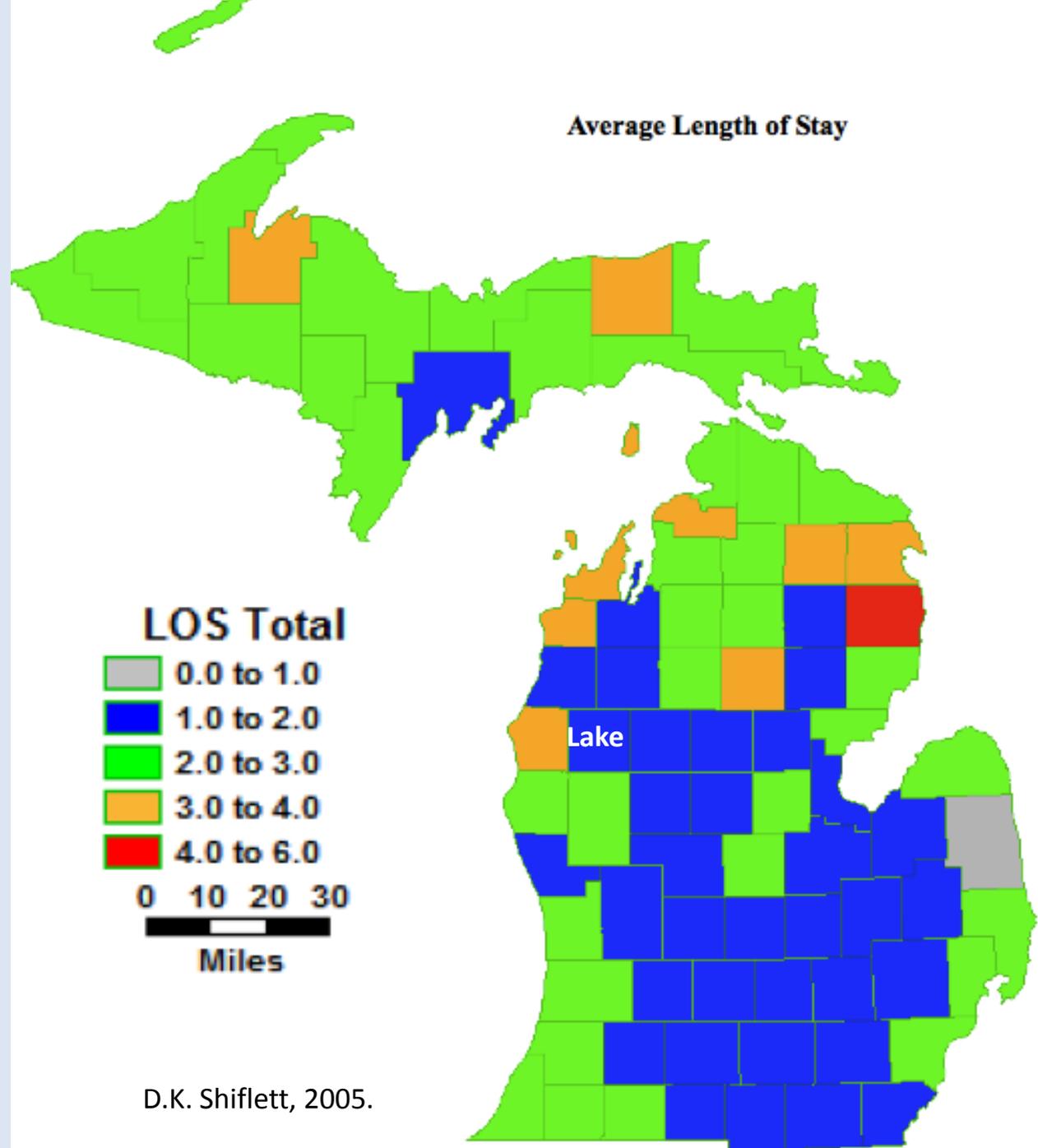
- Dining, Shopping, Entertainment, Beach/ Waterfront, Gambling, Festival/ Fair, National or State Park/Forest, Hunt/Fish

