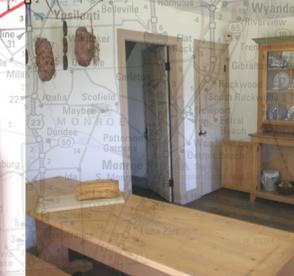
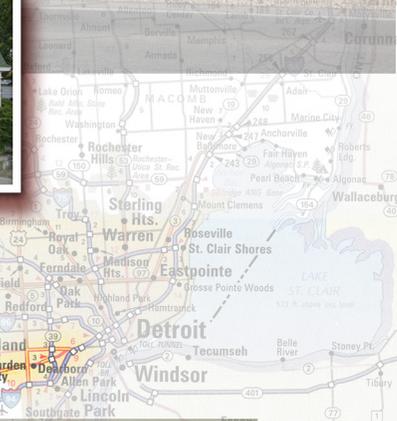




# US-12 Heritage Trail

## Application and Corridor Management Plan



# **US-12 Heritage Trail**

## Heritage Route Application and Corridor Management Plan

prepared for  
the  
US-12 Heritage Trail Council

by  
SmithGroup JJR

and

Michigan State University  
Department of Park, Recreation and Tourism Resources

December 2003

## Executive Summary

### INTRODUCTION

The US-12 Heritage Trail Council is seeking designation as a Michigan Historic Heritage Route for the State trunkline US-12 under the name US-12 Heritage Trail pursuant to the Heritage Route Act, Public Act 69 of 1993. The purpose of this study was to develop a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) that supports the application regarding this designation. Heritage Route designation will help preserve and protect the many historic, cultural, and recreational resources found throughout the US-12 corridor.

Beginning in Detroit, US-12 spans approximately 212 miles in southern lower Michigan. It passes through eight counties and several cities including Ypsilanti, Clinton, Jonesville, Coldwater, Sturgis, Edwardsburg, and New Buffalo before passing into Indiana. It is, or has been, known by several names including Michigan Avenue, the Chicago Road, Sauk Trail, and US-12.

### BACKGROUND

Prior to this study, several groups of citizens, local agencies, and elected officials have collaborated to promote and preserve the historic, cultural, and recreational resources along portions of the US-12 corridor. Smaller in scope relative to US-12 than the current study, these efforts have been successful in receiving some level of historic designation. These include, but are not limited to, the Automobile Heritage Designation within Wayne County, the Ypsilanti Historic District, and the Heritage Trail

Historic Route designations within the City of Saline, Saline Township (pending), the Village of Clinton, Clinton Township, and the Coldwater Historic District.

During the late 1990's, a consolidated effort began to investigate the feasibility of nominating the entire US-12 corridor as a Michigan Heritage Route. In early 2002, following the guidelines of P.A. 217 of 1957, an Intergovernmental Committee was formed which appointed a representative(s) from each Michigan county through which US-12 traversed. Named the US-12 Heritage Trail Council, this committee has assumed the task of seeking designation of US-12 as a Michigan Heritage Route. The Council meets regularly to promote, educate and coordinate studies and plans regarding the future US-12 Heritage Trail in Michigan.

In June 2003, SmithGroup JJR was hired to prepare a Corridor Management Plan supportive of US-12's designation as a Historic Heritage Route. The study included field review of the 129 historical and natural features assembled by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council that are described in the management plan. The purpose of the field review was to photograph and record observations related to the existing conditions and context of the sites as well as assess way-finding issues and vehicle-pedestrian conditions. In addition, SG JJR considered the general landscape character crossed by US-12 relative to its contribution to the value of the road as a Historic Heritage Route.

The Heritage Route application and management plan described in this report is a cooperative effort between the US-12 Heritage Trail Council, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Southwestern Michigan Commission, SmithGroup JJR (SG JJR), and Michigan State University's Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. It is the responsibility of the US-12 Heritage Trail Council to lead the study effort and to implement the recommendations suggested in this report.

### REPORT ORGANIZATION

The report is organized into seven sections and several supporting appendices. The first three sections include data provided by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council. Sections 1 and 2 (*Trail Overview and Goals and Strategies*) provide an overview and outline the goals and strategies for this application. Section 3, *US-12 Heritage Trail Cultural, Recreational, Natural and Physical Resources*, provides a county-by-county list of historical features and landscapes with supporting narratives, as well as a discussion of roadway features and current traffic volumes.

The majority of the information presented in Sections 4-7 is a result of studies/analyses performed since June 2003. This component of the application represents the CMP. Section 4, *US-12 Heritage Trail Resource Analysis*, analyzes corridor resources for each county. It also addresses potential traffic and wayfinding issues and includes data from the MDOT Aesthetic Project Opportunities study. The section concludes with a discussion and analysis of the historic themes represented by the corridor resources outlined in Section 3.



Section 5, *Corridor Improvement and Enhancement Recommendations*, outlines specific strategies targeting suggested architectural and landscape improvements for sites along the corridor.

Sections 6 and 7 are closely related because they provide recommendations and strategies to help market the US-12 corridor.

Section 6, *US-12 Heritage Trail Marketing Plan*, presents a comprehensive plan to promote US-12 to both internal and external customer markets. Internal marketing is focused on strengthening communication within and between municipalities, organizations, and agencies directly involved with the US-12 effort. External marketing focuses on product development and promotions to attract residents and visitors to US-12.

*Communications Support* (Section 7) presents graphic design and content suggestions for a US-12 Heritage Trail newsletter, and web site. In addition, a completed production-ready promotional brochure is also presented.

## REPORT GRAPHICS

In addition to a field review to assess context and general conditions, each site was characterized according to:

- Background data: physical data such as structure name, construction date, statement of significance;
- Historical theme: evaluated relative to seven historical themes selected to be inclusive of historical context, time period, and architectural styles; and

- Prioritization criteria: developed to guide prioritizing sites at a county or corridor level for preservation or enhancement recommendations. Criteria include an assessment of a sites' relative risk, documented history, funding availability, or physical condition.

This information is summarized in Section 4 in the Historical Theme and Prioritization tables compiled by county.

Graphic products provided in this section in 11"x17" format include:

- Cultural and Historic Features: a mapped overview of historic and cultural features for each county including approximate locations, representative photographs, key transportation nodes, historic designations (State or National Register), important views, existing natural features, and primary or secondary destination points;
- MDOT Aesthetic Project Opportunities: a summary of US-12 data compiled during a Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) 2000 study involving a statewide inventory to objectively identify key scenic assets along State trunklines;
- Historic Themes: communicates historical context for each site, demonstrates a site's potential for association with multiple themes. The seven themes used to characterize and map the sites are:
  - Agriculture and Industry;
  - Art and Architecture;
  - First, Most, or Unusual;
  - Migration and Settlement;
  - Recreation and Tourism;

- Social, Political, and Institutional History; and
- Transportation Developments.

Section 5, *Corridor Improvement- Enhancement Recommendations* includes eight recommendations graphically presented that are targeted to building or landscape (four each). Each recommendation includes suggested sites along the corridor where the recommendation may apply. The four architectural recommendations target

- Façade improvements;
- Maintenance and conservation;
- Residential recommendations; and
- Policies and guidelines.

Landscape recommendations seek to improve the appearance or context of the overall property excluding any structures. They include:

- Site Improvements;
- Visitor Enhancements;
- Streetscape Improvements; and
- Access Improvements.

Section 6, *US-12 Heritage Trail Marketing Plan*, provides a clear breakout of marketing campaigns and activities for internal and external customer markets.

Section 7, *Communications Support*, includes graphic representations of the

- Promotional brochure;
- The newsletter design layout; and
- Sample web pages.



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## Section 1 US-12 Heritage Trail Overview

*The following section provides an overview of the general corridor location, the nominating committee, and general historic and cultural resources which exist along the corridor.*

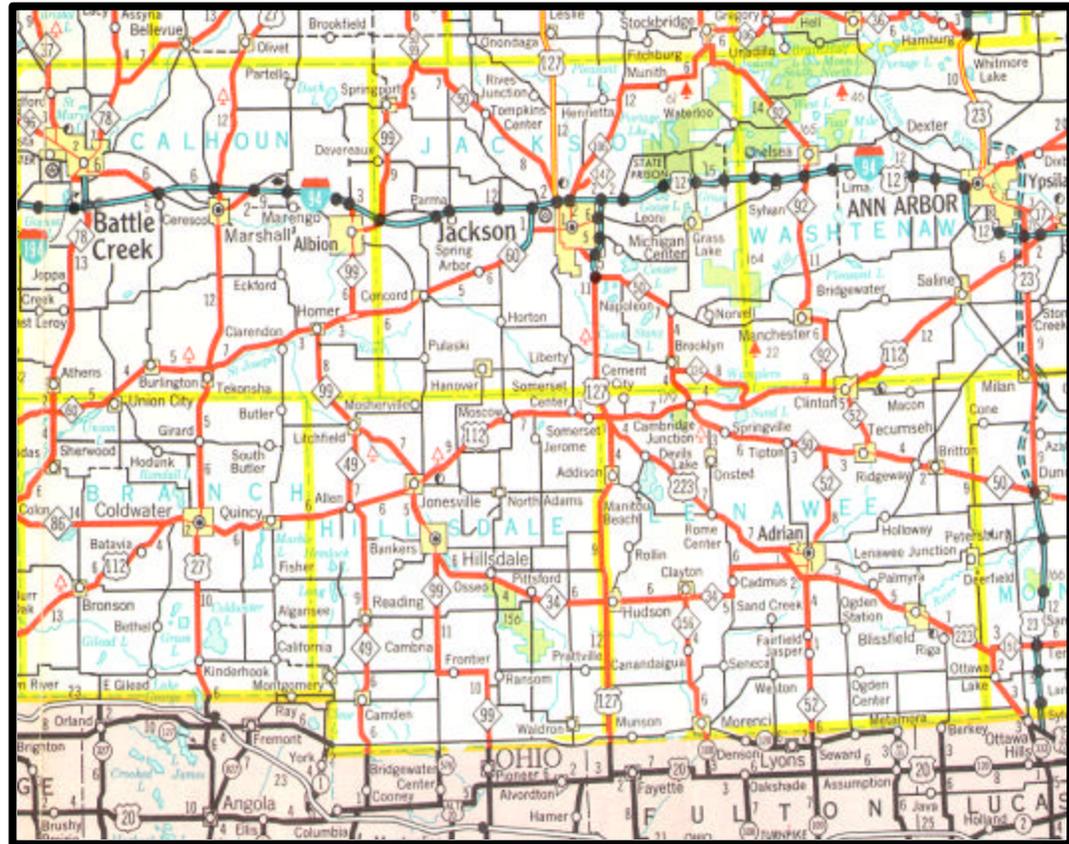
Traversing approximately 212 miles through the State of Michigan, US-12 retains a rich historic character and offers the traveling motorist a unique opportunity to view the many intrinsic historic, cultural and recreational assets along this east-west corridor. The US-12 corridor which begins just blocks from the Detroit River within the City of Detroit, extends through southern Michigan and provides access to the following counties: Wayne, Washtenaw, Lenawee, Hillsdale, Branch, St. Joseph, Cass and Berrien. After leaving the state of Michigan, just south of New Buffalo, US-12 continues westward along the shoreline of Lake Michigan through Indiana, Chicago, Illinois, and ultimately terminating in Aberdeen, Washington.

Among the oldest, most-traveled transportation road corridors east of the Mississippi River, the US-12 corridor has had many names: the Sauk Trail, the Chicago Road, and Michigan Avenue among others. The corridor originally consisted of a network of centuries-old trails created by Native Americans. During the 1820's, a military road was established that followed these trails. At this time, it became known as both the Great Sauk Trail and the Chicago Road and the route became one of the most important migration

routes for settlers into the Michigan territory. Paved in the early 1920's, the road was officially designated a United States Highway (US-112) in 1926. The designation was changed in 1961 to US-12. Today, the US-12 corridor continues to provide many of the same functions as it first offered the settlers of Michigan; access to adjacent communities, connection between major urban destinations, and access to the many cultural and recreational opportunities which exist in southern Michigan.

### **US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL CORRIDOR**

The US-12 corridor is seeking designation as a Michigan Historic Heritage Trail under the name US-12 Heritage Trail pursuant to the Heritage Trail Act, Public Act 69 of 1993. The general location of the US-12 Heritage Trail, as illustrated in Figure 1.0, generally follows the existing US-12 corridor stretching from the City of Detroit on the east to the Indiana/Michigan state-line to the west. Those areas where the original US-12 Heritage Trail deviated from the



1962 Michigan State Highway Department Map illustrating US-12 as US-112



current US-12 alignment, and those community and cultural resources that border existing US-12 which significantly add to the overall traveling experience have also been included within the designated corridor. Examples of such additions include the City of Buchanan, the City of Niles, the Village of Brooklyn, the Irish Hills, and the Village of Burr Oak.

## US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL NOMINATING COMMITTEE

For several years, a group of local citizens, agencies, and elected officials have been working to promote and preserve the historic, cultural, and recreational resources which are part of the US-12 corridor's rich history. Numerous different corridor efforts have been conducted to date including but not limited to, the Automobile Heritage Designation within Wayne County, the Ypsilanti Historic District and the Heritage Trail Historic Route designations within the City of Saline, Saline Township (pending designation), the Village of Clinton, Clinton Township, and the Coldwater Historic District.

During the late 1990's because of the unique characteristics the US-12 Heritage Trail offers statewide, efforts began to investigate the feasibility of nominating the US-12 corridor as a historic corridor. In early 2002, following the guidelines of P.A. 217 of 1957, an Intergovernmental Committee was formed which appointed a representative(s) from each County through which US-12 traversed. This committee was given the task of seeking designation of the US-12 corridor as a Michigan Heritage Trail.

Members of this Intergovernmental Committee, which has been named the US-12 Heritage Trail Council, meet regularly to promote, educate and coordinate studies and plans regarding the future US-12 Heritage Trail in Michigan. Table 1.0 lists the membership of the US-12 Heritage Trail Council:

**Table 1 US-12 Heritage Trail Council Members**

Name	County Representing
Kelli Kavanaugh	Wayne
Kirt Gross	Wayne
Sue Kosky	Washtenaw
Gladys Saborio	Washtenaw
Joyce Drake	Lenawee
Sharon Scott	Lenawee
Rev. Judith Kalom	Hillsdale
Michael Mitchell	Hillsdale
Barbara Rosene	Branch
Chris Hilton	Branch
Carl Higley Sr.	Cass
Larry Carroll	Cass
Joanne Yerrick	St. Joseph
Tom Donaldson	St. Joseph
Sally Carpenter (Alternate)	St. Joseph MSU Extension
Donald Ryman	Berrien
Andy Vavra	Berrien
Brent Miller	Berrien (Alternate)



In addition to the aforementioned community representatives, several agencies are also participating members of the US-12 Heritage Trail Council. Table 2.0 lists these members.

A citizen’s advisory committee of interested stakeholders also meets on a regular basis. This group, which is predominantly made up of interested citizens along the US-12 corridor, provides input and guidance to the US-12 Heritage Trail Council on a variety of topics, including current activities along the US-12 corridor, future projects, and upcoming educational and promotional opportunities.

**THE US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL STORY \***

In 1825, the United States government appropriated \$3,000 for a federal highway, the second in the nation, which was laid out along an ancient Indian trail. Maintained almost continually by federal, state, and local governments, the highway has been used constantly through the present. Today, the US-12 Heritage Trail traverses the State of Michigan retaining alongside it an invaluable legacy of structures, artifacts, and landscapes. These structures represent a built environment that reflects the needs of both southern Michigan’s travelers and settlers.

**Early Development Stages**

The US-12 corridor and the areas adjacent to which it passes have been used since prehistoric times. Near Saline and parallel to the highway, paleontologists from the University of Michigan have excavated portions of the longest mastodon trailway ever found,

**Table 2 US-12 Heritage Trail Council Agency Members**

Name	Agency Representing
Michelle Bohanek-Bussey	Southwestern Michigan Commission
Sally Carpenter	MSU Extension, St. Joseph County
Jim Schultz	Michigan Dept. of History, Arts & Libraries
Kitty Rothwell	MDOT Southwest Region
Jeff Edwards	MDOT Metro Region
Matt Webb	MDOT University Region
Pete Hanses	MDOT Heritage Trail Coordinator

suggesting that game animal were using the corridor over 10,000 years ago. The indigenous people of Michigan who hunted the animals followed, establishing their migratory routes. Although the history of these peoples is not thoroughly documented, evidence of their use of the corridor remains. Burial and encampment sites have been identified along the highway. In Sturgis, a marker identifies a bent tree reported to have been a trail marker used by the native people. When the Europeans first entered Michigan in the seventeenth century, the route was already a well-established pathway through the wilderness. It roughly followed from Lake Erie to Lake Michigan, a geographical line where the abundant forests of the north gave way to the more open grasslands of the south. During the early history of European dominance the trail was used by both native people and the French in the lucrative fur trading profession. After the British gained control of the region, the indigenous people continued to use the trail as they seasonally traveled to receive their yearly stipend from the British at Fort Malden.

Through the early part of the American era, such a travel pattern continued, but when the Erie Canal opened in 1825, settlers were able to reach Michigan Territory by water, turning the nation’s westward push north. In this movement, the US-12 Heritage Trail played a key role, as settlers left the boats in Detroit to travel overland to Chicago and points in between. The great flood of settlers soon created such a demand for land that the two government land offices located in Detroit and Monroe became insufficient. The White Pigeon Land office opened in 1831 and remained in operation for a little less than three years. During that short period of time, the office processed patents on almost all of the territory in southern Michigan west of the meridian line, including the downtown sections of several of Michigan’s large cities: Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, and Battle Creek. This building now operates as a local museum.



## Inns and Taverns

By 1830, the US-12 Heritage Trail had become a major highway carrying travelers, settlers, and freight across the peninsula. In that year, two stagecoaches ran per week between Detroit and Niles. The road reported to be ... "crowded with traffic afoot, on horseback, by wagons, and stagecoach. By the close of 1833 one coach left Ypsilanti for Niles every afternoon" (Pray, 1927). So many traveled along the sometimes impassable route that there was a tremendous need for lodging places. Many homeowners made extra money renting a room or two for the night. Conventional inns were established along the route. In Branch County alone there were 33 taverns in 1837, and several still remain.

The best preserved of these inns is the Walker Tavern at the junction of the Chicago Road (current day US-12) and the La Plaisance Bay Pike (current day M-50) which ran from Monroe. The tavern, built circa 1832, was purchased in the late 1830's by Sylvester Walker. It offered little in the way of modern comforts. There were few sleeping rooms, and travelers often shared beds or slept on the floor. The tavern also served as a community center, and church services were held in the bar on Sundays. When Sylvester Walker wanted to expand his business he built a second tavern across the highway. The new brick building offered private rooms, a dining hall, and on the third story a dance hall. Inns and taverns are among the most prominent early artifacts along the route. The Davenport House on Evans Lake began serving stage passengers in 1839, replacing an earlier log

structure. In Clinton a state historical marker indicates the original site of the Eagle Tavern/Clinton Inn. The tavern was moved to Greenfield Village in 1927.

## Agricultural Influences

During the early development along the highway, a settlement pattern emerged of small towns surrounded by fields and open land. The historic rhythm of this pattern remains very much evident today. Spaced at about fifteen mile intervals, small towns like Saline, Clinton, Jonesville, Allen, Quincy, Bronson, Sturgis, White Pigeon, and Niles lined up facing the highway that was responsible for their existence. Towns grew as service areas to agricultural hinterlands. They were usually located at the junction of the travel route or along a river where water power was plentiful for operating the saw and grist mills needed by the settlers. Several mills remain at these historic junctions along the route including the Atlas Mill in Clinton and the Pears Mill in Buchanan. The most prominent is the Schuyler Mill built in 1843 on the fall of the Saline River, in the then Village of Barnegat (current-day Saline). In a later period of the road's history, Henry Ford purchased the mill in 1935. Along with a dam to provide water power and several new buildings, Ford made major renovations to the mill. The mill was the centerpiece for his village industry located in Saline. The buildings and structures along both sides of the highway are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Influences of the Railroad

Innovations in travel changed the corridor in the post-Civil War days. The railroad soon replaced earlier forms of transportation. It did not, however, diminish the use of the transportation corridor. Railroad companies recognized the geographical suitability of the corridor and communities located along the old stage route vied heartily for inclusion along the new right-of-way. Tracks were laid alongside the old route bringing new vitality to the established villages. Goods that were manufactured locally found a national market. Merchants stocked stores with goods from all over the country. The wealth generated by this commerce led to the construction of many outstanding residential, commercial, and civic buildings. Commercial blocks and homes in Gothic, Italianate, and Queen Anne styles, abound from this period of affluence.

## Early Industrial Influences

Industries sprang up near the source of the raw material they utilized. What were originally small and medium-sized farming villages subsequently became manufacturing centers sending their products across the nation. For example, sheep raisers from the English town of Manchester settled just north of the trail, making Washtenaw County one of the leading wool producers in the nation. In the heart of the sheep raising area, Clinton was a thriving trade center, the largest village west of Detroit on the trail. Two rail lines crossed there making Clinton an excellent site for manufacturing. In 1866, a small group of businessmen formed the Clinton Woolen Mill. Using the local Manchester wool, the mill



manufactured clothing for soldiers in the two World Wars and the Spanish-American War, cloth for fire and police uniforms, and eventually material for automobile upholstery. The mill burned twice, once shortly after it opened and again in 1886 as a result of an explosion. Both times it was rebuilt within months. The mill closed in 1957, but the jobs and affluence it helped to produce left a legacy of beautiful old housing stock and once prosperous commercial buildings.

### **Federal Highway System Designation**

Just as the railroad came to replace the horse and wagon, so a new means of transportation replaced the railroad; the automobile and the motor truck. As they rose to dominance, the face of the US-12 Heritage Trail changed once again, the focus returning to the road. Developing as the center of the automobile industry, Michigan became a leader in the good roads movement. Henry B. Joy, the president of the Packard Motor Car Company led the promotion of the first transcontinental highway. He petitioned Congress to develop a national plan to develop and improve the highway system. In response, Congress passed the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916. The act called for a system of highways that eventually would replace the railroad as the major means of surface transportation in this country.

As a result of this legislation, the Chicago Road became a part of the Federal Highway System, US-112, and paving began in the early 1920's. A new era had begun. Individual states organized Departments of Transportation and

began a project of paving and building that in the following twenty years fostered more change than the entire preceding one hundred years. Bridge building was among the major projects undertaken during this time. The State of Michigan took a leading role developing standardized plans used for bridges throughout the state. One such plan was for the camelback, which was constructed only in Michigan and in Ontario. Several of these bridges spanned rivers along the Chicago Road. One particularly impressive 1922 example remains at the Mottville crossing of the St. Joseph River.

### **Great Depression Projects**

During the Great Depression, the federal and state governments poured money into the economy by sponsoring building projects to hire unemployed workers. Among other projects, Michigan constructed state police posts, including several along the highway. The Jonesville and White Pigeon Posts are good examples of these small, classically styled buildings. As another state project, the nation's first travel information center opened in 1935, located where the highway enters Michigan from Indiana. Here travelers found tourist information, maps, and clean restrooms. It stands as evidence of the growing trend in auto tourism and the response of the state to the needs it generated.