Top States of Origin of Michigan Visitors, 2009



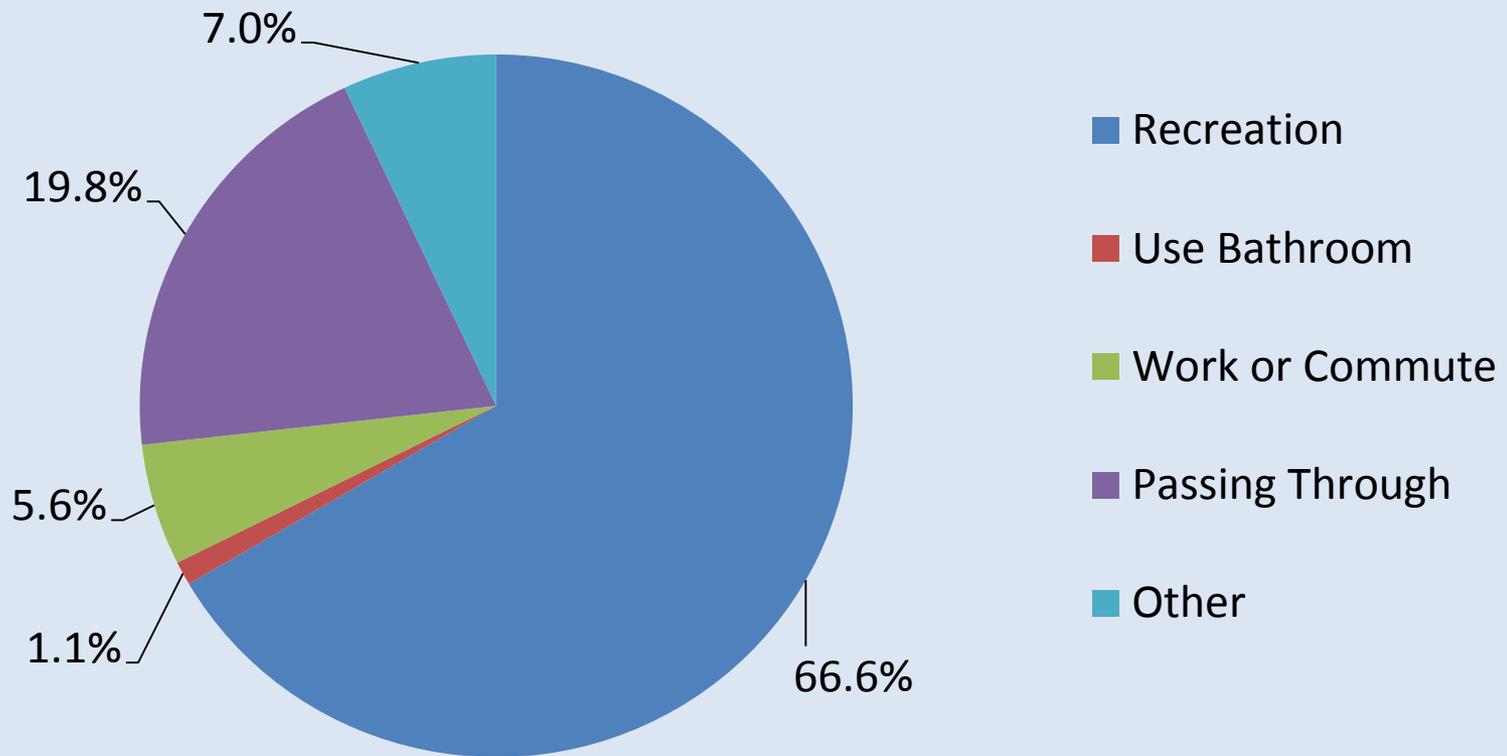
Average Length of Stay

- 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.