### **Tourism-based Travel Influences**

The automobile had brought a new use to the highway. The road no longer served only as a means to transport goods and to carry passengers to a destination; it had become

entertainment. Americans took to the road with enthusiasm. Industrialization and the resultant growth of labor unions, gave Americans the "weekend", paid vacations, leisure time, and income for travel. For the auto-tourist, the corridor which a century earlier had brought great-grandparents to a new home, now became a source of adventure. As early as the 1920's attractions intended for tourists began to appear along the highway, even imposed themselves on the landscape. The Irish Hills Towers were built to extend the experience of climbing the highest point in the area. The Michigan Observation Company opened the "original tower" in 1924. The "spite tower" followed shortly after, when it became evident that the idea was financially lucrative. Both of the towers' owners opened restaurants that catered to the Chicago-bound tourist. At one point a tourist hotel stood just to the east of the towers. After the Second World War, more and more Americans took to the road. A demand for the amenities of travel arose, restaurants, lodging, a place to buy fuel, and a spot for a picnic. With this new use, the landscape of the corridor changed once again. Tourist cabins, gas stations, and roadside parks were built.

### **US-12 Today**

In the last four decades, the face of the highway has changed again, as I-94 and I-69 have diverted a significant amount of the through traffic away from US-12. This shift has helped to preserve the route's history, but the corridor remains in use and serves as a regional connector for the corridor's evolving land uses. Earlier changes never completely



destroyed the material culture of the preceding role of the US-12 Heritage Trail. An awareness of the trail's history will help ensure that as the corridor takes on new roles in the future, these historical attributes, representing the multiple roles of the corridor's past, will remain, their variety a time-line of southern Michigan's history.

\* *Gladys Saborio, Pioneer American Society Transactions, Vol. XXI, 1998 p. 71*

## **BENEFITS OF A HERITAGE TRAIL DESIGNATION**

Designation of US-12 as a Historic Heritage Trail is non-regulatory. With this designation the US-12 Heritage Trail Council seeks to promote, educate and preserve the historic and cultural resources that make the US-12 Heritage Trail a unique experience to travel. Under the Heritage Trail designation, the Council will encourage the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the regulatory county and local governmental bodies to preserve the existing attributes along the US-12 corridor through a variety of management decisions. Expected immediate benefits of designation include:

- Preparation of a state-wide corridor management plan that will establish the framework for all future management activities including: projects, marketing and educational efforts, attracting cultural tourism, and the enhancement of the quality of life within Southern Michigan,

- Identification and inventory of all historic, cultural, community-based and recreational resources along the corridor,
- Development of a coordinated state-wide vision that seeks to preserve the US-12 corridor's agricultural, historical, cultural, natural, and community assets,
- Attraction of visitors to the US-12 corridor, who bring additional revenues, which ultimately enhances economic activity in southern Michigan, and
- Education of future generations about the many different roles the US-12 Heritage Trail has played over the years.

## **LOCAL SUPPORT OF THE US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL**

Throughout the corridor, there is strong local support for the designation of the US-12 corridor as a historic Heritage Trail. Letters or resolution of support have been received from a majority of the local governments along the US-12 Heritage Trail. Copies of the letters/resolutions of support can be found in Appendix A.



## **Section 2** **US-12 Heritage Trail Goals,** **Strategies and Preliminary** **Projects**

*The following section provides an overview of the general goals, strategies and preliminary projects defined by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council for the US-12 Corridor. The information is not presented with any assumed priority.*

The general mission of the US-12 Heritage Trail Council is to promote, educate and coordinate programs and projects aimed at preserving the heritage and natural and cultural resources of the US-12 corridor. To accomplish this mission, the US-12 Heritage Trail Council has developed and adopted the following goals. These broad-level corridor goals are intended to provide the basis for the development of a future management plan and ultimately the framework for the development and implementation of projects and programs along the US-12 Heritage Trail. The goals of the US-12 Heritage Trail are:

### **CORRIDOR GOALS**

1. Develop a corridor-wide historic preservation enhancement plan.
2. Promote and market cultural tourism; including but not limited to community destinations, agricultural tourism, the Automobile Heritage Area, creation of trail maps and way finding guides,

encouragement of tourism agencies, and planning of corridor-wide activities.

3. Educate those along the corridor and in the state and nation; including advice in preparation of management plans and teaching materials and the establishment of a repository for any materials about the US-12 corridor at the Eastern Michigan University Archives.
4. Encourage, support, and promote studies, surveys, designation and markings of historic and cultural resources on the US-12 corridor.
5. Assist with issues of quality of life along the US-12 corridor, including community revitalization efforts, environmental issues, local land use, and appropriate development through zoning provisions and regional planning.
6. Recognize and support community assets; including but not limited to festivals, fairs, museums, historic sites, and natural resources.
7. Utilize existing and where necessary establish new tourist centers for the dissemination of US-12 Heritage Trail information.
8. Encourage appropriate highway design decisions. Work with MDOT and local governments to provide a safe highway,

ensuring historic integrity and providing for commercial, agricultural and tourism usage.

9. Coordinate regularly with the citizen's advisory committee and the local governments along the US-12 corridor.

### **CORRIDOR STRATEGIES AND PRELIMINARY PROJECTS**

The following strategies and preliminary projects list will be used corridor-wide to educate, promote awareness of, and preserve and enhance existing corridor resources.

#### **Community & Commercial Partnerships**

Develop a partnership with the local communities along the US-12 Heritage Trail including but not limited to local governments, local chambers of commerce, museums, historical societies, schools, and local businesses.

#### **Preliminary Projects List:**

1. Develop a corridor-wide calendar of local events. The calendar should contain a listing of local fairs, festivals, and other community events which could be used to promote the US-12 Heritage Trail.
2. Promote and expand the Sauk Trail Heritage Days celebration at the Walker Tavern.



3. Provide an advisory service to local communities including but not limited to developing partnering relationships with local planning commissions so that the “story of the US-12 Heritage Trail” can spread throughout the state and nation. The Council would also be available to serve as an information resource for historical sites along the corridor, distribution of corridor-wide development guidelines, available preservation techniques, and other relevant data.

4. Develop a corridor-wide newsletter that could be distributed to local communities, planning commissions, county boards, businesses and other interested agencies. The newsletter should highlight the unique intrinsic resources that exist along the corridor.

### **Educational Strategies**

The US-12 Heritage Trail Council will educate those along the corridor and in the state and nation; including advice in preparation of management plans and teaching materials and the establishment of a repository for any materials about the US-12 corridor at Eastern Michigan University Archives.

### **Preliminary Projects List:**

1. Develop lesson plans in conjunction with local schools that highlight the local history and significance of the US-12 Heritage Trail.
2. Develop an informational presentation which can be targeted to local chambers of commerce,

community organizations, and other special interest groups along the corridor which would highlight the local history and significance of the US-12 Heritage Trail.

3. Develop a corridor wide development handbook for local officials. This guidebook could be used to highlight the available regulatory tools which communities could implement to assure the resources and the “story of the US-12 Heritage Trail” are preserved to the greatest extent possible.

4. Rotate the Citizens Advisory Committee meetings along the corridor so the meetings serve a dual purpose of both to update local citizens on the Council’s efforts and to educate those of the abundant US-12 Heritage Trail resources.

5. Develop a traveling exhibit which can be displayed at fairs, local, regional and state historical societies, libraries, and other areas to educate the public about the history and significance of the US-12 Heritage Trail.

6. Tap into local institutions of higher education (i.e. Eastern Michigan University, Western Michigan University, Michigan State University, etc.) to suggest the US-12 Heritage Trail be utilized for future research opportunities.

7. Maximize existing agencies and partnerships with such organizations as MSU Extension and Hillsdale Publishing among others to promote educational efforts throughout the corridor.

8. Encourage local school districts to participate in “History Day” with presentations focusing on the historical significance US-12 Heritage Trail within their respective community.

### **Funding Strategies**

*The US-12 Heritage Trail Council will seek to identify various funding sources and secure funds to actively promote, educate and coordinate programs and projects aimed at preserving the heritage and natural and cultural resources of the US-12 Heritage Trail.*

### **Preliminary Projects List:**

1. Develop a list of funding resources and the associated eligibility and application requirements. This list should then be distributed to local communities and organizations as a planning tool for the implementation of future projects.
2. Establish a 501 c(3) non-profit status for the US-12 Heritage Trail Council. (completed January 2003)
3. Establish an administrative position to serve as staff for the US-12 Heritage Trail Council, apply for and administer grants, and actively market the activities and efforts along the corridor.
4. Seek funding from a variety of sources including but not limited to community, regional, and state foundations, state and federal grants, TEA-21 Enhancement applications, etc.



5. Establish a “Friends of the US-12 Heritage Trail” which membership would provide regional advertising, marketing, and other community benefits.

### **Marketing Strategies**

The US-12 Heritage Trail Council will actively seek to promote the intrinsic, recreational, and historic resources along the corridor. The following is a partial list of projects which could be implemented to meet the Council’s goals.

#### **Preliminary Projects List:**

1. Prepare a corridor-wide marketing strategy.
2. Prepare and distribute a quarterly newsletter to retail, community, and local officials along the US-12 Heritage Trail.
3. Actively promote the Sauk Trail Heritage Days at the Walker Tavern
4. Develop a corridor website
5. Develop corridor tours and market them using multi-media sources (i.e. Video, CD, Tape, DVD, etc.)
6. Reproduce US-12 Heritage Trail merchandise (T-shirts, bumper stickers, post cards, etc.) marked with the US-12 Heritage Trail logo.
7. Develop an annual calendar of corridor events which could be used to enhance cultural tourism opportunities along the US-12 Heritage Trail.



8. Trademark the US-12 Heritage Trail logo. The logo could then be marketed to local businesses who wish to be associated with the US-12 Heritage Trail.

### **MDOT Partnerships**

The US-12 Heritage Trail Council will cooperatively work with MDOT on the preservation and enhancement of defining US-12 corridor elements. The Council will seek opportunities to implement future preservation and corridor enhancement projects in conjunction with future highway projects. The Council also recognizes that the primary function of US-12 is to move vehicular traffic in a safe and efficient manner, and that the designation of US-12 as a historic Heritage Route in no way limits the MDOT’s authority to implement a future construction project. These projects can include but are not limited to the maintenance and improvement of the corridor’s ride-quality, accessibility, capacity, and safety. In return, the Michigan Department of Transportation will assist and support the Council with future state and federal grant applications wherever possible for improvements and enhancements to the US-12 corridor.

#### **Preliminary Projects List:**

1. Preparation of the US-12 Heritage Trail Management Plan using State Planning and Research funding.

2. Incorporate MDOT’s University Region’s and Southwest Region’s aesthetic enhancement plans wherever possible

3. To the extent possible, MDOT will seek to accommodate cultural tourism enhancements (i.e. turn-outs, passing flares, safety improvements, etc.) along the US-12 corridor as part of their future improvement projects.

### **Preservation Strategies**

#### **Preliminary Projects List:**

1. Develop site design recommendations/guidelines to encourage the preservation of key historical resources along the US-12 Heritage Trail.
2. Promote the development of historic districts along the US-12 Heritage Trail.
3. Encourage the designation of state and national register eligible sites along the corridor.
4. Coordinate with the Michigan Historical Center and its preservation unit.
5. Educate local officials and planning commission’s on the importance of preserving key resources along the corridor.
6. Encourage environmentally sensitive design along the corridor including the implementation of native landscapes where feasible.
7. Coordinate with local museums and historical societies along the US-12 Heritage Trail.

8. Develop partnership with regional and statewide organizations such as the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) which encourage preservation of community resources.

## Recreational Strategies

### Preliminary Projects List:

1. Inventory and map existing recreational facilities along the US-12 corridor including but not limited to: state parks, county parks, rest areas, public boat launches, hunting and game preserves, canoeing, camping facilities, downhill skiing, etc.
2. Coordinate corridor-wide activities with existing local tourism resources such as the Michigan International Speedway.
3. Identify and promote agricultural tourism opportunities within the corridor.
4. Identify and promote other cultural tourism/recreational opportunities within the corridor as appropriate.

## Research Strategies

### Preliminary Projects List:

1. Develop a corridor wide development handbook for local officials which is based on national “best practices”. This guidebook could be used to highlight the available regulatory tools which communities could implement to assure the resources and the “story of the US-12 Heritage Trail” is preserved to the greatest extent possible.
2. Encourage academic research along the US-12 Heritage Trail.
3. Map all the resources along the entire length of the US-12 Heritage Trail
4. Develop an overlay map of the different historical routes for the US-12 Heritage Trail.
5. Encourage archeological investigations along the US-12 Heritage Trail.
6. Publish a book which tells the “story of the US-12 Heritage Trail”.
7. Encourage documentation of local history along the US-12 Heritage Trail.

## Tourism Strategies

The US-12 Heritage Trail Council will seek to enhance year-round economic and cultural tourism opportunities along the US-12 corridor.

### Preliminary Projects List:

1. Develop a driver-friendly map (i.e., Trip-Tik) which highlights the local points of interest along the US-12 Heritage Trail.
2. Publish a calendar of events along the US-12 Heritage Trail.
3. Develop a listing of services (i.e. restaurants) and lodging opportunities available along the corridor.
4. Develop three interpretive centers along the corridor with locations in the general vicinity of New Buffalo, White Pigeon (US-131 and US-12), and Walker Tavern (US-12 and M-50).
5. Utilize multi-media sources such as CD's, Radio Stations, DVD's, videos to disseminate corridor information.
6. Use existing state rest areas and welcome centers to distribute US-12 Heritage Trail information (i.e. brochures/maps).



## Wayfinding Strategies

The US-12 Heritage Trail Council will work with MDOT to develop and implement a consistent and uniform wayfinding strategy for the US-12 corridor.

### Preliminary Projects List:

1. Mark historic and other sites of significance within the corridor with the US-12 Heritage Trail logo.
2. Standardize the wayfinding opportunities within the corridor by using the US-12 Heritage Trail logo.
3. Utilize Tourist Oriented Destinations (TOD's) signs to promote off-corridor sites of significance.
4. Develop a driver friendly map (i.e. Trip-Tik) which highlights the local points of interest along the US-12 Heritage Trail.
5. Develop alternative wayfinding techniques such as distributing placemats at local businesses.
6. Copyright the US-12 Heritage Trail logo. The logo could then be marketed and sold to local businesses who wished to be identified with the US-12 Heritage Trail.



**SECTION 3**  
**US-12 Heritage Trail Cultural, Recreational, Natural and Physical Resources**

The following section provides an overview of the key cultural, recreational, natural and physical resources along the US-12 Heritage Trail. It includes:

- US-12 physical roadway features;
- 2000 traffic volumes for selected locations;
- A description of selected historic features by county; and
- A listing of additional historic features Council members felt should be included in the nomination package.

The information in this section has been largely prepared through the individual efforts of volunteers from each county who support this nomination and value the historic resources of the US-12 Corridor. As a result, the reader will notice differences in the level of information provided and the style in which it is presented. This should not be interpreted to represent differences in commitment to the US-12 Heritage Trail nomination.

**US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL PHYSICAL ROADWAY FEATURES**

US-12 is primarily a two-lane roadway throughout the majority of its length within Michigan. The roadway is owned and maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation. As the road approaches the more urbanized areas along the corridor, the roadway often flares-out to three, four, or five-lane cross-sections. In general, the right-of-way for the US-12 corridor ranges between a historically accepted 99 feet for the two-lane sections and 204 feet for the four and six-lane sections on the eastern side of the state. Table 3.0 summarizes those segments that are largely wider than two-lane and the major interchanges in these sections:

**Table 3.0 General US-12 Roadway Cross-Sections**

County	General Location	Predominant Cross-Section	Major Intersections/ Interchanges
Wayne	City of Detroit	Four/Six-Lane	M-10, I-96, I-94
Wayne	Dearborn, Inkster, Wayne	Four-Lane	M-39, US-24, I-275
Washtenaw	Ypsilanti	Four-Lane	US-12 Business Route
Washtenaw	Ypsilanti/Pittsfield Townships	Four-Lane	I-94
Washtenaw	City of Saline	Four-Lane	Ann Arbor Street
Lenawee	Village of Clinton	Four -Lane	Tecumseh/Clinton Rd.
Lenawee	Various Intersections	Three-Lane	M-50, M-52, US-127
Hillsdale	Village of Jonesville	Four-Lane	M-99, M-34
Branch	Coldwater	Four-Lane	I-69, M-86
Branch	Bronson	Four-Lane	Orland Road
St. Joseph	Sturgis	Four-Lane	M-66
St. Joseph	White Pigeon	Four-Lane	US-131
Cass	Edwardsburg	Four-Lane	M-60
Berrien	Niles	Four - Lane	US-31, US-12 BR
Berrien	New Buffalo	Four-Lane	I-94, Red Arrow Hwy.

Source: 2000 MDOT Sufficiency Rating, Michigan State Trunkline Highways



## US-12 TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Traffic volumes vary over the length of US-12 with the higher volumes found on the eastern segments of the corridor and within the more urbanized and developed sections of the corridor, with a majority of these vehicles being two-axle vehicles. Table 4.0 provides an overview of the annualized average daily traffic volumes and commercial volume percentages for selected segments of the corridor.

**Table 4.0 Selected Traffic Volumes**

County	General Description	AADT*	% Commercial Traffic
Wayne	City of Detroit	10,200	11%
Wayne	Dearborn, Inkster	24,200	5%
Wayne	Ypsilanti	15,100	4%
Washtenaw	West of I-94 / Pittsfield Township	20,000	6%
Washtenaw	City of Saline	25,900	5%
Washtenaw/Lenawee	County Line	13,600	9%
Lenawee	Village of Clinton	14,800	8%
Lenawee	West of M-52	7,600	11%
Lenawee/Hillsdale	County Line	8,600	10%
Hillsdale	Village of Jonesville	6,400	15%
Hillsdale/Branch	County Line	8,000	12%
Branch	Coldwater	10,500	9%
Branch	Bronson	8,500	7%
Branch/St. Joseph	County Line	5,100	12%
St. Joseph	Sturgis	12,100	5%
St. Joseph	White Pigeon	6,100	14%
St. Joseph/Cass	County Line	6,200	11%
Cass	Edwardsburg	6,800	10%
Berrien	Niles	6,600	17%
Berrien	New Buffalo	10,800	7%
Berrien	State Line	6,600	12%

Source: 2000 MDOT Sufficiency Rating, Michigan State Trunkline Highways

\* AADT - Annualized Average Daily Traffic



## US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL CULTURAL AND HISTORIC FEATURES

The US-12 Heritage Trail possesses exceptional historic and cultural features throughout the State of Michigan. The following discussion provides an overview of selected intrinsic resources within each county which help frame the “story” of the US-12 Heritage Trail. An analysis of many of these features of the US-12 Heritage Trail is included in Section 4.

### Wayne County

The sites listed here have been included in the Resource Analysis discussion in Section 4, however, descriptions of some of these sites for the county are incomplete in this section.

Michigan Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Monument  
Cadillac Square Marker  
Corktown Historic District  
Tiger Stadium  
Michigan Central Railroad Station  
St. Anne Church: Father Gabriel Richard  
Burial Site and Relic  
The Henry Ford  
Fair Lane: Henry Ford Estate and Jens  
Jensen Landscape  
McFadden-Ross House  
Commandant’s Headquarters: Dearborn  
Historical Museum  
1950’ Era Motel Signs  
Eloise County Hospital  
Johnson’s Tavern Marker  
Old Wayne Village Hall

Workers Rowhouse Museum:



1430 Sixth Street, Detroit  
Believed to be among the oldest residences in the City, this simple row house is an example of the earliest residential housing typically built for working-class people from the 1830s to the 1850s.

#### Most Holy Trinity Church:

Site of oldest free medical clinic in the United States. Oldest English-speaking parish in Detroit.

#### Ford Rouge Plant:

3001 Miller Road, Dearborn  
Ford’s largest facility in Dearborn is the 1,200-acre manufacturing complex. Designed by Albert Kahn, “The Rouge” as it is known locally includes an assembly plant that produces Mustang cars, trucks, a glass plant, an engine plant, a stamping plant, a frame plant, a tool and die plant and an electricity generating plant.

#### Henry Ford’s Birthplace:

In Henry Ford Village, this marker commemorates the life of Henry Ford. The is where the farm home of William and Mary Ford stood and is where their son, Henry Ford, was born in 1863.

### Washtenaw County

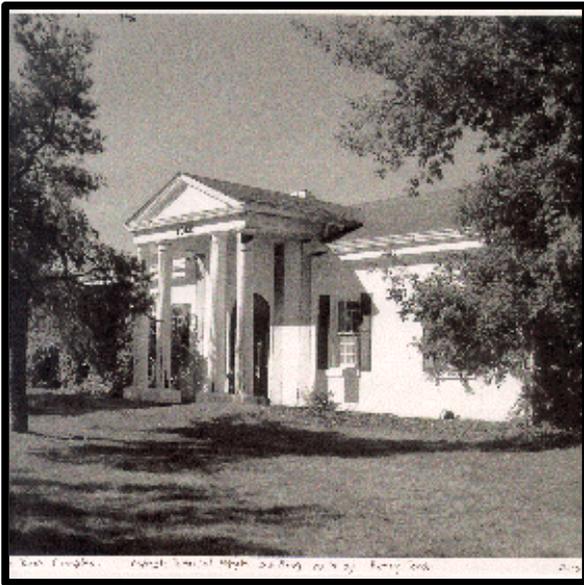
The sites listed here have been included in the Resource Analysis discussion in Section 4, however, descriptions of some of these sites for the county are incomplete in this section.

Willow Run Factory Complex  
Triple Level Highway Bridge  
Greek Revival Structure  
Ypsilanti Historic District  
Ypsilanti City Hall  
Tap Room Restaurant  
Ypsilanti District Library  
Schmidt House  
Sutherland-Wilson Farm  
McCoy House  
Rentschler Farm  
Davenport House  
City of Saline Historic District  
Schuyler Mill, Ford Soybean Factory Complex  
Reynolds Corners Cemetery

In Washtenaw County US-12 passes through four townships and two cities. As it enters the county from the east it is urban in nature, but it quickly takes on a rural feel and runs through open farmland as it exits at the Lenawee County line.

Ypsilanti Township is the first of the four townships in the county. A grassy boulevard divides the roadway as it enters the township. This is a reminder of the time when the interurban owned a right of way down the center of the road. In order to accommodate a wider highway two lanes were built on either side of the interurban right of way.

Partially within Ypsilanti Township and straddling the county line is a major historical site, the Willow Run Factory Complex. Quoting from the Michigan historical marker located in front of the Plant Administration Building:



Greek Revival structure constructed by Henry Ford

**Willow Run (1941-1953)**

After entering World War II in 1941, America desperately needed military equipment and supplies. The Ford Motor Company had begun building this factory in April 1941. Outstanding industrial architect Albert Kahn designed Willow Run, one of the largest manufacturing plants under one roof in the world. Completed in early 1942, this bulwark of the “Arsenal of Democracy” produced 8,685 B-24 Liberator Bombers and had a peak employment of forty-two hundred men and women.

Located within the general area of the complex are two more significant structures, a triple level highway bridge, recently listed on the National Register and an early twentieth century Greek Revival style building constructed by Henry Ford.



**Ypsilanti**

From Ypsilanti Township the Highway enters the City of Ypsilanti. Again quoting from the State Historical marker:

*Located at the juncture of old Indian trails, and the Huron River, this area was the camping and burying ground for several Indian tribes. In 1809, Gabriel Godfroy established an Indian trading post on the west bank of the Huron which he maintained for about ten years. Benjamin Woodruff and companions came up the river by boat in 1823 and settled one mile east of here at Woodruff's Grove. In 1825 a town was platted by Judge Augustus B. Woodward of Detroit and two local men, William Harwood and John Stewart. Situated on both sides of the Huron where the famous Chicago Road (now US-12) crossed the river, the town was named Ypsilanti in honor of the Greek war hero, Demetrius Ypsilanti. The home of Eastern Michigan University, the oldest state teachers college west of Albany, Ypsilanti is also the site of one of the state's very first publicly supported secondary schools.*

The City's main street, Michigan Avenue (US-12) is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Included among the significant buildings along Michigan Avenue are the Romanesque style City Hall building, an early twentieth century post office, now the library, and an excellent example of an art deco storefront at the Tap Room restaurant.



Downtown Ypsilanti

To the west of Ypsilanti the roadway travels another short distance within Ypsilanti Township before it crosses into Pittsfield Township. Pittsfield Township has seen a tremendous amount of growth over the past ten years. The current government is taking steps to preserve the rural character of the township and has recently purchased a large tract of land, which borders on the highway. The township intends to preserve the natural character of this land and to keep it for public use.

The Schmidt Antiques complex and the McCoy House are among the significant buildings along the highway in Pittsfield Township. To the west of Pittsfield Township lies the City of Saline. The city was the first of the communities along US-12 to be designated a Michigan Heritage Route for its historic significance. Outstanding sites along the highway include a second empire style mansion, a twentieth century farmstead, Italianate storefronts and a nineteenth century

grist mill purchased and remodeled by Henry Ford as part of his Village Industries.

To the west of Saline the highway passes through two rural farming townships, Saline and Bridgewater. Saline Township has completed a management plan and applied to the MDOT for designation as a Heritage Route. Bridgewater Township is rural in character with significant buildings that span the nineteenth and twentieth century vernacular styles.

### **Pittsfield Township**

The Sauk Trail, later known as the Chicago Road (US-12), runs on a diagonal in the southern half of Pittsfield Township. In the early part of the nineteenth century records show that Black Hawk, the famous Sauk Indian Chief, crossed Pittsfield Township with other Native Americans on their annual trip to Canada to receive tribute payments from the British. He also passed through the township to fight on behalf of the British in the War of 1812. The first European settlers came to the area around 1824. They came from the eastern states, Ohio, and Germany; Pittsfield erected the first schoolhouse in Washtenaw County during the summer of 1825. It was built of logs and located in section 11.

The township was formally organized in 1834 and called "Pitt" after the British orator and statesman, William Pitt the Elder. The "field" was added later probably due to the area's fertile land. In the early days, settlers went to Ann Arbor for supplies, church, and services such as blacksmithing. Agriculture was

important to the township's development and economy. The Michigan Southern Railroad, which runs parallel to the road approximately ½-2 miles north of the highway, was also important to the developing area. ([www.twp-pittsfield.org](http://www.twp-pittsfield.org))

The township remained rural until the mid-twentieth century. Schmidt's Antiques, housed in a nineteenth century upright and wing farmhouse and outbuildings, has been in operation since 1911.



Schmidt House, located in Pittsfield Township

The McCoy house, according to local history, was important in the Underground Railroad. The McCoy's, who owned this nineteenth century Italianate farmhouse in the latter part of the twentieth century, were important contributors to former President Eisenhower's Music International Program. In 1972 Pittsfield became a charter township, the first charter township in Washtenaw County. Farmland still

exists along the highway, but residential development, commercial development, and township offices (including fire and police) are spread along the six-mile stretch of historic road.

Historic preservation efforts include restoration of historic Wilson Farm, owned by the township. The Historical Society works to document and preserve the township's history and manages the Township Historical Archives, which are located at the Senior Citizens Center at 701 W. Ellsworth. The Society also had display cases in the Administration Building, 6201 W. Michigan Avenue, and at the Senior Citizens Center. The City of Saline and Saline Township also have historic designations pending.

### **Bridgewater Township**

After leaving Pittsfield Township one comes to the City of Saline, the first community to be designated as a section of the US-12 Heritage Trail. Continuing west is Saline Township, whose designation is pending. Contiguous to Saline Township is Bridgewater Township. US-12 traverses the lower southeast quadrant of this township.

Native Americans used the Sauk Trail for centuries during yearly migrations. In the early part of the nineteenth century hamlets and villages grew up along the trail. Bridgewater Township was established in 1832 and at that time included the town of Manchester. Settlers came to the area primarily from New England, New York, and Germany, many of them along the Sauk Trail (US-12.) The hamlet of Bridgewater developed along the North Branch



of the River Raisin that runs in a north-south direction in the western third of the township. Running parallel to the river a railroad was built, the Jackson and Palmyra branch of the L.S. & M.S., later known as the Michigan Southern Railroad. Both the railroad and the Sauk Trail were important to the development of agriculture of Bridgewater Township. It remains today an important agricultural community.

The landscape along US -12 is a patchwork of fields and forest, dotted by nineteenth and twentieth century farmsteads. Historic architecture consists of working farmsteads with Greek Revival, Italianate, and Gothic design. Old barns are either gambrel or English style.



Travelers have a picturesque view of rural Michigan as they travel this part of the road.

### **Manchester Township**

Traveling west on US-12, one leaves Washtenaw County at the southern border of Bridgewater Township and dips down into Lenawee County while going through the village

of Clinton. West of Clinton, Manchester Township, in the southwest corner of Washtenaw County, touches US-12.

Manchester Township was settled around 1832 and previous to this was part of Dexter Township. Two railroads ran through in township in the nineteenth century. The River Raisin and Iron Creek are the township's waterways. Several churches, built in the nineteenth century, are still extant. The Manchester Township Library is Michigan's oldest township library. The approximately three miles of the township which runs along the north side of US -12 is rural countryside dotted by farmsteads. At the corner of Michigan Avenue and Ely Road is the historic Reynolds Corners Cemetery.

The Washtenaw County MT-34 Historic Marker on the mausoleum in the Reynolds Corners Cemetery reads as follows: *"Reynolds Corners Cemetery, located in the southwest corner of Manchester Township, was initially affiliated with a local church which no longer exists. The Reynolds family owned this property at the corner of Ely Road and Michigan Avenue. A vault dated 1883 is believed to have been built when the cemetery was dedicated.*

*The grave of Captain Ebenezer Davis, veteran of the Black Hawk War, is one of the oldest. This cemetery is distinguished by many Washtenaw and Lenawee County farmers interred here including the Brighton, Holmes, Witherell, Cooley and Smalley families".*

### **Lenawee County**

Lenawee County was settled in the 1820s. Prior to European settlement, the Potawatamie Native Americans lived in this area. There are very few cultural remnants left from the Potawatamie, save some mounds. There was an Indian Village, noted on the 1825 Survey near Allen and Wolf Lake. The four townships along the highway have many 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Greek Revival, Four Square Victorian and Farm House style homes, commercial and public buildings and some industrial sites. Development began in the northern part of the County along the River Raisin and near the many lakes.

As you enter Lenawee County from the east, you find the historic business district of the Village of Clinton, the only one on US-12 in the County. Leaving Clinton you see old farmhouses and barns and then you come to the hills and lakes known as The Irish Hills. This area affords great scenic and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to swim, boat, bike, fish, hunt, camp, and snow mobile. There are over fifty lakes in the Irish Hills. There are and were many private camps in Cambridge and Woodstock Twp. The state owns Hayes State Park, Hidden Lake Gardens and Onsted State Game Area. There were dance halls at many of the lakes in the 20's-50s, which brought bands and tourists. The first tourists came via train to the most southerly lakes, but with the advent of automobiles tourist's rooms and cabins were found all along US-12. Today there are many tourist attractions along the highway.





Village of Clinton Circa 1910

Gibbard House: 135 E. Michigan Ave., Clinton, MI

This frame Greek Revival house built around 1830 is the oldest house in Clinton. This house was owned by Alpheus Kies. The basement of the house was used as a store in settlement days. Alpheus Kies came from New York and settled in Clinton in 1829. He owned a large section of land that was the northeast quadrant of town.

Clinton Historic Business District, including the Clinton Inn: Tecumseh Rd. to Division St.

Clinton's location on the Chicago Rd. and the efforts of early business people made it the greatest trading point west of Detroit in the 1830's. Five of the stores built by 1860 remain, while considerable building of the other brick Italianate buildings took place between 1872 and 1901. The Clintonian Hotel, at the center of town, now called the Clinton Inn was completed in 1901. It was built by Alonzo Clark, who came

in 1833 and opened a small store. He made money in pharmaceuticals in Chicago and built many of the brick buildings on the north side of the street.



Clinton Inn

Mortuary Chapel, Riverside Cemetery:

208 Coman St., Clinton, MI 49236- Michigan Historic Marker (applied for) This Gothic style building was completed in 1914. The Clinton Culture Club (Federated Women's Club of Clinton) secured the funds and saw to the building of the chapel in Riverside Cemetery. Wirt Roland, a Clinton boy designed the building. He also was the architect for the Guardian, Penobscot and Buhl skyscrapers in Detroit.

Smith-Kimball Community Center:

Tecumseh Rd. and Franklin St., Clinton Michigan Historic Marker The Center was donated to the Village of Clinton on August 11, 1955 by Mrs. Leander W. Kimball (Blanche). The early portion of the building

dates back to 1840 and is a good example of Greek Revival Style Architecture. It was built by Jira Payne, but by 1849, the home was owned by George E. Pomeroy and called Pomeroy Hall. It was considered a center of social life in the community. John Smith purchased the home in 1862 and lived there until his death. The home passed to his son Edwin R., who in 1892 invited his daughter Blanche and her husband Leander Kimball to share the home with him. Major enlargement and remodeling was done in more of a Victorian Style with oak woodwork and stained glass windows. In 1968, a fire broke out in the rear of the Center and caused around \$100,000 worth of damage. In making repairs, a large meeting room was made in the upstairs. The community center is used for meetings, private parties, community celebrations and even family reunions on its tree shaded grounds.

Clinton Woolen Mill Buildings:

Michigan Ave & River Raisin Clinton, Clinton Michigan Historic Marker The Clinton Woolen Mill Manufacturing Co. was organized in 1866 and began operations on a small scale the following year. The mill was one of some twenty built in central southern Michigan during the period of reconstruction. The mill was very compatible with local farming interests. In 1886, most buildings of the mill were destroyed by fire. Local folks raised money to help rebuild the mill. In 1925 the mill employed 200 workers. Beginning in the 1940's, the woolen industry throughout the country began to have its problems with the invasion of synthetics and in paying a competitive wage. The company received the Army-Navy Award of Excellence during World War II. The closing of



the mill was announced in 1957, and the folks of Clinton found it hard to believe, since the company had played such an important part in the life of the community for ninety-one years. Various owners have had the building since that time.



Clinton Woolen Mill

Atlas Mill: 429 W. Franklin St., Clinton-Michigan Centennial Business

Early settlers decided to build a mill on the River Raisin soon after their arrival. On an 1833 survey map, a mill race and mill yard are shown; this was called the Red Mill. The earliest the present mill can be documented is 1836 when C. W. Pomeroy, D. & H. Owens contracted with Edwin Smith and Hiram Dodge to build a three-story Greek Revival style mill. The mill race, which channeled water from the River Raisin, was used to turn the horizontal wheel which turned the stone that ground the local farmers' wheat. Atlas Flour was known throughout the state. In 1955, when Charles Carlton and Max Steffens purchased the mill, the flour milling was

terminated and the business turned to feed milling. Under owner Charles Steffens, the mill turned more to urban interests like lawn and garden supplies and pet foods. Atlas True Value Feed and Farm Supply is one of Michigan's ten oldest business sites.

Southern Michigan Railroad Society Museum and Railroad, 320 Division, Clinton  
517-423-7230 Bridge #15 is a National Historic Site

The Society incorporated in 1982 and purchased 13.56 miles of railroad that goes from Clinton to Tecumseh and south to Lenawee Junction. The Michigan Southern Railroad company opened the line to Clinton in 1853. The last passenger train ran in 1938 and the last freight train ran from Clinton to Toledo in 1982. The Railroad Society gives nostalgic rides on early 1900's trains, between Clinton and Tecumseh in the summer and special Fall Color Tours between Clinton and Raisin Center. The building that houses the Railroad Museum was built in the 1890's as the Village Electric Light Plant.

The Lancaster House / Bauer Manor:

Franklin Twp. Michigan Historic Marker  
This former inn was built across from Evans Lake. In 1834, Henry W. Sisson of New York settled here and built a log tavern. The tavern was purchased in 1839 by John Davenport, who owned the property until 1864. During this time, the present building was constructed. The Lancaster House was named for Henry Lancaster who owned the property from 1864 to 1884. As late as 1900 stagecoaches stopped here. In recent years it has served as a tavern and restaurant.

Walter J. Hayes State Park/Wampler's Lake:

1220 Wampler's Lake Rd., Onsted, MI  
It is said Chief Wampler gave his name to the Lake, although some say it was the surveyor Jack Wampler. The park began as the Adrian Clinton Park in 1916 on Wampler's Lake. By the 1920's it was one of the first parks owned by the State and called Cedar Hills State Parks. Land was given to the Park by Walter J. Hayes Family in 1930. The CCC worked to improve the Park from 1924-1936. The park includes 710 acres for hiking, camping, picnics, swimming, boating and fishing.



The St. Joseph Shrine located in Cambridge

St Joseph Shrine: Cambridge Twp. State Historic Marker, Cambridge Twp.  
St. Joseph's Chapel was begun in 1854 and finished in 1863 for services. Greatly religious were these Irish people, and they started building the stone chapel as soon as they built their houses. The Way of the Cross was started in 1932 and was sculpted by Mexican artisans. A new addition to the Shrine is the "Great



Hunger Memorial", which is to honor the one million people who died and the two million others who fled Ireland during the potato famines (1845-1851). The sculpture is designed by Kenneth Thompson of Blissfield and includes a lintel from Cork Harbor.

The Frame Walker Tavern/Historic Complex:

Northwest corner of US-12 and M-50

The Tavern was built around 1832 by Calvin Snell. Sylvester Walker purchased the property in 1843. Walker's needs soon outgrew the capacity of his frame tavern and in 1852-53, he constructed a commodious brick hotel, which stands today opposite the frame inn. Walker was a successful farmer, frontier leader and congenial innkeeper. The Inn, a two-story frame building was a stagecoach stop. The State of Michigan now owns the site and holds festivals and classes at the complex. Today exhibits at Walker Tavern interpret Michigan's frontier settlement and stagecoach era. The tavern includes an 1840's parlor, barroom, dining room and kitchen. It is also one of the hubs for the National Automotive Heritage Area. It is open Wed.-Sun., Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Siam School:

US-12 at Person Hwy. Onsted, MI 49230.

This building was used as a school from 1854-1931. The land was donated by Squire Powers in 1852. It is named for the Potawatamie Chief Siam who, tradition has it, sent his children here to school. It is located across from Allen Lake. An Indian Village was located near Allen and Wolf Lake as found on an 1825 survey.

Irish Hills Towers: Cambridge Twp.

The 1st tower was built by the Michigan Observation Company on Mr. Brighton's property in 1924. Soon afterward, the Kellys built a tower fifty feet high. Thus began the rivalry for height and business, which lasted until 1944. At this time, Mr. Lamping bought the first tower and when Mr. Kelly died in 1955, Lamping joined the two towers at the base and a gift shop was erected. The towers provided a breathtaking view of eleven lakes and the Irish Hills. The towers were joined at the top in 1972. They are closed now, and badly in need of restoration.

St Michael's Episcopal Church and Cemetery,

11646 Monroe Pike, M50 at Cambridge

On the Michigan State Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places.

The building was completed and consecrated on Oct. 31, 1858 and the cemetery was opened at the same time. The leaded stained glass windows were a part of the original building. Rev. William Lyster from Ireland helped found the church and was the first priest. William Blackmar donated the land for both the church and the cemetery. The church was closed in the 1930's and reopened ca. 1942.

Drake School/The Enchanted Schoolhouse:

14012 US -12, Woodstock Twp.

This school was founded and built in 1871 and was used into the early 1940's. It is now a gift shop.

Tourist Cabins at Bernie's Cedar Haven:

14335 US -12, Brooklyn, MI 49230

Tourist Cabins were a direct result of automobile tourism in the Irish Hills. One of the six original 1920's cabins -that are still rented out-is at the Edison Institute in Dearborn. They are typical of many cabins that remain from the first half of the 20th century.

Artesian Wells Garage:

Southeast corner of US-12 and US -127

Woodstock Township Cemetery is adjacent to the Artesian Wells; Woodstock Township Cemetery. Typical of late 1940's gas stations, this station was built at the site of the Artesian Wells. An artesian well is one drilled deep enough to reach water that is draining down from higher surrounding ground above the well so that the pressure will force a flow of water upward. At one time this well's water was known from coast to coast. The water is still flowing in the area.

Hidden Lake Gardens: Franklin Twp.

6280 Munger Rd., Tipton, MI 49287

Hidden Lake Gardens is 755 acres of gardens and natural areas, owned by Michigan State University. It has plant conservatories, hiking trails, 6 miles of picturesque driving, and picnic areas and is open to the public for a small fee.

## Hillsdale County

The sites listed here have been included in the Resource Analysis discussion in Section 4, however, descriptions of some of these sites for the county are incomplete in this section.

McCourtie Park  
Grosvenor House  
Village of Jonesville



## White Marble Springs Campground and Park

In April 2000, the MDOT contracted with Gray & Pape, Inc. to conduct a reconnaissance level survey to evaluate the above ground resources along the US-12 corridor through Hillsdale County. The study provided a complete survey of the corridor along with preliminary evaluations of the National Register eligibility of all architectural resources more than fifty years old within the US-12 corridor. Landscape and viewsheds were also identified within the report. The following section provides a synopsis of the findings of that report. The entire Hillsdale County inventory will be incorporated within the US-12 Heritage Route Management Plan.

A total of 346 cultural resources were documented along the US-12 corridor within Hillsdale County. Of the 346 potential sites, National Register eligibility recommendations were made for one historic district in the Village of Jonesville and nineteen individual properties. The following is a summary of those structures and areas along the US-12 within Hillsdale County that were recommended eligible for the National Register:

### Village of Jonesville Historic District:

The Village of Jonesville Historic District is located east of the St. Joseph River on US-12. It is comprised of residential, commercial, education, civic, and religious resources. The majority of this district consists of residential buildings, with a number of extant residences providing examples of popular nineteenth century styles such as Greek Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne. The area contains some of the oldest buildings and many of the residences

of the prominent nineteenth-century business and political leaders. The Jonesville Historic District also includes the village's traditional downtown commercial area and the following deemed potentially National Register eligible by the Gray & Pape study.

Within Hillsdale County there are a number of Italianate, Greek Revival, and Queen Ann structures along the US-12 Heritage Trail which have been deemed eligible for the National Register. These commercial and residential structures provide excellent examples of the popular architectural styles which were found along the US-12 Heritage Trail. The following section provides a brief overview of the each structure type along the corridor.

George Smith General Store: Italianate  
Northwest Corner US-12 and Somerset Road  
This brick commercial building, which was built in 1871 by George Smith, provided the social and commercial heart within the Village of Somerset. George Smith, who was a prominent businessperson, farmer, postmaster, and president of the Hillsdale County Agricultural Society, originally opened the building as a general store. Mr. Smith also served a term in the State House and two terms in the State Senate and ran for governor in 1887. In 1915, Andrew Leutheuser purchased the store and continued its operation under the name A. Leutheuser & Company through the mid-1960's.

O.B. Blackmar House: Italianate  
5751 Chicago Road, Moscow Township  
Constructed in 1870 this five-bay by three-bay Italianate house was part of the O.B. Blackmar

Estate, one of the earliest settlers in Moscow Township. The structure was likely constructed by Elisha Mumford who was a successful farmer within Moscow Township.

George Smith House: Queen Anne  
1420 Chicago Road, Village of Moscow  
This brick Queen Anne house was built by George Smith in 1888 and was part of the successful family farm.

Fowle's Store: Queen Anne  
7391 Chicago Road, Village of Moscow  
This 1913 two-story house was originally built as a commercial building by O.J. Fowle. Mr. Fowle operated a grocery store on the site until it was later converted to an Antiques Shop. The structure provides a notable example of eclectic design-with its split-faced concrete block construction and picturesque decorative accents-make it unlike many other commercial buildings along the US-12 Heritage Trail.

Mallory House: Queen Anne  
4400 Chicago Road, Moscow Township  
This two-story house was built in 1890 and is one of the few remaining intact historic-period farmsteads along the US-12 Heritage Trail in Hillsdale County. The property which originally belonged to the Mallory family contains three barns, a silo, privy and shed.

Moscow Plains United Methodist Church:  
Moscow Township  
The Moscow Plains United Methodist Church and cemetery is located on the southeast corner of US-12 and Hastings Road on Moscow Township. The church was found in 1852 and



was built on land donated by Azariah Mallory. The church which was built in 1853 and remodeled in 1916 contains excellent examples of the Greek Revival architectural style. A two to three acre cemetery is located behind the church with grave markers dating back to the 1850's and 1860's.

#### Union School District #1 Schoolhouse:

2971 Chicago Road, Moscow Township  
Built in 1854, this fieldstone building was a former one-story schoolhouse located at the crossroads community that was historically known as Milnes Corners. The school was originally designated to serve Union School District # 1 for Moscow and Scipio Townships. The building served as school until it was consolidated with Jonesville Village Schools and ultimately closed in 1952. In 1987 it was renovated and received an Architectural Restoration Award from Hillsdale County Historical Society. The building is one of the few fieldstone buildings along the US-12 Heritage Trail within Hillsdale County. It is currently occupied by Bretty's Antiques Store.

#### MDOT Roadside Park:

Fayette Township  
During the early 1930's, the State Highway Department undertook a series of efforts to beautify Michigan's highways with roadside tree plantings, landscaped intersections, and road designs that were sensitive to natural features. Roadside parks which were intended to provide a rest and picnic area for automobilists were one of these features. This US-12 MDOT roadside park was among the first roadside parks built in the state.

## **Branch County**

Branch County, which has been platted out for well over 250 years, has long been a cultural and transportation crossroads of Michigan since the settlements of the Native Americans in the early 1600's. The old Sauk Trail between Detroit and Chicago (now known as Chicago Road or US-12) saw great numbers of pioneers passing through Branch County, bound for Illinois and other parts of what was then the "far west." The presence of the Native Americans deterred many that would have otherwise settled here. It wasn't until 1821 that Chief Topinabee and his people sold to settlers in the Branch County area, however the tribes still continued to occupy the land as before, until around the 1850's when more settlers began to live in the county. While many counties surrounding Branch have grown, it has remained relatively rural. Agriculture, the amenities from the several lakes within Branch County, and the many well-maintained turn-of-the-century homes and commercial buildings offer a quaint and scenic drive through Branch County along US-12. The US-12 Heritage Trail bisects Branch County in a slight northeast to southwest direction toward Chicago, which also intertwines with the major railroad line that flows through Branch County. Upon entering Branch County from the east, travelers would soon enter into the historic town of Quincy. Tree lined streets, old historic homes, and buildings such as the Carnegie Library, Union Church, and the American Legion building greet travelers as they pass by. Heading further west is the City of Coldwater. Interstate 69 intersects with US-12 in Coldwater,

creating an easy north-south access for travelers.