National Forest Visitation

Huron- Manistee National Forest Visitation Purpose



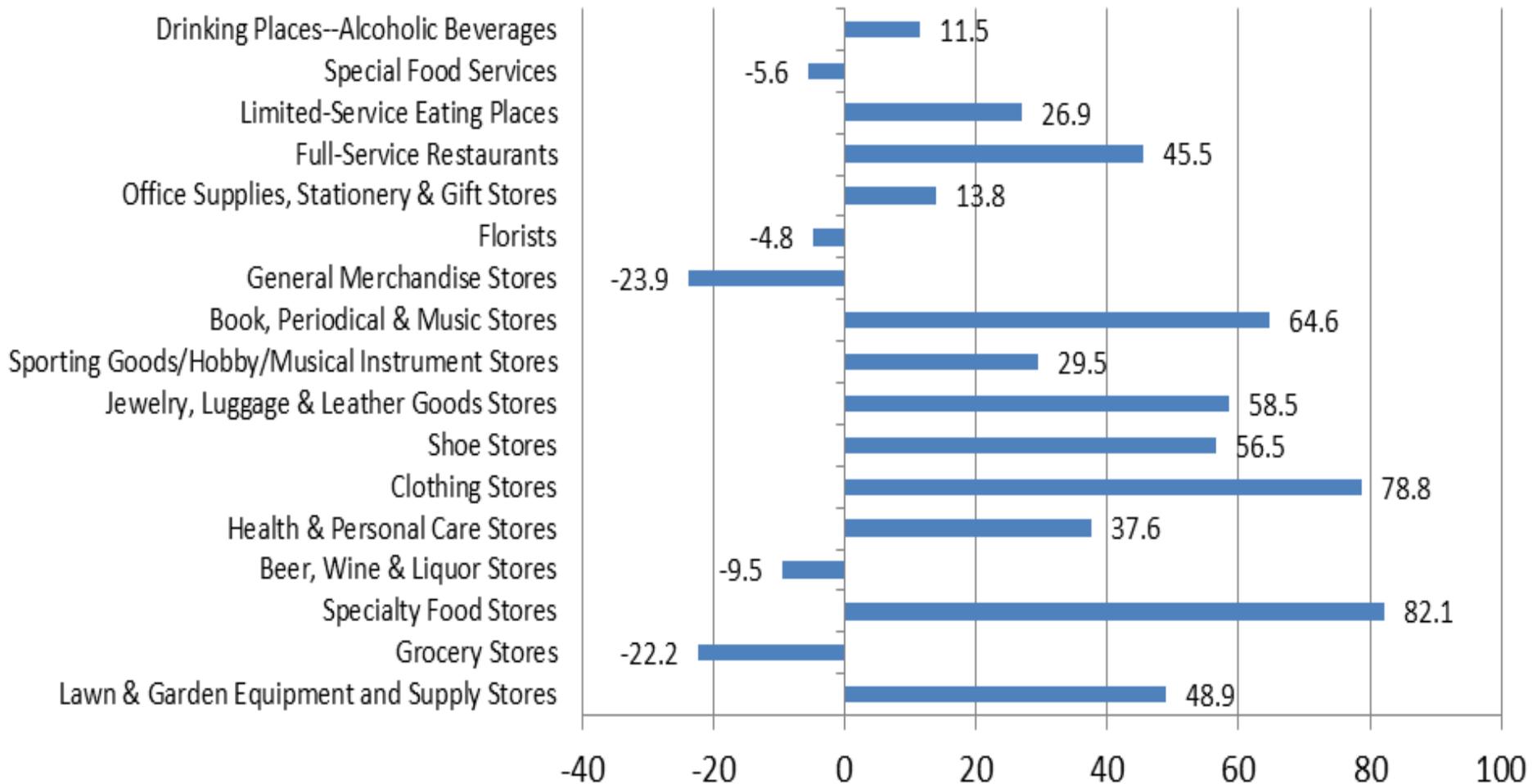
. U.S. Forest Service, 2012

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



A winter landscape featuring a large, snow-covered frozen lake in the foreground. In the middle ground, there is a dense line of evergreen trees, with several small, light-colored buildings or cabins nestled among them. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds, and a large, bright sun is visible in the upper right quadrant, creating a lens flare effect. Bare tree branches are visible in the upper left corner, and a wooden fence is partially visible in the bottom right corner.

Recent Planning Activities

Recent Planning Activities

- Six plans done since 2006
 - Cultural Economic Development Readiness Initiative (2006)
 - Idlewild Downtown Development Map (2007)
 - Idlewild Economic Development Strategy (2008)
 - Idlewild Cultural Resource Management Plan (2009)
 - 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