Coldwater is both the county seat and the largest city in Branch County. US-12 passes through 4 of the 8 historical districts within Coldwater, passing such sites as the Chicago Pike Inn, the Branch County Library and the Masonic Temple, all located in the tree lined East Chicago Historic District. Moving west through Coldwater, visitors will approach the historic downtown district, in which many of the original commercial buildings still stand and many are currently under renovation to bring the buildings back to their original glory. From Chicago Street in the downtown district, the Presbyterian Church with its 200-foot brick and white shingle steeple is visible for miles, and is an important part of Coldwater's skyline. Tibbits Opera House which currently produces a summer stock play series and has played host to many popular old time celebrities such as John Phillip Sousa, Ethel Barrymore, Maude Adams, Fay Templeton, and many more, is located just north of US-12 on Hanchett Street. Past the downtown historic district is Allen's Root Beer Stand, a popular destination for motorists. When Leaving Coldwater, motorists are surrounded by the historic Oakwood Cemetery, where many of the city's founders are buried as well as some of their horses that died in action during the Civil War. Flanking Oakwood Cemetery are South and Cemetery Lakes both accessible and visible from US-12. On the outskirts of Coldwater is the famous Capri Drive-in Movie Theater, which is one of ten in the State of Michigan still in operation



today showing current movies for those that want to live a little of the 60's.

The incorporated city of Bronson is the last stop on the US-12 Route before leaving Branch County. The city boasts many historic buildings such as the school, church and library that all lie along US-12. The Bronson Civic Center is the cultural home to the community's plays, concerts and social gatherings throughout the year. Also along the US-12 corridor in Bronson are many well-maintained historic homes. Between Bronson and the county line are many farms and forest tracts that provide a scenic route for travelers. Many farmers in the Bronson area raise cattle and grain, but some also produce flowers for distribution, such as gladiolus. In fact, Bronson proudly calls itself the "Gladiolus Capital of the United States."

#### Downtown Quincy:

The incorporated town of Quincy is a quaint tree lined town brimming with history. The Downtown is two blocks in length along US-12, building height ranges from 2-2½ stories in Italianate or Late Victorian styles. Brick is a common material used for facades in Quincy. Travelers are able to spot the Carnegie Library, Union Church and the American Legion as landmarks, as well as viewing several historic homes along US-12. There is the hint that Amish life is near with hitching posts scattered along the street in Downtown Quincy, allowing Amish residents nearby to be able to come into town and shop.

#### Farming Scenes:

All throughout Branch County travelers are able to view the scenic farms, which reflect the deep-rooted agricultural history of Branch County dating back to the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

#### Old School House:

West of Ridge Road, South side of US-12  
Also known as the Lusk School, this historic site was first built in the 1880's and then suffered from a massive fire in the 1930's. The Lusk School was rebuilt shortly after the fire and now after years of neglect, the Lusk School was recently purchased and will now house an antique shop.

#### Fiske School:

Southeast corner of Fiske Road and US-12, Coldwater Township  
This historic schoolhouse is part of the rich heritage that residents of Coldwater and Branch County have come to embrace. Built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, circa 1880, this schoolhouse now faces destruction with the recent development surrounding the structure and its grounds.

#### Jewell House:

867 East Chicago Street, City of Coldwater  
A distinctive Italianate style brick house, set back from the highway used to be the home of Abraham C. Fiske, famed horse breeder until his death in 1897. The home was built during the Civil War and still stands as the eastern marker of the City of Coldwater today. Abraham Fiske specialized in raising full-blooded horses, which made him a pioneer in this field. Surrounding his home, Fiske built a large private racetrack that was used for time trials and for the exercise

of horses. Horses would be sold anywhere from \$7,000 to \$12,000 depending on the type and quality.

#### East Chicago Street Historic District:

##### City of Coldwater

This district houses some of the most historic homes in all of Coldwater and Branch County. The neighborhood is bound between Wright Street and Jefferson Street along US-12. With Chicago Street bisecting the historic neighborhood, motorists get a glimpse of what used to be. Many of the homes in this area are of the Victorian Era in the Italianate, Queen Anne, or Georgian Colonial Revival design. East Chicago also is home to the Community Health Center of Branch County, which services the entire county for any kind of medical needs.

#### Chicago Pike Inn:

##### City of Coldwater

Morris G. Clarke built his home at 215 East Chicago Street in 1903. Mr. Clarke hired a Chicago Architect, Ashbury Buckley, who had designed many of the homes on Mackinac Island in the late 1800's. Mr. Clarke, who was a Coldwater merchant, had his home built in the Colonial Reform style, complete with massive Greek Revival columns. When the Clarke mansion was finished, it had cost him a total of \$15,000.00. Morris lived in this beautiful mansion with his wife, Margaret, sons Charles and Edwin (called Ned), and daughter Sophia, until his death in 1927. Margaret continued to reside in the home until her death in 1936. In 1936, sons Charles and Edwin sold the property to a family that turned it into a rooming house. The Clarke mansion continued as a rooming



house until 1988. Harold and Jane Schultz bought the Clarke home in the fall of 1988, and completely restored it to the splendor you see today. On June 20, 1989, the beautiful Clarke mansion was opened as a Bed & Breakfast, now known as the Chicago Pike Inn. The Inn has many highlights - the gleaming cherry woodwork, the end cut parquet floors, and the landing is illuminated by an original Kokomo stained glass window, made in Kokomo, Indiana. The six guest rooms have all been furnished with antiques and each one has a special elegance.

#### Coldwater Downtown Historic District:

City of Coldwater

Geographically, Coldwater is the center of Branch County, but it is also the economic and cultural center as well. Founded in the 1830's, along side the inception of US-12. Today Coldwater is a town that is proud of its past and that is also looking into its future. Coldwater boasts 8 National Register Historic Districts, a thriving downtown, and technology that has brought the community of only 10,000 into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Downtown Historic District of Coldwater has long been the center of economic activity for Branch County and the surrounding rural areas. This district is bounded by Jefferson Street on the East and Clay Street on the west along US-12. Many family-owned businesses, such as Kerr Hardware and the J.B. Branch Department store were main icons of retail all the way up to the 1980's in Coldwater. Four local banks still call Coldwater home. While several historic icons were destroyed in the 1960's due to urban renewal, many survived and are near to their original design when built in the

late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Architecturally, many of the historic buildings are of Italianate, Late Victorian and Neo-Classical Rival styles, ranging from 2 to 4 stories in height all made with brick. The downtown also includes 4-Corners Park, which is the cultural hub of Coldwater. During the summer months, art displays, community festivals, and concerts are held in 4-Corners Park.

#### Wing House Museum:

City of Coldwater

A hidden jewel in downtown Coldwater is the Wing Museum, located at 27 South Jefferson Street. This treasure-filled, 1875 Second Empire mansion is a monument to a High Victorian way of life. The Wing Museum, known as a working museum, is open Wednesday through Sunday from 1 p.m. until 5 p.m. Enjoy a stroll through the many rooms with over 80 percent of the furnishings actually owned by the Wing family. A must see are the many exquisite paintings and an 1893 Regina Music Box.

#### Masonic Temple:

City of Coldwater

Built as an Italianate style building in 1868 as a personal art gallery of Henry Clay (H.C.) Lewis, it remained an art gallery until sold to the YMCA in 1896. In 1913, it was bought by Tyre Lodge #18, Free & Accepted Masons, and Order of the Eastern Star Chapter #1 to be used as a meeting hall. In 1920, it was remodeled and the styling changed to Hacienda. In 1954, a fire gutted the inside. The building was restored at that time and remains a Masonic building to this day.

#### Tibbits Opera House:

City of Coldwater

This theater, built in 1882, has played host to the likes of Ethel Barrymore, John Philip Sousa, John L. Sullivan, Maude Adams, Fay Templeton and many more. The original style of the building was an ornate Second Empire French Revival, but in the late 1960's, was covered by a more "modern" façade, losing all of its fenestration. Tibbits' many attractions include a professional summer stock company that presents a variety of plays and musicals. Currently a major fundraising campaign has been initiated to raise the well over \$12 million needed to restore Tibbits to its original glory.

#### Branch County District Library:

City of Coldwater

The Coldwater Public Library located at 10 W. Chicago Street (Corner Street and Division) is one of the oldest libraries still functioning in its original building in the State. The library is reputed to be one of the State's leading genealogical research sites. The building itself is a symbol of our community's pride in its cultural heritage. It is indicative of the community efforts to preserve many of the fine old buildings and private residences. The Branch District Library serves all of Branch County.

#### Allen's Root Beer Stand:

City of Coldwater

This stand has greeted customers into Coldwater for decades and is still a popular stop along US12.

#### Old US-12 Bridge



Old Oakwood Cemetery:

City of Coldwater

This Cemetery, which overlooks Cemetery and South Lakes, houses many of the founders of the City of Coldwater and Branch County.

Monuments tower in the shaded hillside of this historic cemetery, paying tribute to those that have given life to the community and the county.

Capri Drive-In Movie Theater:

City of Coldwater

Built in 1964, the Capri Drive-In Movie Theater has been a popular destination for all ages for decades. Still showing popular films today; this destination is one that cannot be passed up.

This unforgettable landmark, along with Allen's Root Beer Stand, are great examples of auto-oriented services that popped up during the 1950's and 60's.

City of Bronson:

Founded in 1828, the City of Bronson is still the small quaint town of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Tree lined streets and historic homes still dot the city today. Architecturally along US12, the downtown area of Bronson features buildings of Italianate and Late Victorian in style, all built in brick construction and are 1 to 2 stories in height. Highlights of the downtown are the Library as well as Saint Mary's Catholic Church and School.

St. Mary's Catholic Church, City of Bronson:

Founded in 1867 by Rev. Fr. Charles Rychaert, this church has been a major contribution to the city of Bronson ever since the founding. Primarily a Polish family church, St. Mary's has grown into a vital element of the Bronson

community, offering a school, soccer fields and baseball fields for the community as well. While the historic church had to be demolished, you can still find any kind of community activity from ice cream socials to craft fairs any time of the year at St. Mary's.

**St. Joseph County**

From early Native Americans on foot, to rugged pioneers in wagons and stagecoaches, to modern-day motorists, travelers carved history into the stretch of roadway currently known as US-12. From Detroit to New Buffalo, travelers knew their journey was halfway completed when they arrived in St. Joseph County. St. Joseph County hosts a twenty-four point nine mile (24.9) stretch of US-12. The two-lane paved highway travels through the county as the most southern highway in the state.

Inns still stand today that welcomed pioneers and others that traveled the path which was known as the Sauk Trail. As you enter St. Joseph County from the east the highway crosses Burr Oak Township. An inn still remains along the highway that housed weary travelers for the night. The original hitching posts for the coach horses still stand. In the summer months, many fields in the area are graced with beauty from all the flowers. Burr Oak also has an annual herb day and an old auto show.

The US-12 Heritage Trail then enters Fawn River Township. It passes through the early settlement of Freedom. The old Freedom School has been converted to a private residence. Two old cemeteries and a County

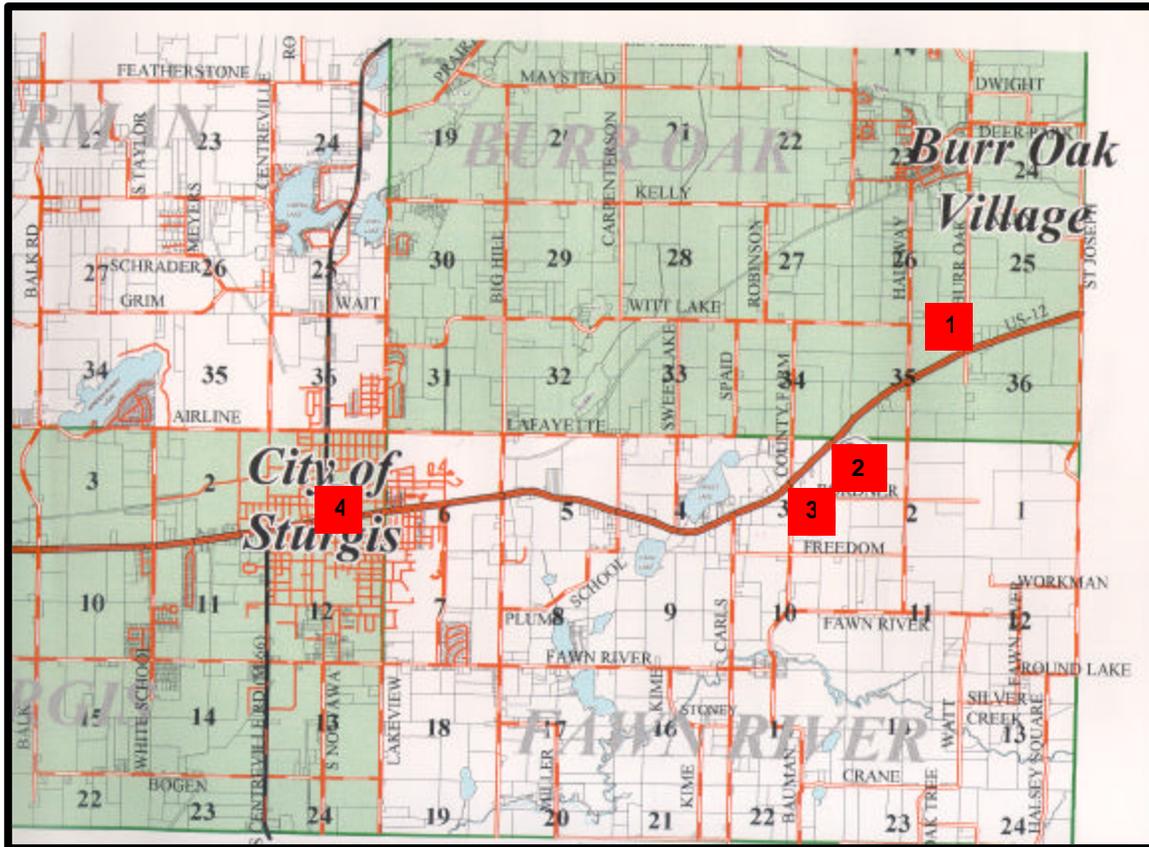
Farm building with its many stories of the past remain in that area. Travelers will see buckets hanging from the towering maples in early spring collecting sap for making maple syrup and sugar. The syrup may be purchased at a roadside farm market west of Sturgis.

Sturgis is the official Michigan Week Kickoff City. An annual parade celebrates the event. Many Michigan Governors and officials have participated in the parade. The highway goes directly through the historical business district of Sturgis. Modern day travelers may stop over at the historic Christmere House Bed and Breakfast and perhaps visit the old Lakeshore and Michigan Southern Depot Museum, or take in live theater at the Sturges-Young auditorium.

Brick streets remain and are visible from US-12. They take you past historical homes that are also visible while traveling through. Parks and live concerts in the summer may be enjoyed as well. Sturgis also houses a 1936 electric plant that is adjacent to memorial Park. Memorial Park was dedicated to the memory of WWI veterans. During the summer of 2000, the park was the site of the Moving Wall Vietnam Memorial and was visited my thousands of people.

US-12 also known as Chicago Road, or the Sauk Trail crosses the rich prairie land across southern St. Joseph County. Tree lined highway passes lakes, rivers, a golf course and farmland. The highway parallels the Lakeshore and Michigan Southern Railroad. This was once the main line of the New York Central System's Buffalo to Chicago route. The railroad is still in





Early Inns (1), Freedom (2), Old Freedom School (3), and Sturgis (4)  
St. Joseph County

use today. If travelers are very lucky they may have to stop at Douglas Crossing between Sturgis and White Pigeon and perhaps see passengers enjoying a round trip train ride behind an old steam engine. Craft shops, farm markets, and road side parks are places that always welcome visitors while traveling between Sturgis and the historic village of White Pigeon.

White Pigeon is home to Michigan's third land office. All settlers had to visit this land office when coming to the state. The land office still stands and is clearly marked. White Pigeon is the oldest incorporated village. West of town is the burial site of Chief White Pigeon who gave his life to save the settlement. A Michigan Historic Site at Wahbememe Park on the corner

of US-12 and US-131 has a picnic area where time can take you back to 1830 when the chief fought his battle.

Adopt-a-Highway signs are plentiful along the route. These signs show the pride that businesses and citizens have of this route by their agreeing to pick up litter along the road. In route to Mottville visitors may want to stop and shop at various types of businesses such as surplus stores and handicraft supply stores.

Mottville houses a long ago dirt speedway that hosts stock car races in the summer. A fine dining restaurant overlooking the St. Joseph River is also located in the village. From the restaurant's window you can see the still standing camelback bridge and piers from an even earlier covered bridge. It has now been replaced with a more modern bridge. The 1922 bridge has been designated a historic site by the Michigan Department of Transportation. The site has a picnic area by the tree-lined river with plenty of parking, making it a good place to take a break and enjoy the scenery as you leave St. Joseph County.

Halfway Road:

This is the main road into Burr Oak and is the halfway point between Detroit and Chicago. In 1835, two stagecoaches a week were scheduled out of Detroit. With the establishment of a regular stagecoach schedule, stations were needed at intervals along the road, one was at the halfway point.

The highway passes through the early settlement of Freedom and Fawn River. The



County Farm, located in Freedom and operated in the beginning of the 1800's.

Freedom Cemetery

R-11 Classic Car Museum:

Village of Burr Oak

A private collection of 350-400 classic and antique vehicles. Many of them are one-of-a-kind or limited edition and all have been restored to original condition. Open to the public on Saturdays, or groups by appointment.

Historic Downtown Sturgis:

Bordered on the east by Nottawa Road, on the west by Clay Street. Sturgis is the official Michigan Week Kick Off city, which takes place in mid-May.

- Christmere House Bed and Breakfast: Historic residence, renovated to reflect its 1850's origin.
- Michigan Southern Depot Museum
- 1936 Electric Plant – Located adjacent to Memorial Park.

Between Sturgis and White Pigeon

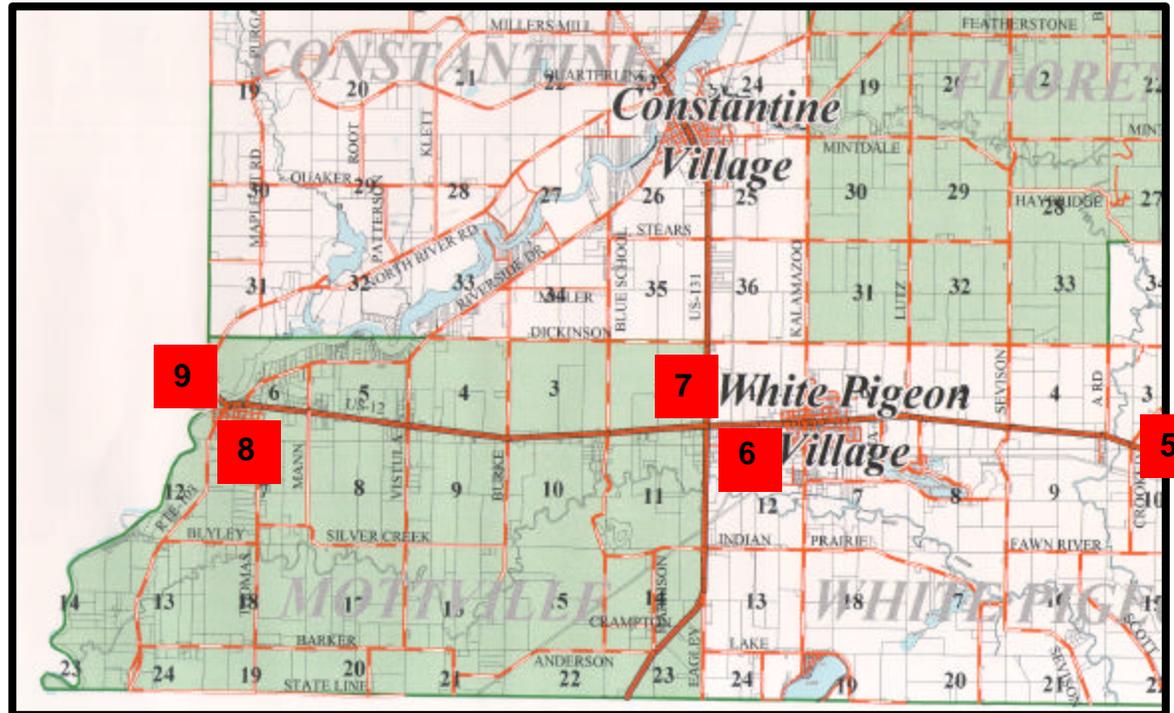
Byler's Farm Market:

A farm market offering seasonal produce and baked goods.

Klinger Lake Country Club and Golf Course:

A private golf course, located on scenic 700-acre Klinger Lake.

White Pigeon – White Pigeon is the oldest incorporated village in Michigan



Chicago Road (5), White Pigeon (6), Wahbememe Park (7), Mottville (8), and the Mottville Bridge (9)

White Pigeon Land Office:

This office was built in 1831. Every land settler had to stop here to register his claim. It was the third land office in the state, serving the area from 1831-1834. Features local artifacts and historic memorabilia.

Chief White Pigeon Monument at Wahbememe Park:

A three-acre park dedicated to the Pottawatami Chief, Wahbememe, burial site of Chief White Pigeon, who died in 1830 is located at the corner of US-12 and US-131.

Mottville Bridge:

Mottville

Crossing the St. Joseph River, the bridge is made up of three identical 90-foot spans. This is the longest Michigan reinforced concrete Camelback Bridge.

Beautiful views of the St. Joseph River:

The river runs across the county from east to west and is Michigan's second largest river. It's a great river to canoe, boat and fish.



## Cass County

### Sweet Road Natural Area:

This underdeveloped area along Sweet Road (about one mile south of US -12) features over 200 wild natural areas and a man-made lake with a dam. There is no public parking lot for this area.

### Baldwin House:

Home of John Baldwin, the first pioneer in Porter Township. His home predates 1836 and has been added on to many times. The building used to be an inn during the mid-1800s for weary travelers to stay and lodge and rest their horses. The home is currently a farmhouse residence owned by Rick Watts.

### Hartman House:

This is the most photographed house in Union. It is an 1876 Victorian Italianate home on the south side of the road that is considered to be very beautiful. Hartman ran the general store in Union in the late 1800's. He is also partially credited with naming the town.

### District 5 Schoolhouse/Mason Twp Hall, Mason Township:

This Victorian schoolhouse was built in 1874-75. It is a red and yellow brick building that served as a school until 1959. The building was purchased by the Township in 1964 to be used as the Township Hall. The buildings interior décor was restored to its original look in 1987. That same year, the Township Board set up the Mason-Union branch of the Cass District library and moved all Township records to the building. The building is in very good condition today.



The site is also on the State Register of Historic Places.

### Five Points Cemetery:

This cemetery has a number of War Veterans from 7 wars: Revolutionary War; Civil War; War of 1812; World Wars I and II; Korean War; and the Vietnam War. Jotham Curtis, a Revolutionary soldier, is buried there.

### Bucklen House:

This home has been owned by the same family for over 150 years. They can trace their family Priscilla Mullins of the Mayflower. Vacant house today.

### Underground Railroad Stop:

This home was an underground railroad stop in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It was also the site of the Maple Hill Diary. William Milliken owns and lives in the house today.

### Miliken House:

Built by Dan Fallmer, a German immigrant, in 1830.

### Edwardsburg Presbyterian Church, Ontwa Township:

This church was founded in 1830, making it the oldest Protestant church in Cass County. The present building was built of frame between 1854-1856. In 1923, the church was remodeled with brick veneer and a new chancel, additional rooms, and new sanctuary furniture was purchased. The money for the improvements was given by Mrs. Charles A. Chapin of Niles. The church is still active.

### Smith's Chapel, Milton Township:

Wooden Late Victorian church, built in 1840, was the first Methodist church in Southwest Michigan. It was sold to Milton Twp in 1976. It is now used for weddings and funerals, etc. There are two open houses and a Christmas program each year. The grounds also include a cemetery, and are well maintained by the Smith Chapel Historical Society. The site is also on the State Register of Historic Places.



Smith's Chapel located outside of Edwardsburg

## Berrien County

### The Chapin House, Niles:

Chapin Mansion is a two-story, Late Victorian Queen Anne style house built in 1882. It is a brick and terra cotta construction, with four gables, a turret, and several large stained glass windows. The building also features hand-carved woodwork. The home belonged to Henry Chapin, a prominent Niles businessman who owned the Chapin Mine near Iron Mountain. The City of Niles purchased the home in an

auction for \$300 in 1932. The building is currently the Niles City Hall and is in excellent condition. It is open for unguided tours during weekdays from 9-5.

#### Michigan Central Railroad Depot, Niles:

Romanesque structure built in 1891-92 at a cost of \$35,000 from beautiful red-brown limestone. Designed by Detroit architects Spier & Rohns. Railroad officials planted beautiful rose gardens during the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, and Niles became known as the "Garden City". The Richardsonian Romanesque beds were restored in 1988 by Amtrak and MDOT. Additionally, the Michigan Central Railroad was completed near this site in 1842. The building is now the Amtrak Station for Niles today. It is also listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

#### Fort St. Joseph Marker, Niles:

A large boulder was placed in 1912 to commemorate Fort St. Joseph, which no longer stands. The site was one of the earliest marked sites, as a marker was added in 1957. The fort was a very important trading post in the 18th century. It was built by the French in 1691 (predating Fort Detroit) to promote trade with the Mohicans. After Montcalm's defeat in Quebec in 1759, control passed to the British and 1781. The fort was destroyed by a group of French raiders carrying the Spanish flag. Two years later, the area became territory of the U.S. Since the area was ruled over by four separate nations during its past, the river valley became known as the "Land of the Four Flags". It is also on the State Register of Historic Places.

#### St. Joseph River:

This is Michigan's second largest river. The river offers quiet waters as well as medium-fast waters and is a great place to boat, canoe, kayak, and fish.

#### Historic Downtown Buchanan

- Union Hall, Buchanan:  
Brick building built in 1862. Served as a meeting place for the community during the Civil War. Named "Union Hall" for Buchanan's support for the Union forces. The Eclipse, a Christian youth center, occupies the building now.
- Pears Mill, Buchanan:  
Historic flour mill built in 1857. Greek revival style 3.5-story building. The original waterwheel has been restored plus millstones. The mill is open on weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Flour and cornmeal is ground on Saturdays.
- Oak Ridge Cemetery

#### Moccasin Bluff:

People have lived on the terrace between Moccasin Bluff and the St. Joseph River for eight thousand years. The first inhabitants stayed in small temporary camps as early as 6300 BC. The residents of AD 500 traded with people in Indiana and Illinois. Those living here 600-900 years ago farmed and had more permanent villages. This historic bluff was named after Cogomaccasin, who was the leader of one of the permanent Potawatomi villages.

#### Buffalo Road Cemetery

#### Dayton Lake:

This is one of 250 inland lakes in Michigan and is located in Bertrand Township. A few of the activities on the lake include fishing, canoeing and kayaking.

#### Galien Township Cemetery:

This is the Township Cemetery. George Blakeslee, the township founder, is among those that are buried here. Cemetery established in 1861 but some graves date back to 1856.

#### Spring Creek School:

The school was built in 1879 and closed in 1938. Three Oaks Township still owns the property, but the building is not in use at the present time. Although the roof has been replaced, the building needs many repairs. New walls, paint, and plumbing need to be addressed.

#### Historic Downtown Three Oaks

- Three Oaks Spokes Bicycle Museum and Backroads Bikeway:  
Located in the Historical Michigan Central Railroad Depot, the bicycle museum provides visitors with information about the history of Three Oaks, railroad equipment and bicycling, as well as provides maps of self-guided bicycle tours on paved area roads or on secondary dirt and gravel roads through Berrien County, MI and LaPorte County, IN.
- Dewey Cannon:  
The Dewey Cannon was the prize offered by the committee that was raising funds to build a monument for the Spanish American War victims of the "Maine." The village of Three Oaks collected \$1400 (\$1.41 per capita) and



were awarded the brass cannon. President William McKinley dedicated the park in October 1899 and Ms. Helen Gould was present at the unveiling of the Dewey Cannon on June 28, 1900. Dewey Cannon Park offers a picnic area, grills, and a bandstand with summer concerts on selected evenings.

- Warren Featherbone Office Building: Originally built in 1905 for the former Warren Featherbone Company's corporate offices. It was later used for the Chamberlain Historical museum until 1951. At that time, it became a bank. The building has the original marble floors, brass handrails, and ceiling moldings from 1905. Today it is occupied by the Three Oaks Township Library and will soon become a historical museum again. The site is listed on the State Register of Historic Places.
- Acorn Theater/Featherbone Factory: Warren Featherbone Factory founded in 1883 and numerous manufacturing buildings housed equipment for the manufacturing of "featherbone," a material made from turkey quills that was used worldwide as stiffening for ladies' corsets, later replaced by plastic in the 1930's. Featherbone replaced whalebone. Kinner Enterprises occupies the site now and manufactures concrete products. The Acorn Theater will formally be opening in the complex in 2003.

#### Warren Woods:

A forest preserve donated to the State of Michigan by 19<sup>th</sup> Century industrialist and environmentalist, E.K. Warren. This 311-acre

preserve contains 200+ acres of virgin hardwood forest, scenic hiking trails, a walking bridge over the Galien River, and a picnic area. Operated by the State of Michigan.

#### Galien River

##### Galien River Preserve and County Park:

Acquired from the Sima family by Berrien County in 2001, this 200+ acres is home to a Great Lakes Marsh. Galien River frontage with fantastic marsh vegetation including swamp rose mallow and many endangered species. Much of the land was donated by the Sima family. Adjacent development is threatening the site. Operated by Berrien County Parks.

##### Lake Michigan and Lake Michigan Beaches:

With access in New Buffalo, the white sandy public beaches of Lake Michigan welcome visitors to relax and unwind. Whether it's swimming, boating, fishing, water skiing, sailing, scuba diving, volleyball, kite flying or just basking in the sun, there is something for everyone to enjoy either on the beach or in the water.

#### Railroad Museum

##### State Line Rest Lodge, New Buffalo:

One story, Colonial Revival style building, opened by the state highway department in 1935. This structure is believed to be the first of its kind in the U.S., it provided travelers with modern lounges, outside tables and benches, highway information and descriptive literature of Michigan. During the first 7 months of operation, more than 30,000 visitors, representing 48 states and 12 foreign countries were registered.

The building has been added on to, and houses four businesses: The Harbor Muse, The Climbing Monkey, Shaker Cottage, Inc., and Panozzo's Pantry. The Climbing Monkey, an interior design store, occupies the original section of the building.

#### **ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL FEATURES**

In addition to the 129 sites described here and discussed in the next section's resource analysis, each county was asked to provide a supplemental list of additional sites they felt it important to recognize in this application. Preliminary lists were developed for all counties except Branch. All sites for Branch are included in the report. These locations, listed in tables by county at the end of this section, should not be considered of lesser priority in their contribution to the story of US-12. Other sites may be added to the survey as their significance becomes apparent.

These locations should also be prioritized by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council and assigned to one or more of the historic themes discussed in Section 4. Improvement and enhancement recommendations in Section 5 apply equally to these locations.



## **Section 4**

### **US-12 Heritage Trail Resource Analysis**

#### **OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY**

The Cultural and Historic Features analysis and Historic Theme maps found at the end of this section are the result of coordinated work between the US-12 Heritage Trail Council and the study team as part of the larger effort to develop this Corridor Management Plan (CMP). Section 3 of this document, prepared by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council, provides a comprehensive list of exceptional historical and cultural features along the 212-mile route of US-12 that spans eight southern Michigan counties.

Using this list as a starting point, a list of historical and cultural features was compiled to streamline the corridor site analysis. A particular site was excluded from this list if its specific address and/or approximate location was not available. However, if this information was provided before the analysis was conducted, these sites were added to the list and subsequently surveyed. Some sites were located on the Cultural and Historic Features Analysis maps as county representatives added new information but were never evaluated in the field because the information was provided after the site analysis was performed.

Using this refined list of 129 sites, field analysis was conducted in June 2003 to catalog, photograph, and record visual observations related to the site's existing condition. Factors considered included:

- physical condition,
- historical character and context,
- apparent ownership,
- wayfinding issues, and
- vehicle and pedestrian conditions.

The general character of the landscape including exceptional views and natural features was also assessed for the entire corridor. Data compiled by the US-12 Heritage Council regarding existing and historic conditions for each site was used to complement the information collected during the site analysis. USGS maps at a scale of 1"= 3,000 feet were used to confirm location of historical features and to assess overall landscape characteristics.

Several components of the analysis presented in this section produced maps to help illustrate the discussion. They are:

- Cultural and Historic Resource Analysis;
- MDOT Aesthetic Project Opportunities; and
- Historic Themes

These maps may be found at the end of Section 4 in the order in which they are discussed.



## COUNTY BACKGROUND AND RESOURCE ANALYSIS

### WAYNE COUNTY

#### County Background

##### History

Established in 1796, Wayne County was named for Major General Anthony Wayne (1745-1796). "Mad Anthony" Wayne was a Revolutionary War hero, who in the 1790's, led an expedition of American soldiers to victory over Native American tribes and British troops at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. The area now occupied by the City of Detroit was founded by French explorers in 1701 and operated as a major port for commercial and military use. Detroit's French beginnings are still evident today with streets such as Chene, Dequindre, Campau, and Livernois, named after early French land owners. US-12, mostly referred to as Michigan Avenue in Wayne County, originates in Cadillac Square at the intersection of US-12 and Randolph Street in downtown Detroit.

##### Economy

Up until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the economy of Wayne County and Detroit consisted of agriculture, lumber, and small industry. By the turn of the century, Detroit had become the global-center of automobile manufacturing and will remain forever associated with the automobile industry with the nickname, The Motor City. Over several decades, the influence of the auto industry has shaped the economy

and landscape of surrounding communities. Today, the top three employers in Wayne County are the "Big Three", Ford, GM and Chrysler. In Dearborn, US-12 passes near the Ford Rouge Factory, the revolutionary manufacturing complex, which at its peak in the 1930s employed 100,000 workers. Still operating today, the Rouge is undergoing a transformation from a 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial icon into a model of 21<sup>st</sup> century sustainable manufacturing.

##### Demographics

Wayne County is comprised of 33 cities, 10 townships, and 41 public school districts, and with a population of approximately 2.1 million, it is the most populous county in the state and eighth largest county in the nation. Beginning with Detroit, US-12 passes through eight communities before entering Washtenaw County. They include Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Inkster, Westland, Wayne, and Canton and Van Buren Townships.

##### Recreation and Tourism

The Wayne County Parks system has 12 parks and provides a variety of year round activities. Running parallel and just north of US-12, the Lower Rouge Parkway spans the cities of Inkster and Wayne and provides active and passive recreation. The Huron-Clinton Metroparks system maintains 13 parks covering nearly 24,000 acres along the Huron and Clinton Rivers providing a greenbelt around the Detroit metropolitan area. In contrast to the activity offered by Wayne County parks, the City of Detroit offers "big city" attractions including

several professional sports teams, multiple cultural venues, and year-round festivals and events. The Henry Ford, which includes Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum, is the nation's largest indoor/outdoor museum complex and has more than one million visitors a year.

##### Landscape Patterns

Before European settlers arrived, the productive loamy soils and lake-moderated climate resulted in early and intensive agricultural development. Today, very little agricultural production occurs in Wayne County. The landscape has been altered considerably by human activity and is now a continuum of urban land use. To the east, Detroit is heavily urbanized with little open space available. Traveling west along US-12 towards Washtenaw County, the urban pattern becomes less dense and dispersed with open spaces. As you approach the county line, isolated tracts of remnant or second-growth forested and/or fallow fields appear. A great deal of the corridor has a run down appearance with dilapidated and/or abandoned buildings or vacant lots. There are, however, periodic isolated pockets along US-12 that are attractive.

##### Resource Analysis

The following comments for each county are based on an analysis of the county resources described in Section 3 and shown on the US-12 Cultural Inventory and Historic Resource Analysis maps included at the end of this section.



- Being the first, and therefore oldest, section of the US-12 corridor to be settled brings a unique perspective to the historic sites in Wayne County. Many of those selected are listed on the National Register and many more elsewhere in the urbanized Detroit/Dearborn/Wayne area, also listed on the National Register, are not discussed in this report but worthy of attention and tourist travel. Of the sites selected for this project, nine are listed with the National Register. They include the Michigan Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument, Corktown Historic District, Tiger Stadium, Michigan Central Railroad Station, St. Anne Church, the Ford Rouge Plant, Greenfield Village and the Edison Institute (now known as the Henry Ford), Fair Lane, and the Commandant's Headquarters, location of the Dearborn Historical Museum.
- At over 300 years old and as one of the first landing points for early explorers, the City of Detroit has a sizeable and extraordinary history. Because of the ongoing development of the city, three of the selected sites are historic markers rather than actual buildings or remains. While these places have historic significance, their apparent value and curb appeal to tourists is diminished because of their setting. Historic programming may benefit if these and other unidentified sites were included in an interpretive "history walk" similar to the Freedom Trail in Boston.
- Because it hasn't been thought of as a tourist destination for many years,

interpreting selected sites in Detroit presents an added challenge. Public perceptions about crime, traffic, and lack of parking may be issues to overcome. Addressing this will be helped by the number of revitalization projects in the City such as the new Compuware Building, Ford Field and Comerica Park, the refurbished Fox Theater and Detroit Opera House, three downtown casinos, and recent commitment to improve Detroit's riverfront including a new state park. The new riverfront will provide opportunity to tell the US-12 story.

- With the range of historic sites in and around Detroit, there is ample opportunity for a number of interpretive themes. The sites selected for emphasis in the Corridor Management Plan should be paired with other locations to more strongly develop this thematic programming. An offering of potential themes and likely sites includes but is not limited to arts and culture (the Detroit Opera House and Fox Theater), recreation and leisure (Tiger Stadium, Belle Isle, Greenfield Village), transportation (the Michigan Central Railroad Station, Fair Lane, Greenfield Village, Henry Ford birthplace), migration and settlement (Corktown, Ft. Wayne, St. Anne Church, Chicago Road historic marker, Commandant's Headquarters, McFadden Ross House), and agriculture and industry (Rouge Plant, Greenfield Village, Michigan Central Railroad Station).
- Corktown, on the National Register, is distinct as Detroit's "oldest neighborhood."

With its many restored homes, the neighborhood has become a desirable place to live but the preponderance of nearby large-scale abandoned buildings – such as Tiger Stadium, the Michigan Central Railroad Station, and the State of Michigan Plaza Building, and lack of retail in the area may challenge its continuing success. Ongoing restoration work is a source of pride and a great advertisement for Detroit.

- Two among the selected project sites, Tiger Stadium and the Michigan Central Railroad Station, are very large, significant, and threatened. Various activist groups are exploring saving both sites but with limited success because of the extensive cost involved. Restoration and reuse of the Michigan Central Railroad Station would be a crowning glory on the US-12 corridor. Sadly, the high visibility of the decaying building is a strong negative influence on the US-12 corridor and its surrounding neighborhood. A new roof would extend the building's life while restoration efforts continue. The Station, never fully utilized, has tremendous reuse potential, and recent news reports indicate its consideration as the new headquarters building for the Detroit Police Department.
- St. Anne Church, in the heart of thriving Mexicantown, is a beautiful example of Gothic Revival architecture. With Church records dating from 1701, it is the second oldest Catholic parish in the nation, which may increase its draw to both tourists and worshippers. However, better signage is



needed since it is relatively isolated and difficult to find from US-12. Father Gabriel Jacques Richard, a pastor of Ste. Anne Church, printed Michigan's first newspaper, *The Michigan Essay or Impartial Observer*, was one of the first professors of the University of Michigan, a pioneer educational institution in the territory and a Michigan Territory delegate to the United States Congress. In this role, he was instrumental in gaining support and funding for the Territorial Road, which linked Detroit and Chicago, opening Michigan to settlement first from Detroit to St. Joe and extended to Van Buren County in 1835. A variety of themes may connect to this stop.

- The small but wonderfully landscaped park that commemorates the birthplace of Henry Ford lies hidden behind a sign on the southeast corner of Ford and Greenfield Roads that identifies the residential development of which it is a part. Interpretive stations positioned around a central water feature and fountain, portray events from Henry Ford's life and his contributions to the auto industry. Quiet and well maintained, the park serves the adjacent retirement community well but is isolated and not well integrated with other Henry Ford sites in Dearborn.
- Greenfield Village and Fair Lane, the Henry Ford Estate and landscape by noted landscape architect Jens Jensen, are primary destinations for Wayne County that are well known, preserved, funded and advertised. As such it is important to

capitalize on this popularity and investigate opportunities to integrate the US-12 story into these sites. With their proximity to downtown Dearborn there is rich opportunity to expand on a variety of programmatic themes. Connections between Dearborn's historic resources and Detroit's may offer ways to draw tourists to downtown.

- The old Eloise Hospital, which once housed over 8,000 patients and was known as one of the best and largest mental health hospitals in the county, now serves as Wayne County offices and houses a museum. Among its many roles, it served the indigent in the mid-1800s and during the Depression and was a care facility for tuberculosis patients in the early 1900's. As the only structure of its kind on the corridor, its unique history and story is well worth preserving. A new golf course on the property's north side provides clue to potential development threat. This may be one of the corridor's "weak" links in need of attention.
- The south side of the US-12 corridor, between Ypsilanti and Dearborn, includes a number of old motel signs that evoke the early tourism travel of the mid-twentieth century. Many of the buildings still stand, though often in poor condition, in use as short-term rental units. At a minimum, the signs should be preserved and displayed as cultural artifacts that tell part of the story of early automobile travel.

- The Motorcities – Automobile National Heritage Area, has extensive promotional material that includes many of the historic sites selected for the Corridor Management Plan. See their Lower Rouge Hub Map and suggested US-12 Driving Tour for examples. Coordinating promotional efforts for US-12 history with the existing programs of this group will be important from the travelers' perspective and as a way to maximize funding and programming resources.

## WASHTENAW COUNTY

### County Background

#### History

In 1822, the legislative Council of the Michigan Territory defined the boundaries of Washtenaw County. The County's name is a variant of Wash-ten-ong, a Chippewa name for Grand River, which refers to the Huron River. Exploration of this region came much earlier in 1680 when French explorer LaSalle canoed the Huron River from Portage Lake to Lake Erie. The Huron River valley and Washtenaw County was originally home to a large Native American population. Settlement of this area began in 1805 when Godfrey, Pepin, and LaShambre established a trading post known as "Godfrey's, on the Pottawatomie Trail" at what is now Ypsilanti. Early transportation networks developed from the area's numerous rivers and Native American trails. In 1827 the Chicago Military Road was built along the Great Sauk



Trail (Michigan Avenue).  
([www.washtenawhistory.org](http://www.washtenawhistory.org))

### **Economy**

Historically, Washtenaw County has enjoyed a strong local economy. This is partly due to the influence from the county's institutions of higher learning, which include the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University. The business climate is attractive because of the abundance of an educated workforce (42 percent of the population has at least a bachelors degree), proximity to major transportation centers, and a strong business community. Not surprisingly, the largest employers are the University of Michigan and the University of Michigan Medical Center, employing over 30,000 people. Other major business sectors include print and publishing, software, automotive, and biotechnology.

### **Demographics**

Washtenaw County is comprised of four cities, four villages, and 20 townships. In 2002, the population was 334,351 with the City of Ann Arbor accounting for approximately a third of the total. For 2002, per capita income was \$36,676, considerably higher than \$22,168, the 2000 per capita income for the State of Michigan.

### **Recreation and Tourism**

Recreational opportunities are abundant in Washtenaw County. The County maintains 12 parks offering a variety of activities including an exercise facility, a water park, golf, historical sites, cross-country skiing, swimming, fishing, and plenty of picnic facilities and hiking trails.

The City of Ann Arbor maintains 147 parks that offer similar activities year round. Pittsfield Township, which is just south of Ann Arbor, has recently purchased approximately 530 acres of land adjacent to US-12, to be used as future parkland. Other year round activities include Big Ten sporting events, art exhibitions, opera, plays, the Ann Arbor Art Fairs, Manchester Chicken Broil, Ann Arbor Summer Festival, Frog Island Folk Festival, the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival, and Saline's Celtic Festival.

### **Landscape Patterns**

Glacial action in this region carved out a variety of landforms and vegetation. The oak-hickory forest association dominated much of Washtenaw County prior to European settlement. Other forest types included beech-sugar maple, and deciduous swamp forests. Considerable glacial deposits and a lake-moderated climate created productive loamy soils, which resulted in early intensive agriculture. The River Raisin and the Huron are the major waterways in the county and have influenced travel and development patterns in this region. As US-12 enters the county from the east, Business Route-12 (BR-12/Michigan Avenue) diverges north through the City of Ypsilanti. The primary route (US-12) follows Interstate 94 (I-94) and rejoins BR-12 at the I-94/Michigan Avenue interchange. From Ypsilanti to Saline, land along US-12 is primarily urban/suburban, but west of Saline to the county line, the landscape is characteristically rural dominated by agricultural fields.

## **Resource Analysis**

- The historic resources of Washtenaw County include a number of sites on the State and/or National Register. The Ypsilanti Historic District (National), the Saline Historic District (National), the Schuyler Mill complex (National), the US-12 Triple level bridge (National), and the Davenport House (State, National) have been selected by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council for this analysis. In addition, the National Register also includes the East Michigan Avenue Historic District in Saline, and a number of individual structures that should be included in interpretation.
- Heading east from Lenawee County, the corridor begins to change from rural to more intensive suburban/urban land uses that continue to intensify into Detroit. There is less land area between cities (Saline, Ypsilanti), and preservation of open farmland is challenging in the face of continued development pressure. Of all eight counties, these pressures are most intense in Washtenaw County. It is here, where the history of the road, no longer influenced by views from the car, turns to programmatic and interpretive themes at individual sites. Natural resource and historic inventories, and guidelines designed to accommodate development while preserving the historic and rural character of the road will be critical tools to balancing these goals.