Sample of Recent Planning Documents for Idlewild and Yates Township

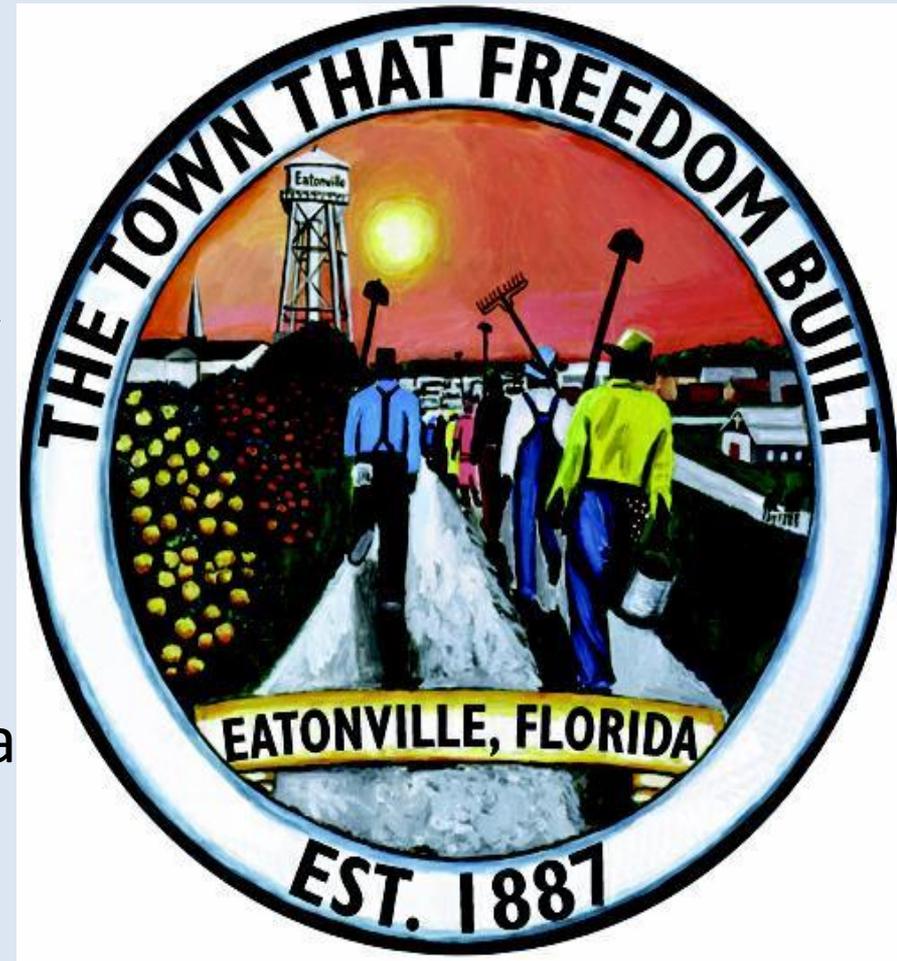
Date	Title	Authors	Recommendations	Status in 2013
2006	Idlewild CED Readiness Initiative	National Resource Team	1. Preserve Idlewild as inhabited functioning community	Numerous activities completed or in progress
			2. Strategic partnership between Idlewild and State of MI	Established 2006 and still 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
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not pursued b. Master plan finished 2010; zoning ordinances in progress c. Not pursued d. Not pursued e. Not pursued f. Established 2012

A winter landscape featuring a large, snow-covered frozen lake in the foreground. The background is filled with a dense line of evergreen trees, and several small, light-colored buildings are visible among them. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds, and a large, bright sun is positioned in the upper right, creating a lens flare effect. Bare tree branches are visible in the upper left corner, and a wooden fence is partially visible in the bottom right corner.

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



A winter landscape featuring a large, snow-covered frozen lake in the foreground. The background is filled with a dense line of evergreen trees. Several small, light-colored buildings are visible among the trees. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds, and a large, bright sun is positioned in the upper right, creating a lens flare effect. Bare tree branches are visible in the upper left corner, and a wooden fence post is in the lower right.

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

Short Term/Low Cost (2013-2016)	Medium Term/ Medium Cost (2016-2019)	Long Term/High Cost (2020-2023)
<p>Capacity building--training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michigan Nonprofit Association, Michigan Historic Preservation Network, Center for Community Progress <p>Capacity building—collaboration</p> <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 	<p>Capacity building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire part-time planning and development coordinator Establish official ICDC/Idlewild Community Land Trust headquarters Expand Idlewild Chamber of Commerce 	<p>Capacity building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire full-time planning and development coordinator
<p>Physical development</p> <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 	<p>Physical development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>Physical development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel(s) established; commercial development occurring Raise funds locally to build permanent amphitheater on Williams Island

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>