- The Willow Run Factory Complex, with its association with Henry Ford and Albert Kahn, is significant to WWII and automobile industry history. However, their attractiveness to visitors is diminished by their current use, condition, access, and setting. Because the buildings and triple-level bridge are not publicly accessible, off-site interpretation will be needed to tell their story. Tie-in with a tour offered at the Yankee Air Museum, also in the Willow Run Airport Complex, should be considered. Restoration of these structures is likely to be the responsibility of General Motors.
- Ypsilanti is a working downtown. While in the long run, this is more viable than shops catering solely to tourists, in the short run it is more challenging to preserve/restore on small business budget. Although a variety of shops and restaurants exist at street level, signs for these businesses do not complement the architecture and do little to improve the ambiance of the streetscape. Renovations of three downtown buildings are good indications that revitalization programs are active. Conditions indicate guidelines for façade restoration may be in place.
- Interpretive programming for Ypsilanti should emphasize the downtown history. Michigan Avenue, the main downtown street, has a better mix of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles than other towns on corridor. On the west side, the beautifully restored Ypsilanti District Library is an excellent local resource and anchors the west edge of the Historic District.
- While it would appear that Native American heritage is strong in this section of the corridor per the county description in Section 3, there are no sites that represent or interpret this history.
- Saline has the distinction of being the first designated section of the US-12 Heritage Trail, with designation within Saline Township pending. The story may serve as an inspiring example of community action.
- Downtown Saline is attractive and well preserved or restored. A number of shops and restaurants are attractive to tourists as well as being a popular regional draw. The downtown area is well integrated with surrounding neighborhoods. Walking tours of historic homes, if not already being done, would add to the depth of the corridor resources without their being a primary destination. Although private residences on US-12 such as the Davenport House on the east side of Saline are good eye-catchers and help provide attractive entry to the City, they are not open to the public, so interpretation off-site is needed if they are to be more than visually interesting.
- Schuyler Mill, known today as Wellers Carriage House, is a popular regional destination on US-12 well situated on the Saline River. It provides a good example of adaptive reuse and is a very popular setting for weddings and receptions. Visit their web site at [www.wellersweddings.com](http://www.wellersweddings.com) for more history. It's original use as a gristmill offers a good agriculture and industry theme tie-in with near-by local farms.
- Cemeteries are not generally destinations that draw the public. Reynolds Cemetery, like many others on the corridor, is interesting for its genealogy and provides a quiet place to stop on a busy corridor. Opportunity may exist to list these sites and key local families buried there for those interested in genealogy studies.
- The Wilson-Sutherland Centennial Farm, currently unoccupied and situated between two new subdivisions in a rapidly growing area, is a silent example of the development/preservation conflict. Purchased by Pittsfield Township in 2000, tentative plans include possible use as a farm museum.
- The Michigan Department of Transportation is currently preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 4(f) Evaluation to evaluate the potential impacts that would likely result from the proposed widening of US-12 between Saline and Munger Road to the east. As part of this work, the McCoy House and Rentschler Farm have been identified as National Register eligible.
- The Rentschler Farm and the associated Saline Family Farm Museum, is owned and operated by the Saline Area Historical Society. While a good interpretive resource, its historical context has been overpowered



by the Visteon plant immediately west and new commercial development directly east.

- As with Wayne County, the MotorCities – Automobile National Heritage Area, includes the US-12 corridor in their interpretation. See their Ypsilanti Hub Map. Paired with the sites listed in this brochure, the County's strongest interpretive opportunities include agriculture, industry and transportation. With the many universities nearby, educational and social/political themes may also prove important.

## LENAWEE COUNTY

### County Background

#### History

Lenawee County, which derives its name from a Shawnee word for Indian, was organized in 1826. It was first settled by a group of 30 New Yorkers who founded Tecumseh on the River Raisin in May 1824. The following year, Addison J. Comstock purchased 480 acres of land and started a settlement, which came to be known as Adrian. Comstock was instrumental in persuading the legislature to designate Adrian as the county seat, and also in promoting the building of an early railroad between Toledo and Adrian.

#### Economy

The thirty-mile long Erie and Kalamazoo Railroad that connected Adrian with Toledo was the first rail west of Albany, New York. In 1840, a second railroad arrived in Lenawee, the

Michigan Southern. Together, the two railroads spurred the county's growth. Today, the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in Lenawee, supported by a progressive, pro-business environment. Through a well-established, multifaceted transportation network, Lenawee County's commercial, manufacturing and agricultural producers have quick access to major international markets. Five major highways and three railroads provide convenient access. Corporate and private aircraft can be serviced through Lenawee County Airport near Adrian and Meyers Airport in Tecumseh. In nearby Detroit and Toledo, two international airports and two major seaports give Lenawee businesses an open door to lucrative markets all over the world.

#### Demographics

Lenawee County covers 755 square miles and had a 2002 population of over 100,000. The County Seat is in the City of Adrian, which has a population of over 21,000. Lenawee County contains 12 public school districts and Adrian College and Siena Heights University, both in Adrian.

#### Recreation and Tourism

Recreational opportunities are abundant in Lenawee County. Year round activities are available including golf, historical sites, automobile racing, cross-country skiing, swimming, fishing, picnic facilities, hiking trails, Hidden Lake Gardens, and the Michigan International Speedway. Along US-12, there are three State Parks, Hayes State Park, Cambridge State Historic Park, and Onsted State Wildlife

Area. Adrian is also home to the Croswell Opera House and the Adrian Symphony.

#### Landscape Patterns

The majority of Lenawee County lies equally within two regional landscape ecosystems. The northwestern half of the county contains long, narrow bands of end and ground moraines with relatively low slopes. This area has few lakes with two major rivers, the Huron and Raisin. In contrast, the southeastern half of the county has relatively steep sloped end-moraine ridges surrounded by broad expanses of outwash sands. There are also many lakes and wetlands. The headwaters of many major rivers originate in this regional ecosystem. These include the Huron, Grand, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Rivers.

Prior to settlement, these ecosystems supported a variety of vegetation types including, oak-hickory, beech-sugar maple, and deciduous forests, oak savanna, hardwood swamps, prairie fens and bogs. Most of the pre-settlement vegetation has been disturbed by human activity or converted to agriculture. Entering from the north through the City of Clinton, US-12 extends across the northern portion of Lenawee County. Few agricultural views are found along US-12 in the county because the relatively hilly landscape limits both agricultural development and views from the road. Instead, US-12 is interspersed natural areas, rural residential, and recreational opportunities to the western county border.



## Resource Analysis

- Of the sites that were analyzed in the County, eight sites are listed on the State or National Register. The Lancaster House/Bauer Manor, Frame Walker Tavern, and St. Michaels Episcopal Church are on the National Register. The Clinton Historic Business District, Clinton Inn, Smith-Kimball Community Center, Clinton Woolen Mill, and St. Joseph Shrine are on the State Register.
- The area has several strong interpretive themes (Migration/Settlement, Transportation, Auto Tourism, Agriculture and Industry) and a good number of the selected sites are accessible to the public. While historic sites are somewhat concentrated in Clinton, the area is fortunate to have lakes, parks, taverns, as well as 20<sup>th</sup> century tourist spots. Corridor continuity appears strong. The intersections of several north-south highways throughout the county provide excellent access.
- Opened in 1838, Walker Tavern, now a well-interpreted period museum that highlights the Tavern's original use as a hotel, is part of a museum complex that includes two additional buildings. New traffic circulation patterns designed to bring more visitors to the museum complex need to be carefully evaluated relative to potential traffic conflicts with Michigan International Speedway (MIS) events.
- Inns and stagecoach stops (the Old Stagehouse in Clinton, Lancaster

House/Bauer Manor, and Walker Tavern) illustrate themes of 19<sup>th</sup> century transportation and migration. Bernie's Tourists Cabins provide interesting contrast as 20<sup>th</sup> century accommodations for auto tourists. Whereas inns are valued as historic resources and often restored, Bernie's could be easily forgotten and lost.

- Settled in 1829, Clinton offers a traditional downtown that serves travelers and local residents and primarily provides examples of the Italianate style although the Smith-Kimball Community Center, just south of US-12, is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style. Ongoing streetscape improvements will add a variety of aesthetic features that will enhance the downtown appearance.
- In Clinton, the Atlas Mill and Clinton Woolen Mill are two examples of the relationship between farming and early industry. The work of the Atlas Mill actively continues the agricultural connection with local farmers, however, the Woolen Mill is presently used as a warehouse and seems more obviously threatened with decay or demolition unless an adaptive re-use can be found. The strategic location of the Clinton Woolen Mill Buildings adjacent to downtown, the River Raisin, and US-12 make it a prime candidate for this type of restoration strategy.
- St. Joseph Shrine, with its unique Spanish mission style architecture, may be an appealing stop for travelers. Those who

stop will be delighted to find an extraordinarily designed Stations of the Cross showcasing the unique naturalistic artwork of George Cardoso and Ralph Carona. Promoting the Shrine could be paired with McCourtie Park, which also includes many examples of this unusual craft style.

- The Lancaster House/Bauer Manor is very visible, accessible, and thematically significant, although vacant and in some disrepair. It may be appropriate to explore restoring it as a Bed and Breakfast and/or restaurant. Commercial trucks and high-speed traffic in front of the manor detract from its ambiance and interfere with views of Evans Lake.
- Hidden Lake Gardens is a wonderful destination likely to appeal to all ages. Although not directly located on US-12, it draws visitors from a wide region. The main entrance on the north side of M-50 would benefit from clearer signage.
- The Irish Hills Towers entice the imagination with a story to be told. If renovated, they would likely become the stop many travelers still remember – a good destination point for views, gifts and a possible lunch or dinner. Their use may be problematic due to accessibility issues and their small square footage.
- The Southern Michigan Railroad building in Clinton fits with the railroad theme found elsewhere on the corridor. It is a small



museum and could be used as a US-12/Clinton Welcome Center.

- Two schoolhouses (Siam and Drake) are a potential interpretive grouping. Siam is important as apparently the only site representing a Native American heritage, however the building is not currently used, and has no surrounding attractions. The contemporary addition, which housed a water business, is very inappropriate. The Enchanted Schoolhouse, a commercial establishment, currently occupies Drake School.
- Numerous outdoor recreation sites in the Irish hills have produced a concentration of tourist spots some of which have structures reminiscent of the pop culture of the 50's and 60's. Many of these are soon to be of an age that will give them historic value. Walter J. Hayes State Park, on Wampler's Lake, provides a variety of outdoor activities including swimming, picnicking, and camping. The Michigan International Speedway (MIS), though not historic, is a popular destination for thousands of race fans whose events stress traffic conditions in this section of US-12.
- St Michael's Episcopal Church and Cemetery on Monroe Pike south of US-12, was consecrated in 1858. William Blackmar donated the land for both the church and the cemetery.
- The Artesian Wells Garage is difficult to interpret and unlikely to attract visitors, as the natural spring that once drew travelers

does not appear to be available. The building has lost most of its late-1940's appeal as a gas station.

## HILLSDALE COUNTY

### County Background

#### History

Hillsdale County, named for its pleasant rolling green hills and valleys (dales), was organized in 1835 with the city of Hillsdale as the county seat. Hillsdale County's recorded history began in 1825 when the Chicago Turnpike (Sauk Trail) was surveyed. Michigan Militia Captain Moses Allen, an enlisted veteran of the War of 1812, was a member of the original survey crew. At the dead-end corner of M-49 and US-12, Captain Allen moved his family from Monroe in 1827, and thus became the first recorded English-speaking white settler in Hillsdale County. His name is perpetuated in the village of Allen, which was originally known as Allen's Prairie. Hillsdale College, located in the City of Hillsdale, was the first Michigan college to admit women and continues to gain a nationwide reputation for academic excellence in the liberal arts and other disciplines.

#### Economy

Due to its fertile soil, Hillsdale County developed primarily as an agricultural area and continues this tradition today. In 1843, Hillsdale's economy was given a boost when the Michigan Southern Railroad, which began in the City of Monroe, became the railway's western end due to a construction delay. Today, despite its

strong agricultural base, over 30% of Hillsdale's workforce is employed in the manufacturing sector. Hillsdale's economic base continues to diversify, with construction, manufacturing, and retail trade accounting for the majority of businesses in the County.

#### Demographics

Hillsdale County covers 617 square miles (394,880 acres) and is an average of 630 feet above Lake Erie and 616 feet above Lake Michigan. In 2002, the population was nearly 47,000. The County's largest city, Hillsdale, is the county seat and has a population of over 8,000 persons. Hillsdale County contains eight school districts and Hillsdale College.

#### Recreation and Tourism

Because of the undulating landscape, Hillsdale County provides ample outdoor recreational opportunities, with over a hundred inland lakes. It is also ecologically important because it includes the headwaters of the Grand, St. Joseph, Kalamazoo, Raisin and Maumee Rivers. Along US-12, several local parks can be found in Allen, Jonesville, and Somerset Center. The 100-acre historic Marble Springs campground can be found in Allen. No State Parks are near US-12, however, the *Lost Nation State Game Area* is on M-99 southeast of the Village of Jonesville and the City of Hillsdale.

#### Landscape Patterns

The boundaries of Hillsdale County lie equally within two regional landscape ecosystems boundaries, contributing to the County's diverse landscape. The northern half of the county has



relatively steep ridges surrounded by lakes and wetlands, and coarse-textured soil. In contrast, the southern half has relatively low slopes dominated by broad ground moraines and lake plains. The fertile loamy soils in this region have resulted in extensive agricultural development. Together, these regional landscapes support a variety of ecosystems, including oak-hickory, beech-sugar maple and deciduous swamp forests, oak savanna, hardwood swamps, prairie fens, and bogs. Hillsdale County is the location for the headwaters of five major rivers that drain into Lake Michigan and Lake Erie. They are the St. Joseph flowing into Lake Michigan, and the St. Joseph of the Maumee, the Kalamazoo, the Grand and the Raisin flowing into Lake Erie. US-12 enters Hillsdale County in the northeastern corner of the county where the landscape is dominated by relatively steep ridges and dotted with numerous lakes and ponds, whose views are partially obscured by forested areas along the road. The road then turns to the southwest through a flatter landscape, which is primarily dominated by agricultural fields, despite passing through the Village of Jonesville.

## Resource Analysis

- Currently the Grosvenor House in Jonesville is the only historically registered (State and National) structure in the county, although, nineteen structures were deemed eligible for the National Register in a 2000 study by Gray and Pape, Inc. McCourtie Park is also on the National Register.

- Many selected sites for this study are residential buildings that provide good examples of a variety of architectural styles. However, while it is important to preserve them, they are not a big public draw. Increasing the number of State or National Register listings would enhance marketing efforts for this section of the corridor, increase community pride, and create tax incentives.
- Prominent business and political figures have lived in this county such as George Smith and O. B. Blackmar, some of the first settlers in the area. This offers good potential to interpret a Political/Social theme. The Smith General Store and farmstead would be interesting if they could be interpreted together.
- In the 2000 Gray and Pape study, the Village of Jonesville was recommended as a National Register eligible Historic District. Jonesville commercial buildings look to be in good condition, and many appear restored. Often the cornices are missing, which is a typical problem with late 1800's Italianate buildings. Another common problem associated with the tall windows of this style is that dropped ceilings block the full window opening, or are filled in so that stock size replacement windows can be installed.
- The Village of Jonesville includes residential and commercial buildings. These could be used to tell the broader story of the development of the village by connecting the story of the business people who lived here,

the houses they built, and the businesses they owned.

- The MDOT Roadside Park in Fayette Township is one of the first in the state. Interpretation is needed on site to relate the park to auto tourism themes and to put it into the context of the US-12 story.
- There is a long stretch of the corridor with little to interpret east of Jonesville. Ways to keep the corridor story interesting in this section may include emphasizing agricultural views, and the proximity of the Moscow Plains church, the 1890's Smith farmstead, and the Union District #1 schoolhouse as exemplary of rural life.
- The Smith general store is an example of a business virtually gone today, but so central to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Current building use is unclear. A general store in this location between cities could be a destination for tourists.
- Fowles Store, a 1913 split-block house, is architecturally unusual. As a hybrid store/house it could tell an interesting story of home-based business (now making a come-back). Otherwise, it is not likely to provide much public draw.
- The northern half of Hillsdale County traversed by US-12 is characterized by the rolling hills created by glaciers. In this section, much of the roadway is tree lined and agricultural views are shorter and more patch work where they are broken up by wetlands and woodlots.



- The many lakes north of US-12 at Somerset Center extend the landscape character of the Irish Hills into the county. US-127, immediately east, is a good connection north into Jackson. While there may be good recreational opportunity to market in this area to bring people to US-12, roadside character in this section is limited to rural residential and individual commercial lots which block much of the view from the road and no signs give indication to attract visitors. Lombard Lake, south of US-12 may also provide untapped opportunity.

## BRANCH COUNTY

### County Background

#### History

Branch County was organized in 1831 shortly after settlers arrived in the Bronson area and was named after John Branch, then Secretary of the Navy under President Andrew Jackson. Branch County grew at a slower rate than the other surrounding counties because of its lack of road and railroad access. With the coming of the "Chicago Road," in the 1840's (now US-12), the area attracted commerce and settlement. The county now enjoys access provided by three major transportation routes, Interstate 69 (I-69), and US-12 and US-27. Cities of Bronson and Coldwater provide excellent examples of turn of the century architecture.

#### Economy

Today, Branch County remains a relatively rural, agricultural area with 70 percent of the land in farms. The Coldwater and Bronson areas are thriving, with several manufacturing facilities including metal fabrication and fishing gear products. The Union City Iron Company, founded in 1847, produced the first iron made from Michigan iron ore. Branch's economic base continues to diversify, with retail, manufacturing, and construction accounting for the majority of businesses in the County.

#### Demographics

Branch County covers 508 square miles and ranks 69<sup>th</sup> out of 83 counties in the State in terms of size. It is largely agricultural although one-third of the work force is engaged in manufacturing, particularly plastics products, fabricated metals, and metal doors, sash, and trim. In 2002, the population was over 46,000 with the City of Coldwater accounting for approximately 28 percent of the total population. Branch County contains three school districts.

#### Recreation and Tourism

Branch County provides ample outdoor and indoor recreational opportunities, with over a hundred inland lakes, two chains of lakes totaling 21 square miles, five golf courses, the Tibbits Opera House in Coldwater, and several annual festivals including Polish Days in Bronson, the Carp Rodeo in Union City, and Applefest in Coldwater. Along US-12, several local parks can be found in the cities of Bronson, Coldwater, and Quincy. No State Parks are near US-12.

#### Landscape Patterns

The majority of Branch County lies within one regional landscape ecosystem, which is broad and flat with numerous lakes, and wetlands. A number of these lakes such as Marble Lake near Quincy, and a large series of chain lakes near Coldwater are close to US-12. Prior to settlement, this ecosystem had large expanses of tallgrass prairie or oak savannah, most of which have been disturbed by human activity or converted to agriculture. Nearly 50 prairies were known to occur in this region, some as large as 20 square miles. The fertile loamy soils in this region led to its extensive agricultural development. Areas of Branch County still contain a variety of ecosystems, including oak savanna, oak and oak-hickory forest, remnants of tallgrass prairie, hardwood swamp, wet prairie, and prairie fen. US-12 bisects Branch County into nearly equal north and south parts. Soon after entering the county from the east, agricultural views to the north give way to the small-town setting of Quincy. The road from Quincy to Coldwater is dotted with low-density residential, an occasional farm, and isolated small businesses until you reach the interchange with Interstate 69 (I-69) where new strip commercial dominates views from the road. Entering the East Coldwater Historic District is an effective transition and welcoming collection of historic homes. Beyond Coldwater to the west, US-12 turns southwest and is primarily a rural landscape with expansive agricultural views to the south.



## Resource Analysis

- Of the sites included in the analysis, seven of the County's historic sites are listed on the State or National Register. The East Chicago Street Historic District in Coldwater, the Coldwater Downtown Historic District, Wing House Museum, and the Old US-12 Bridge are on the National Register. The Jewell House, Tibbits Opera House, and the Branch County District Library are on the State Register. There is opportunity for a strong interpretive cluster on books and education by combining these sites with the Old School House, Fiske School, and the Quincy library.
- Highway commercial development around the US-12/I-69 interchange negatively dominates the eastern approach into Coldwater and gives no indication of the lovely character of the East Chicago Street Historic District east of the City. The District provides an attractive entrance and effective transition into the Coldwater business district, however, it may prove difficult to attract visitors into downtown in the face of the appearance of the interchange. Ways to communicate what's hidden "behind the cover" will be important.
- The integrity and appearance of the East Chicago Street Historic District offer good opportunity for visitor experiences. Walking tours that showcase the district with its 1850's-1900's building styles would likely prove an attractive draw.

- Downtown Coldwater facades are mostly late 19<sup>th</sup> century and in good condition. Its traditional character offers goods and services attractive to local residents and travelers, and its pedestrian-friendly streetscape enhances its appearance and helps to sustain economic viability. In contrast, Quincy and Bronson would benefit from a façade study and guidelines to strengthen the historic integrity of the downtown area where building facades are covered, windows are filled in, and lower storefronts have been modified.
- With few good 20<sup>th</sup> century examples on the corridor, Allen's Root Beer Stand and the Capri Drive-In stand as good illustrations of auto tourism and 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural style. By pairing a visit to Allen's Root Beer Stand with the Capri Drive-In, residents and visitors to the Coldwater area can enjoy a classic 1960's American experience.
- Tibbits Opera House, the Bronson Theater, and the Capri Drive-In may provide similar potential for an Arts and Culture interpretive cluster.
- Downtown Quincy offers few goods and services, yet its proximity to Coldwater, Jonesville and Marble Springs Campground offers an opportunity to attract visitors. Recent streetscape improvements may promote increased pedestrian activity and business revitalization. Adding a restaurant, café, or other shopping as a new business anchor may attract new visitors as marketing

programs relative to the Heritage Route get underway.

- Expansive agricultural views may be seen between Coldwater and Bronson, and west of Bronson to the county line. The Prairie River, in Bronson Township, connects with the pre-settlement landscape in this section of the county.
- Commercial truck traffic detracts from historic downtowns and the scenic agricultural views in the County as elsewhere in the corridor. The driving experience is diminished by the high speed at which vehicles travel along these rural stretches of road and urbanized areas are negatively impacted by the noise and pollution generated by truck traffic.

## ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

### County Background

#### History

Formed in 1829, St. Joseph County derives its name from the river of the same name, named by LaSalle for the patron saint of New France. Original occupants of this area were the so-called "Mound Builders," later the Native American tribes of the Potawatomi and Miami. European settlers were drawn to the fertile prairie lands of this area and eventually displaced the Native Americans. White Pigeon was originally selected as the temporary seat of justice because it was the largest settlement. However, as the county grew, the need for the county seat to occupy a central location became



evident. So, in 1831, the City of Centreville, aptly named for its central position in the county, was named as the county seat. Two north-south routes intersect US-12, M-66 runs through Sturgis, and US-131, which intersects with US-12 just west of White Pigeon and through Constantine to the north. The first stagecoach operated on the Chicago Road from (1831-32) between Tecumseh, White Pigeon and Niles. The first railroads came in 1851.

### **Economy**

St. Joseph County led the United States in production of mint oil and, in fact, any section of the world of equal area. Cultivation of mint started in 1835. After 1850, the county became noted for the raising of peaches, cherries and plums in abundance. Today, both agriculture and industry fuel St. Joseph's economy. Over two-thirds of the land is in farms, almost equally divided between crops and livestock. Farming includes corn for grain, soybeans, wheat, oats, alfalfa, vegetables and hogs. Manufacturing activities include a wide range of products including condensed and evaporated milk, furniture and fixtures, paper products, plastics, fabricated metals, metalworking machinery, and auto-related products. The county also has many lake and river resorts that support a variety of water-related sports and recreation activities.

### **Demographics**

St. Joseph County covers 503 square miles, which makes it the 12<sup>th</sup> smallest county in the State. In 2002, the population was over 62,000, with Sturgis, the largest city in the county having a population over 11,000. St. Joseph County

contains ten public school districts and Glen Oaks Community College in Centreville.

### **Recreation and Tourism**

St. Joseph County provides a wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities, such as boating and fishing on numerous inland lakes and the St. Joseph River. Facilities throughout the county provide for hunting, cross-country skiing, and camping. Along US-12, several local parks can be found in Sturgis and White Pigeon. No State Parks are found near US-12, however, the *Three Rivers State Game Area* is approximately four miles north of Mottville, near the western border of the county.

### **Landscape Patterns**

The majority of St. Joseph County lies within the same regional landscape ecosystem as Branch County, which is broad and flat with numerous lakes, and wetlands. Klinger Lake, just east of White Pigeon, and the Pigeon and St. Joseph Rivers are close to US-12. Prior to settlement, this ecosystem had large expanses of tallgrass prairie or oak savannah, most of which have been lost to human activity or converted to agriculture. The fertile loamy soils in this region have resulted in extensive agricultural development. Like neighboring Branch County, areas of St. Joseph County still support a variety of ecosystems, including oak savanna, oak and oak-hickory forest, remnants of tallgrass prairie, hardwood swamp, wet prairie, and prairie fen. US-12 extends along the southern end of the county never more than four miles north of the Indiana state line. Agricultural views are prevalent on both sides of the road within the first few miles of the eastern county line. Farms

disappear as the approach to Sturgis becomes dotted with single-family homes amidst rolling topography. West of Sturgis to the county line, the landscape along US-12 consists primarily of long-memorable agricultural views. The Pigeon and St. Joseph Rivers roughly parallel the Corridor to the south and north, respectively.

### **Resource Analysis**

- The county has several "firsts" or "bests" important to call out programmatically, such as the oldest incorporated village, the first land office, and the longest camelback bridge in Michigan.
- The beautiful camelback architecture of the Mottville Bridge and its adjacent restaurant offer a nice stopping point on the St. Joseph River that could be paired with a nearby outdoor recreation stop at Sweet Road Natural Area (Cass County).
- The potential for a water recreation trail connection between White Pigeon and Mottville or Constantine and Mottville on the Pigeon and/or St. Joseph Rivers should be explored. The proximity of US-131 would support easy access.
- Downtown Sturgis offers travel amenities and bits of Sturgis history. For the most part, downtown building facades appear to represent good 19<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles. However, alterations in some, such as windows filled in and facades covered, lower their style integrity. Facade guidelines may prove beneficial. Its tree-lined



streetscape helps create a positive downtown identity, although heavy traffic is intrusive.

- This section of US-12 is one of the farthest from I-94. Indiana travelers and adjacent counties may provide a stronger market than a larger regional draw.
- The historic status of Bylers Farm Market and the Klinger Country Club are not clear. However, Bylers appears to offer a good halfway stop between Sturgis and White Pigeon.
- Views from the road are generally agricultural and longest to the south. These are most spectacular west of Shimmel Road where they extend up to at least two miles.
- Lake views are not clear from the road. River views are obvious only at their crossing. Traffic typically moves too quickly for more than a brief glance.
- The M-66 southbound/US-12 intersection is heavily commercialized and very busy. Its entry from the north directly into central downtown Sturgis is offset from its southbound exit and likely the primary contributor to the downtown traffic that detracts from a more positive ambiance.
- The geographic significance of Halfway Road is likely to be interesting to visitors and would benefit from better signage.
- In spite of the corridor's Native American history, it is represented at few sites on the corridor. While the burial site of Chief White

Pigeon is culturally significant, the historical context of the site is almost completely lost due to the commercialization that surrounds it. Landscape improvements that increase its presence and enhance its separation should be considered.

- As an older town, White Pigeon's smaller scale buildings are an interesting contrast to the later three-story Italianate buildings seen elsewhere on the corridor.

## CASS COUNTY

### County Background

#### History

Cass County was organized in 1829 and named after the former Territorial Governor of the Michigan Territory, Lewis Cass. In addition to being Territorial Governor, Cass' political accomplishments were many, including General in the U.S. Army during the War of 1812, U.S. Secretary of War, U.S. Minister to France, candidate for President of the United States, and U.S. Secretary of State. Before European settlement in the 1820s, three bands of Potawatomi Indians inhabited the area of Cass County. The Underground Railroad was active during the Civil War with the William Jones House, near Cassopolis, considered the "end of the line" for many slaves. US-12 runs along the southern portion of the county, very close to the Indiana border passing through the Village of Edwardsburg then turning north towards Niles in Berrien County before exiting the county.

#### Economy

Over 60 percent of the land in Cass County is used for agricultural production and ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the state for agricultural receipts. Also important are pork production, and soybeans and corn. Service industries are also an important component of Cass' County economy, as is manufacturing, particularly wood products, plastics, and heating and refrigeration equipment. The Dowagiac Municipal Airport in the City of Dowagiac supports local industry.

#### Demographics

The county, 10<sup>th</sup> smallest in the state, covers 496 square miles. It has over 50,000 residents, and Dowagiac, its largest urban center in the County's northwest corner, has 6,000 residents. The county also contains four villages and 15 townships. Southwestern Michigan College (Niles Campus) is just past the county line. White settlers began populating Cass County in the 1820's displacing most of the indigenous Potawatomi. However, some remained in Cass County and were allowed to purchase 1,000 acres of land in what is now Silver Creek Township. Many descendants of this population remain today.

#### Recreation and Tourism

Cass County is a popular destination for those seeking outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, camping, boating, hiking, and bird watching. The County contains over 250 lakes and several nature preserves such as the Sweet Road Natural Area on the far eastern edge of the county, which is bisected by US-12. No State Parks are located near US-12, although



several State Game Areas are located north of US-12 near M-40 and M-60.

### Landscape Patterns

Most of Cass County's landscape is broad, flat outwash plain with numerous small lakes, and wetlands divided by major streams (St. Joseph and Kalamazoo Rivers). A number of these lakes such as Eagle, Christiana and Long Lake, are close to US-12. Prior to settlement, Cass County had large expanses of tallgrass prairie and oak savannah. Since settlement, most prairies and wetlands have been converted to agriculture. Entering the county from the east, views from US-12 are enclosed by the dense forested areas of the Sweet Road Natural Area but open up traveling west. US-12 is generally elevated above long, expansive farmland views predominately to the south. The western portion of Cass County includes denser rural residential development that fronts the road and blocks rural views as US-12 turns north toward the City of Niles, in Berrien County.

### Resource Analysis

- Two sites in Cass County, the District 5 Schoolhouse and Smith's Chapel, are on the National Register.
- Based on our data, Edwardsburg, the major town center on the Corridor for the County, includes one historic site, an antique shop and a small historical museum. Their effectiveness as a tourist draw would benefit from adding another public site to reinforce the significance of the town and give

travelers an increased reason to stop. Niles, immediately west of the Berrien County line, likely acts as the primary destination point for the area. The US-12/M-60 interchange is a key transition node.

- There are few destination sites in the county, as many are privately owned. Rather, the travel experience is one of appreciating the rural landscape from the car. Because of this, flyers, the Web site, or some other means of interpreting the sites is necessary.
- Most historic features listed for the county such as the one room schoolhouse, rural chapel, and farmhouses represent rural life. Good interpretive themes for this area may be "Agriculture and Industry" and/or "Migration and Settlement."
- While the underground railroad stop has cultural significance, it is not open to the public or close to US-12, so has little potential as a destination.
- Although the selected houses are not architecturally stunning in terms of a particular style or size, their strength lies in their rural context and, by association, their representation of rural life. The means of communicating this and bringing the experience to life for the visitor will be key.
- With so few public areas with historic connections available for travelers in the county, consider placing historic information at other public access points such as the Sweet Road Natural Area, as it is one of the

few sites in the county where people can stop.

- According to records, the Bucklen house is not lived in. If it could be opened to the public, it would provide a needed destination and interpretive location for the county.
- Background data mentions 1950's Holiday Cottages near Eagle Lake, which may provide a good example of Auto Tourism and be a popular seasonal destination for visitors from as far away as Chicago.
- Sweet Road Natural Area provides good recreational tie-in with nearby Mottville Canoe Livery but location from US-12 is not marked and there is no obvious entrance or trailhead.
- Indications of nearby lakes such as Christiana, Eagle or Long in Michigan and Simonton in Indiana are not clear from the road although the neat fence line of Eagle Lake Road north of US-12 adds a positive visual clue of care.
- Long views toward Christiana Creek are nice from US-12. New development seen in the area approaching Bucklen House seems to be expanding along Adamsville Road and near the Indiana border. With residential and commercial development dispersed across the corridor, Cass's landscape character is largely rural residential. Development pressure seems likely from the south in Indiana.
- Existing topography and the many residences that front US-12 east of



Edwardsburg and approaching Niles west of Fir Road block views from the road and keep the eye of the traveler focused on the corridor rather than the landscape.

## BERRIEN COUNTY

### County Background

#### History

Berrien County, named after former U.S. Attorney General John Berrien, was organized in 1829. Jacques Marquette was the first European to visit the area, though it was Rene La Salle who had the earliest impact. Arriving in 1679, La Salle built Fort Miami at the mouth of the St. Joseph River, the present site of St. Joseph. At the end of the seventeenth century the French built Fort St. Joseph at the present site of Niles. Thereafter the county remained unsettled until 1823, when the first permanent settler arrived. During the 1830s settlers began to pour into the area, peacefully coexisting with the Native Americans.

#### Economy

Berrien County's excellent location on Lake Michigan, and strategic location between Chicago, Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Indianapolis, is served by major interstate highways, airports, rail transportation, and shipping. This makes Berrien County a prime market for business, industry, and tourism and contributes to the diversification of the economic base. Its substantial and wide variety of agriculture has established locally grown crops as major attractions for tourists and food

processors. Peaches were being harvested as early as 1834 and today's impressive fruit industry was launched in 1839 with the first shipment of peaches to Chicago. The natural beauty of the County and 50 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline make Berrien County a choice destination for tourists, artists, and naturalists.

#### Demographics

In 2002, the population of Berrien County was over 162,000, with Niles, the largest city in the county having a population over 12,000. Berrien County contains 15 public school districts, Lake Michigan College, Andrews University, and Southwestern Michigan College (Dowagiac Campus).

#### Recreation and Tourism

With fifty miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, natural areas, rivers, unique urban centers, and 306 inland lakes, Berrien County has a wide range of outdoor and indoor recreational opportunities. Facilities throughout the county provide for hunting, cross-country skiing, and camping. Along US-12, several local parks can be found in Niles, Buchanan, and Three Oaks. *Warren Dunes State Park* and *Warren Woods* provide naturalists some of the State's best examples of beech-sugar maple forests.

#### Landscape Patterns

The majority of Berrien County lies equally within two regional landscape ecosystem boundaries, which contributes to the County's diverse landscape. The ecosystem that dominates the eastern half of the county is a 10-

20 mile wide band of historic beach ridges that run parallel to Lake Michigan. The western half consists of sand dunes up to 200 feet high and 1 to 3 miles wide along the Lake Michigan shore. These landscapes support a variety of ecosystems, including beech-sugar maple, white oak, and oak-hickory forests.

From the east, US-12 enters Berrien County just south of Niles and extends along the southern end of the county very near the Indiana state line. Between Niles and Buchanan there are nice agricultural views to the south of US-12. From the west side of Buchanan to the west side of Galien, the landscape becomes hilly offering scenic views from the road. The landscape becomes flatter and agricultural views are more prevalent as the road approaches Three Oaks and continues west into New Buffalo.

### Resource Analysis

- The broad regional draw of Lake Michigan beaches is a powerful influence on the amenities available to travelers. Western Berrien County offers galleries, restaurants, shops and many rental units. Three Oaks is close enough to capitalize on these advantages expanding the area attractive to tourists. Historically and currently the area thrives because of the mix of natural and built sites. Preserving these features in the face of development pressure is key.
- The convergence of US-12, I-94, and the Red Arrow Highway at New Buffalo focuses travel to the area, and there is a good



cluster of transportation sites in the county that could be linked through programmatic interpretive elements.

- Architectural resources in the county are strong with three buildings on the National Register and three that are state registered. The historic themes of agriculture and industry (Pears Mill, Chapin House), transportation (Michigan Central Railroad, the Railroad Museum, Three Oaks Spokes Museum), and migration and settlement (Fort St. Joseph, Moccasin Bluff, and cemeteries) are well represented. Chapin House and the Niles Railroad station are well known and open to the public. The sites need supporting amenities and activities nearby to keep people in the area.
- The travel rhythm between Niles-Buchanan-Galien-Three Oaks and New Buffalo is notable and most clearly demonstrates historical patterns of travel and settlement of anywhere in the corridor. Interpretive elements should look for ways to compare and contrast these cities and reinforce the chain.
- There are several unique or exemplary architectural building types in the county. The Chapin House and the Michigan Central Railroad in Niles are stunning, high quality examples of their style. Pears Mill, Spring Creek School, and the structure over the railroad line in New Buffalo are classic vernacular forms. Since a functioning mill such as Pears Mill is rare, finding ways to

use the property more regularly would enhance its market draw.

- The State Line Rest Lodge is thematically significant, however current retail use does not indicate the history of the site. It would be an ideal place to provide welcome, interpretation and resource information about specific sites along the corridor.
- While Moccasin Bluff and Fort St. Joseph are perhaps the most significant cultural sites in the county, the Fort was difficult to find and the Bluff could not be located. Because of their hard-to-find locations, programmatic interpretation will be important to conveying their value.
- The open, flat expanses of the areas known as Elm Valley east of Three Oaks and to a lesser extent of Portage Prairie, southwest of Niles, provide beautiful long views of the agricultural landscape of southwest Michigan. Their names are evocative of the native plant communities found by early settlers.
- Views of the rolling hills and smaller fields near Galien derive from the landscape differences created by the ridgeline that travels on a northeast-southwest axis through Galien Township. These sections of the road are rolling and wooded, reminiscent of the forests that once covered most of Michigan.

## TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

### Introduction

A general review of the existing traffic conditions for the US-12 Heritage Trail was performed utilizing traffic data provided by MDOT. Data provided for various sections along the eight county corridor included: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), Level of Service (LOS) and the percent of sight restriction on the road based on local topography, etc. LOS is a qualitative measure of the operational conditions within a traffic stream as perceived by the motorist. Categories range from ratings of LOS A through LOS F. LOS A represents the best operating condition and LOS F essentially represents the functional failure of the roadway in terms of traffic movement. The typical minimum LOS desired for transportation improvements is LOS D for rural roadways and LOS E for urban roadways.

The following is a brief overview of the existing traffic conditions in each of the eight counties along the corridor and where US-12's designation as a historic heritage route is likely to have effect:

### Berrien County

The Level of Service (LOS) for the county is generally A or B, however, between Three Oaks and Galien and east of Galien to Redbud Trail, the (LOS) is D. Although Three Oaks is becoming a more popular destination point, no historic sites discussed in the Comprehensive Management Plan are expected to markedly affect traffic conditions at this time. Conditions should continue to be monitored between



Redbud Trail and New Buffalo for increases in tourist traffic to either Three Oaks or Buchanan

### **Cass County**

The Level of Service (LOS) for US -12 in Cass County varies from A to D with the majority of the route Level C or better. A Level of Service D exists at the US-12 junction with M-62 and M-205, in part due to sight restrictions at these intersections. Growing development pressure from Elkhart County in Indiana is likely to continue in this section of US-12. This is likely to have continued negative impact on the LOS surrounding Edwardsburg. This condition should be monitored and evaluated for its possible negative impact on the historic character of this section of US-12. Because of the growth pressure, this section of US -12 in Cass County would benefit from having design guidelines to guide growth in this area.

### **St. Joseph County**

The Level of Service (LOS) for the county varies from A to E with the majority of the route at an LOS C or B. An LOS E occurs at the west boundary of Sturgis, and an LOS D between Franks Avenue and Plumb School Road. The US-131 intersection, a key transition point for north-south travelers onto US-12, also demonstrates LOS conditions of D and E between the Indiana state line and Dickinson Road north of White Pigeon. Chief Wahbememe Park is located in the northwest corner of this intersection and it is already isolated by the traffic and commercial development that surrounds it.

The city of Sturgis is well located to serve as an attractive stop between Coldwater and Niles. The impact of the M-66 traffic and continued growth on its historic character should continue to be monitored. This is also a corridor section that would benefit from having design guidelines and planning that consider traffic impacts and circulation. No other historic sites evaluated for the county in this plan are expected to generate sufficient draw to affect traffic conditions at this time.

### **Branch County**

Branch County's Level of Service (LOS) on US-12 varies from A to F. The majority of the route functions at an LOS A or B, however, the section from Willowbrook to the east city line of Coldwater has a Level of Service of F. An LOS of E exists between Coldwater and Quincy and from the junction of M-86 to Coldwater Road.

Coldwater, located at the juncture of I-69 and US-12, is likely to become a key destination-transition point for the US-12 Heritage Trail. In addition, there is currently a grass roots effort to nominate I-69 in Branch and Calhoun counties as a Recreation Heritage Route in Michigan. These designations have the potential to bring further traffic to the Coldwater area. The poor LOS ratings east and west of Coldwater reflect the growth of the city and the influence of the commercial shopping immediately east of I-69, which is also likely to be attractive to the Quincy community. In these sections of the road, it is likely that city growth is outpacing road capacity. How development is implemented, such as minimizing curb cuts and using access roads, may help address these conditions. Design

guidelines that guide development in these areas in ways that are sensitive to the historic nature of US-12 as well as the increasing traffic in this section of the corridor will be critical.

### **Hillsdale County**

The Level of Service on US -12 in Hillsdale County varies from B to E with the longest stretches of the corridor having an LOS of D or E. These sections include from the:

- West county line to the western limit of Allen;
- Junction of M-49 south to the western limit of the Village of Jonesville; and
- Eastern limit of Jonesville to the eastern county line.

A primary reason for the degraded LOS within Hillsdale County are the sight restrictions, which vary between 19 to 60 percent in this area as influenced by the contour of the road. The section of the route between Moscow and the Hillsdale/Lenawee county line has a LOS of E. Likewise, from the west county line (Branch/Hillsdale) to the west city line of Allen the LOS is also E. Between the junction with M-49 and M-99 the LOS is D.

This section of US-12 should be closely monitored for potential increased conflicts resulting from tourist traffic. The antiquing center that is developing at Allen is likely to be one of the first locations to benefit from Historic Heritage Trail designation as it, like the city of Coldwater, is an attractive stopping point with an established identity of interest to tourists. In



addition, McCourtie Park in Somerset Center, is a site that while little used or advertised at the present time, would be likely to draw visitors for its unique craftsmanship. Coupled with the farm market north on Jackson Road and the George Smith General Store, now Oak Hill Antiques, on Somerset Road, this grouping will make an attractive stop.

### **Lenawee County**

Like Hillsdale County, the Level of Service (LOS) in Lenawee County varies from A to E with long stretches of the corridor rated D or E. These sections include everything along US-12 in the county except within the city of Clinton. Generally the decreased LOS in these areas is attributed to the high percentage of sight restrictions that range from 45 to 97 percent at various locations along the corridor.

This is also a county that may benefit early from Heritage Trail designation with increased tourist traffic to Walter J. Hayes State Park, Onstead State Game Area and the many lakes along the corridor. In addition, there are a number of older tourist destinations such as Mystery Hill, the Stage Coach stop and Golden Nugget which, although not discussed in this report, may also benefit from increased traffic as a result of the heritage trail designation.

The Walker Tavern Museum, at the juncture of M-50 and US-12 is proposed as a US-12 Heritage Trail Welcome Center. In addition, there has been some interest voiced in exploring the possibility of establishing an entrance directly on US-12. The feasibility of this concept

must be explored with MDOT relative to existing and projected traffic conditions, particularly in view of the increased traffic generated by the Michigan International Speedway every racing season.

This roadway section should continue to be closely evaluated for potential increased conflicts resulting from increased tourist traffic following designation. This is an area that would benefit by implementing design strategies that would improve traffic efficiencies such as minimized curb cuts.

### **Washtenaw County**

The Level of Service (LOS) for Washtenaw County varies from A to F. A significant section of the route east of Saline between Industrial Drive and Munger Road has an LOS rating of F. An Environmental Assessment has been completed recently to evaluate the impact of widening the road in this section. Increased traffic and growth pressure from Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti has resulted in conditions where volume exceeds the capacity of the roadway by as much as a factor of 2. Site restrictions, that generally range from 45 to 97 percent, are also a factor. The proposed widening will impact several historic properties.

With the exception of Schuyler Mill, most historic destinations for the county are within the city limits of Saline and Ypsilanti. Because of the existing high traffic load, Heritage Trail designation is not expected to have a noticeable impact.

### **Wayne County**

In Wayne County, the Level of Service (LOS) varies from A to F with the majority of the roadway performing at an LOS of C or better. The eastbound section between Belleville Road and the junction with I-275 has an LOS of F. Sections having an LOS of E, include the westbound section from Belleville road to the I-275 junction and at the beginning of the divided section near junction with M-39.

Most sections of US-12 in Wayne County that are likely to have high tourist draw are well-known destinations located in urban areas where LOS ratings are generally good. These include such attractions as Fair Lane, Greenfield Village, the Dearborn Historic Museum and Corktown. Evaluating traffic effects as other structures are considered for renovation such as the Michigan Central Railroad Station will be an important aspect of their development.

## **WAYFINDING ANALYSIS**

### **Introduction**

The historic attractions of the US-12 Heritage Trail range from well-recognized and enjoyed tourist attractions, such as the Henry Ford, to unknown private residences, such as the underground railroad stop in Cass County; from recognizable structures directly on the highway, such as the Capri Drive-in, to little known cemeteries off the beaten track; and from public spaces already visited by tourists to old favorites in need of serious renovation effort before being safe or inviting for use.



In addition to considering how best to address the range of conditions presented by the historic sites discussed in this management plan, the analysis considered the following goals for the way-finding program:

- To use signage to increase the traveler's awareness of the US-12 Heritage Trail in the region as bounded by I-94 in Michigan and I-80/90 in Indiana;
- To create a consistent, visible presence along the length of US-12 that improves the travelers recognition of the corridor as a historic Heritage Route;
- To improve a traveler's experience when visiting US-12 historic sites by making them easier to find; and
- To simplify the ability of a traveler to respond to impulse upon seeing a sign and being made aware of an attraction that was previously unknown.

## Methods

State highway maps for Indiana and Michigan were evaluated for major north-south connections between US-12 and other major east-west interstate highways, such as I-80/90 in Indiana and I-94. This approach was based on the assumption that many travelers may still use these highways to get to US-12, particularly if traveling longer distances such as from Chicago, Detroit or Lansing. In these instances, US-12 is more likely a destination rather than part of the journey.

This upper level analysis was interpreted in conjunction with 1) input from the US-12



Heritage Trail Council received throughout the project, 2) the knowledge gained in traveling and researching the corridor during field inventory work, 3) the historic theme maps which help provide an understanding of where groupings of attractions may cluster and 4) an assessment of the appropriateness of each site to welcome visitors.

## Preliminary Recommendations

In order to best accomplish the program's stated goals, four levels of signage will be introduced as funding and the ability to do so, permit. With the exception of the 1<sup>st</sup> level signage, these signs are located within the highway right-of-way. These include:

- 4<sup>th</sup> level: Primary Introduction
- 3<sup>rd</sup> level: Secondary Introduction
- 2<sup>nd</sup> level: Directional
- 1<sup>st</sup> level: Attractions

### 4<sup>th</sup> level: Primary Introduction – Existing Highway Signs.

US-12 is bisected by major north-south corridors at fairly regular intervals. These roadways include (from east to west) M-39, US-24, I-275, US-23, US-127, I-69, US-131, and US-31. With the exception of billboards outside of the right-of-way, most of these highways typically do not permit signage other than standard directional signs and logo signs that may be used by highway-oriented businesses.

The intent of considering fourth level, primary introduction signage for these roads is to begin to introduce travelers in the region to the presence of the US-12 Heritage Trail while

traveling on interstate highways in southern Michigan and northern Indiana. Currently US-12 has little to no visibility to travelers on these roadways. Although this venue is closely regulated out of safety concerns, it may be possible to add or change language on the highway directional signs at key interchanges. Examples might include changing "Coldwater" to read "Coldwater/US-12 Heritage Trail."

### 3<sup>rd</sup> level: Secondary Introduction – New signage

These secondary introduction signs are also intended to introduce the corridor and historic features on well traveled US or state highways at distances beyond which the Tourist Oriented Directional Sign Program discussed in Appendix B is permitted. State roadways such as Route 60, M-50, M-52, Route 66 and M99 are all more rural highways that connect to US-12 near key population centers or historic sites such as Sturgis, Coldwater, Clinton, Jonesville and Niles.

This level may be one of the best uses of billboard signing placed on private property. The MDOT and US-12 Heritage Trail Council should develop a coordinated approach that uses a historic billboard style placed at discreet locations to advertise the Heritage Trail and some of its amenities. This program must be developed according to ordinance restrictions of the local townships.

The City of Kingman Arizona on Route 66 has published the city's wayfinding plan on the worldwide web. While much of it may not apply to the corridor-wide signage issues of US-12,

and much of it is not designed with historic character, the reader may view several types of signage styles that are illustrative of what could be done. To view a billboard recommendation, see <http://ci.kingman.az.us/docs/wayfinding/wayfinding.htm>.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> level: Directional Signs

Michigan's Tourist Oriented Direction Sign program (TODS) discussed in Appendix B as an alternative to billboards, is most applicable at this level of travel signage. TODS signs are used on rural state non-freeways outside of incorporated cities or villages, and are not intended to be located at expressway/freeway interchanges. They may be used by area businesses to list the business name, travel direction and mileage. They may be placed along the highway, or along intersecting rural state roads up to 10 miles from the attraction being advertised.

Based on the field inventory work, signs for historic attractions are absent or minimal, even for fairly well known locations. Almost without exception, US-12 historic sites that will be considered major tourist attractions will benefit from the TODS program. Among others, these include St. Anne Church, Walker Tavern, McCourtie Park, Mottville Bridge, US-12 Welcome Centers and small communities not directly on US-12, such as Buchanan and downtown Three Oaks.

At this level, the US-12 Heritage Trail logo becomes an important, recognizable symbol with which to communicate that the business,



museum, or district being advertised is part of the Heritage Trail. The Council should work with Michigan Logos, Inc, who manages the program, to confirm if the logo may be shown in addition to the name of the location. They may be contacted by calling 1-888-645-6467. Requirements of the TODS program will dictate where they are placed.

### Facts about the TODS program...

- Typically installed on state highways within ½ mile of intersections with other state highways or local roads;
- Distance limit: up to 10 miles from the attraction;
- Requires a major portion of the business activity's income or visitors during normal season be from motorists not residing in the area;
- Attendance must be at least 2,000 visitors in a consecutive 12-month period; and
- Costs \$360/year/sign plus \$120/year/trailblazer.

### 1<sup>st</sup> level: Attraction Signs (Kiosks, Banners, Welcome Centers, Business signs)

A variety of on-premises sign styles may be used at this primary level to advertise individual US-12 attractions. However, while they may be individualized, the more their style is graphically similar, the easier it will be for the traveler to recognize at a glance their connection to the US-12 Heritage Trail. While some historic locations were signed on US-12, these were not

always clear and a number were not signed. Bringing the public to these sites, if desired, will require an increased level of signage.

A within right-of-way signage program for local roads will also be important to bring tourists to sites not directly on US-12. The Council will need to work with county road commissions and others to understand limitations in size and placement, as many of these will be posted within the right-of-way. For example, several historic locations could not be found, such as Moccasin Bluff. Others were quite difficult even with the benefit of MapQuest and even though they were often public places. Those, among others, that would benefit from additional signage include the birthplace of Henry Ford, the old Eloise County Hospital, McCourtie Park and Sweet Road Natural Area.

Local tour maps of near-by sights in kiosks at US-12 Welcome Centers would also be helpful. Currently, suggested Welcome Center locations include the State Line Rest Area in Berrien County and the Walker Tavern in Lenawee County. The Council should also consider locating centers in Dearborn, perhaps at the Commandant's Headquarters and somewhere in Coldwater. With its location at US-12 and I-69, it is an ideal stop to welcome people on to US-12.

On-premises signs done in keeping with historical styles may also prove helpful, particularly at commercial locations, to attract traffic from the road. For many locations however, posted state and national Register

signs are good locators and do not compete with the structures they describe.

## Conclusion

There is need for a variety of signs to bring travelers to US-12, particularly those who will be attracted to a particular location or specific event. These recommendations are preliminary and should be confirmed by a more formally defined study that actively involves MDOT, representatives of the US-12 historic properties (particularly those with public programs) and the US-12 Heritage Trail Council.

New signage, particularly first and third level signs, should be carefully researched to be historically appropriate and referenced to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Appendix C).

## MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION US-12 AESTHETIC PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

### Introduction

In 2000, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) administered a statewide inventory of potential aesthetic project opportunities and scenic heritage routes to objectively identify key scenic assets along the State's trunklines including US-12.

The Aesthetic Project Opportunities Inventory identified areas adjacent to trunklines that would allow for the preservation, protection, and

enhancement of aesthetic resources. For each area, specific recommendations were provided, including landscaping within the right-of-way, scenic easement acquisition, structure removal, vegetation management, streetscaping, corridor/site management plans, landform improvements, structural improvements, and scenic turn-out development.

A Scenic Heritage Route designation recognizes the aesthetic quality of specific corridors and provides a means to help protect, preserve, and enhance the resources within and adjacent to the trunkline right-of-way. Five criteria, vividness, intactness, unity, viewshed, and uniqueness, were used to assess the visual quality and compositional merit of the road, the immediate right-of-way, and views of the adjacent landscape. The roadway also must be of reasonable uninterrupted length with a logical beginning and end.

### US-12 Aesthetic Opportunities

Three different consulting firms consisting of professional landscape architects registered with the State of Michigan surveyed nearly 10,000 miles of roads. Statewide, a total of 2,158 aesthetic project opportunities were identified, 40 of which were located along US-12. Completion of these projects will also support US-12's Historic Heritage Trail nomination by maintaining/improving the aesthetic character of the roadway.

A total of 96 Scenic Heritage Route candidates totaling 2,544 miles, were identified across the state. Only one candidate along US-12, a

19.91-mile stretch from White Pigeon in St. Joseph County east to the Branch County line, was recommended for scenic heritage route designation independent of the proposal to designate the entire US-12 corridor as a historic heritage route. According to survey results, this section of US-12 is a, "pleasant drive with gently rolling topography and nice road curvature" with a "nice mosaic of cropland, woods, farmsteads, and residences." However, designation of this segment as a Scenic Heritage Route may be contingent upon completion of six identified recommended aesthetic improvement projects.

The 40 recommended projects and the section of US-12 recommended for potential Scenic Heritage Route status are shown on the MDOT Aesthetics Survey map at the end of this section.

## HISTORICAL THEMES

### Introduction

The Historic Context of US-12 is not necessarily divided into clear-cut periods. Context includes time periods, styles, *and* ideas. These overlap and are intertwined. Upon review, there are some over-arching concepts that seem to unify the periods and interpretive themes, presented by the 129 sites analyzed in this document. They cross over the periods and city boundaries. It is important to avoid chopping the corridor into little thematic bits, or to force the division of county lines onto the developmental history.



An appropriate unifying concept simplifies prioritization and project selection because one can step back and ask, “How does this particular project add to the corridor *as a whole?*” Similarly, “how does this particular interpretive theme relate to the corridor as a whole?” *A history of movement and connection* is the idea that distinguishes US-12, and makes it a candidate for Historic Heritage Route designation. The idea is captured in the phrase “From Pathway to Highway.” The strength of the corridor is in the story of its evolution, from a prehistoric mastodon path to Highway US-12: the changes to it, the people that traveled it, the events that occurred on it, and the places that developed along it.

### Interpretive Themes

For this corridor, interpretive themes are a natural outgrowth of the use of US-12 as a path for hundreds of years. In its over 200 miles and at least 300-year history, virtually any story can be found and told. The goal of this analysis was to find the strongest themes that have a critical mass of sites that emphasize the corridor’s unique and designation-worthy qualities. These themes were intentionally chosen for their inclusiveness and ability to encourage a general interpretation of the corridor yet emphasize the corridor’s unique qualities. The selected themes cross time periods, and geographic and political boundaries. Themes were also designed to encourage a flexible, interpretive plan. For instance, the theme “Migration and Settlement” applies to multiple time periods and includes stories and sites-such as Moccasin Bluff, the White Pigeon Land Office and Fort St. Joseph-



related to travel, settlements, ethnic diversity, land division, and more.

These preliminary themes were drawn from the draft application, meetings with the Council, and review of very basic historic documentation about the selected sites discussed in this report. They are only a fraction of the historic fabric on the corridor, and the historic analysis is fairly cursory. Seven themes were chosen for their ability to generate more general interpretations, to which additional sites or extensive research could be added. They are:

- Migration and Settlement;
- Agriculture and Industry;
- Recreation and Tourism;
- Transportation Developments;
- Social, Political and Institutional History;
- Art and Architecture; and
- First, Most or Unusual

Each theme is discussed in more detail in the following pages. The historic sites in each county were matched to historic themes. The information is presented in table format by county and mapped by theme.

### Theme 1: Migration and Settlement

This theme explains the history of migration, immigration, and settlement along the trail. It includes pre-history and natural history, as well as the history of European occupation and settlers, pre- and post-statehood.

#### *Prehistory and Natural History*

#### Ideas

- Geography Geology
  - Paleontology
  - Indigenous people
  - Migratory routes
  
  - Topographic features
- European Migration*

#### Ideas

- European occupation
- Fur trade sites
- French
  
- German
- Irish
- Polish/Slavic
- Maltese
- Hispanic
- Other

#### *Settling Michigan*

#### Ideas

- Settlers
- Land division
  
- Erie Canal
  
- Water and land passage
- Ownership
- Ancestry
- Imported culture

#### Features

Mastodon trail  
 Native Burial sites  
 Native trails  
 Nature & animal preserves

#### Features

Encampments  
 Forts  
 Father G. Richard sites  
 First roads

#### Features

Ports  
 Land offices (e.g. White Pigeon)  
 First settlements, earliest homes  
 Cemeteries

**Theme 2: Agriculture and Industry**

This theme illustrates agricultural, rural life and its relationships to industrial developments. The development of the auto industry is included in “Transportation Developments,” but there is also potential for interpreting the extent to which the auto revolution has changed the rural landscape with this theme.

*Agriculture*

<u>Ideas</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhythm of towns and open farmland</li> <li>• Rural lifestyle</li> <li>• Agricultural methods</li> <li>• Harvest</li> <li>• Harnessing Nature’s Power</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farmhouses, barns</li> <li>One-room schoolhouse, One-room chapel</li> <li>Mills</li> <li>Fields, farms, livestock</li> <li>Dams</li> <li>Produce stands</li> <li>Centennial Farms</li> </ul>

*Early Industry*

<u>Ideas</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw materials, natural riches of the area</li> <li>• Change from agriculture to manufacturing</li> <li>• Wool industry</li> <li>• Grain industry</li> <li>• Home industry, family industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Converted barns for industry</li> <li>Converted houses or other</li> <li>Early business organizations</li> <li>Wool mills, gristmills</li> </ul>

*19<sup>th</sup> c Industry*  
(Sites may overlap with “Transportation/Railroad”)

<u>Ideas</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship to transportation</li> <li>• New wealth</li> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Local vs. national goods</li> <li>• Imported styles and ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train stations</li> <li>Fine homes</li> <li>Eclectic, exotic, European architecture</li> <li>General stores</li> </ul>

**Theme 3: Transportation Developments**

This theme explains the various modes of transportation that have developed along the corridor, including travel by foot, stagecoach, train, car, and truck. Shipping and industry are related topics.

*Stagecoach Era*  
(Many of these sites overlap with “Migration and Settlement”)

<u>Ideas</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel hardship</li> <li>• Rest for weary</li> <li>• Hospitality</li> <li>• Rustic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inns</li> <li>Restaurants</li> <li>Horse Barns</li> <li>Carriages, wagons, etc.</li> <li>Multipurpose</li> </ul>

*Railroad*  
(Sites may overlap with “Industry” and “Migration and Settlement”)

<u>Ideas</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport innovations</li> <li>• New wealth</li> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Local vs. national goods</li> <li>• Imported styles and ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train stations</li> <li>Fine homes</li> <li>Eclectic, exotic, European architecture</li> <li>Stores</li> </ul>

*Rise of the Auto*  
(Sites may overlap with “Recreation and Tourism” or “Agriculture & Industry”)

<u>Ideas</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rise of the auto</li> <li>• Michigan center of auto industry</li> <li>• Changing appearance of roadways</li> <li>• Federal Highway designation</li> <li>• Federal Depression Projects</li> <li>• Govt. standards, govt. intervention</li> <li>• Dept of Transportation</li> <li>• Auto for fun (tourism, racing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Auto manufacturing Sites</li> <li>Camelback bridges</li> <li>Ford related</li> <li>Standardized bridges</li> <li>State Police Stations</li> <li>Auto leader homes</li> <li>Auto worker housing</li> <li>Speedway</li> <li>See auto tourism sites also</li> <li>MDOT rest stops</li> </ul>



#### Theme 4: Recreation and Tourism

This theme includes sites used for indoor or outdoor recreational activities. Sites related to the auto tourism industry are most unique to US-12 history.

##### *Auto Tourism*

This theme and these sites may also be interpreted as a part of “Transportation/Rise of the Auto”

<u>Ideas</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road Trips</li> <li>• Post War leisure time</li> <li>• Middle class adventure</li> <li>• Contrast to stagecoach</li> <li>• Relation to rise of auto</li> <li>• Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attractions, novelty</li> <li>Rest stations</li> <li>Parks</li> <li>Hotels, Motels, Motel signs</li> <li>Diners</li> <li>Gas stations</li> <li>Drive In</li> <li>MDOT Rest stops</li> </ul>

##### *Recreation and Leisure*

<u>Ideas</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adventure</li> <li>• Vacation</li> <li>• Take a break</li> <li>• Cultural Experience</li> <li>• Quality Time</li> <li>• Great Outdoors</li> <li>• Daring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lake Michigan</li> <li>Parks</li> <li>Go Carts, speedway</li> <li>Golf, other amusements</li> </ul>

#### Theme 5: Social, Political, and Institutional History

This theme includes and interprets sites whose primary significance is cultural rather than physical, although there may be a building associated with the site. Sites of historic events, or which represent events and issues would be included.

<u>Ideas/Issues</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slavery/Emancipation</li> <li>• Politics/Government</li> <li>• World War, (Unions?)</li> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Other events and issues to be determined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Underground railroad stops</li> <li>Homes of political figures</li> <li>Courthouses</li> <li>City Halls</li> <li>Willow Run</li> <li>Churches, chapels</li> <li>Libraries, schools</li> <li>Hospitals</li> <li>Other sites to be determined</li> </ul>

#### Theme 6: Art and Architecture

This theme includes and interprets sites whose primary significance is related to all aspects of the arts and also includes those sites that are a high quality representation of various architectural styles.

<u>Ideas/Issues</u>	<u>Features</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolution of the performing arts</li> <li>• Vaudeville</li> <li>• Unique folk art/craft</li> <li>• Architectural styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theaters (Film and Stage)</li> <li>Concert Halls</li> <li>Sculpture parks</li> <li>Italianate business Districts</li> </ul>

#### Theme 7: “First, Most, or Unusual”

This theme is somewhat of a catch-all theme, to include and emphasize the “gems” of US-12. Examples of rare natural or man-made beauty would be interpreted in this category. Examples of excellence, origin, oddity, or supremacy could also be included. This theme has some overlap with Art and Architecture.

##### Features/claims (not a complete list)

- Second highway in the nation
- First Land Office in State (White Pigeon)
- Longest camelback bridge (Mottville)
- State Line Rest Station (First rest stop)
- McCourtie Park (unique craftsmanship)
- Halfway Road (one of a kind)
- Grosvenor House (architectural splendor)
- Wing House (architectural splendor)
- Coldwater historic homes (architectural splendor)
- Mi Central Railroad Depot, Niles (architectural splendor)
- Most miles of river (St. Joseph Co.)
- St. Anne Church, Detroit (Second Oldest Catholic Parish)
- Split faced block house, Hillsdale (architectural oddity)
- Twin Towers, Irish Hills (architectural oddity)
- Warren Woods Natural Area (virgin Beech-Maple ecosystem)
- St. Joseph River (1 of 2 in the world that flows north)



# Wayne County

SITE	HISTORIC THEMES						
	Agriculture & Industry	Transportation Developments	Migration & Settlement	Recreation & Tourism	Social, Political, & Institutional History	Art and Architecture	First, Most, or Unusual
Michigan Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument					X		
Cadillac Square Marker		X	X				X
Corktown Historic District			X			X	X
Most Holy Trinity Church			X		X		
Workers' Rowhouse Museum	X		X		X		
Tiger Stadium				X			X
Michigan Central Railroad Station		X				X	X
St. Anne Church: Father Gabriel Richard Burial Site and Relic			X		X		
Ford Rouge Plant		X					
Henry Ford Birthplace Marker		X					
The Henry Ford	X	X					
Fair Lane: Henry Ford Estate and Jens Jensen Landscape		X				X	
McFadden Ross House							
Commandant's Headquarters: Dearborn Historical Museum					X		
Eloise County Hospital					X		
Johnson's Tavern Marker			X				
Old Wayne Village Hall					X		
1950's Era Motel Signs		X		X			

- = Does not meet Criteria or Theme
- = Meets Criteria or Theme
- = Information not sufficient. To be determined by US-12 Heritage Trail Council or individuals familiar with repair history, funding, documentation, and local risk factors.
- = Information to be confirmed.



## Washtenaw County

SITE	HISTORIC THEMES						
	Agriculture & Industry	Transportation Developments	Migration & Settlement	Recreation & Tourism	Social, Political, & Institutional History	Art and Architecture	First, Most, or Unusual
Willow Run Factory Complex	X	X			X		
Triple Level Highway Bridge		X					
Greek Revival Structure		X					
Ypsilanti Historic District						X	
Ypsilanti City Hall					X	X	
Tap Room Restaurant				X		X	
Ypsilanti District Library					X	X	
Schmidt House	X						
Sutherland-Wilson Farm	X						X
McCoy House	X						
Rentschler Farm	X						
Davenport House						X	X
City of Saline Historic District						X	
Schuyler Mill, Ford Soybean Factory Complex	X						
Viewscape from Western City Limits of Saline to County Line	X		X				
Reynolds Corners Cemetery			X				

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## Lenawee County

SITE	HISTORIC THEMES						
	Agriculture & Industry	Transportation Developments	Migration & Settlement	Recreation & Tourism	Social, Political, & Institutional History	Art and Architecture	First, Most, or Unusual
Gibbard House			X				
Clinton Historic Business District			X	X		X	
Clinton Inn					X	X	
Smith-Kimball Community Center						X	
Mortuary Chapel, Riverside Cemetery					X	X	
Clinton Woolen Mill Buildings	X						
Atlas Mill	X						
Southern Michigan Railroad		X					
The Lancaster House/ Bauer Manor		X	X				
Hidden Lake Gardens				X			
Walter J. Hayes State Park/ Wampler's Lake				X			
Irish Hills Towers				X			X
St Joseph Shrine			X		X	X	
Siam School					X		
Frame Walker Tavern		X	X	X	X		
Drake School/The Enchanted Schoolhouse					X		
Tourist Cabins at Bernie's Cedar Haven				X			
Artesian Wells Garage				X			
St. Michael's Episcopal Church and Cemetery			X		X		

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- = Information to be confirmed.



## Hillsdale County

SITE	HISTORIC THEMES						
	Agriculture & Industry	Transportation Developments	Migration & Settlement	Recreation & Tourism	Social, Political, & Institutional History	Art and Architecture	First, Most, or Unusual
George Smith General Store	X				X		
George Smith House	X				X		
McCourtie Park				X		X	X
Fowle's Store							X
O.B. Blackmar House			X			X	
Mallory House	X						X
Moscow Plains United Methodist Church			X		X		
Union School District #1 Schoolhouse					X		
MDOT Roadside Park		X		X			
Grosvenor House					X	X	X
Village of Jonesville						X	
White Marble Springs Campground & Park		X		X			X

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## Branch County

SITE	HISTORIC THEMES						
	Agriculture & Industry	Transportation Developments	Migration & Settlement	Recreation & Tourism	Social, Political, & Institutional History	Art and Architecture	First, Most, or Unusual
Downtown Bronson							
Bronson Theater						X	
Old School House					X		
Fiske School					X		
Jewell House						X	
East Chicago Street Historic District						X	X
Chicago Pike Inn						X	
Coldwater: Downtown Historic District			X				
Wing House Museum						X	X
Masonic Temple					X		
Branch Co. District Library			X		X		X
Tibbits Opera House						X	
Allen's Root Beer Stand				X	X		
Old US-12 Bridge		X					
Capri Drive-In Movie Theater				X	X	X	
Old Oakwood Cemetery			X				
Downtown Quincy							
Farming Scenes	X						
Train Depots		X					

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## St. Joseph County

SITE	HISTORIC THEMES						
	Agriculture & Industry	Transportation Developments	Migration & Settlement	Recreation & Tourism	Social, Political, & Institutional History	Art and Architecture	First, Most, or Unusual
Halfway Road			X				X
R-11 Classic Car Museum		X					
Freedom Cemetery			X				
Historic Downtown Sturgis			X			X	
Christmere House Bed and Breakfast						X	
Michigan Southern Depot Museum		X				X	
1936 Electric Plant						X	
Byler's Farm Market				X			
Klinger Lake Country Club and Golf Course				X			
White Pigeon				X		X	X
White Pigeon Land Office			X	X			X
Chief White Pigeon Monument (Wahbememe Park)					X		
Farmland View	X						
Mottville Bridge (Camelback Bridge)		X		X		X	X
St. Joseph River		X		X			X

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- = Information to be confirmed.



## Cass County

SITE	HISTORIC THEMES						
	Agriculture & Industry	Transportation Developments	Migration & Settlement	Recreation & Tourism	Social, Political, & Institutional History	Art and Architecture	First, Most, or Unusual
Sweet Road Natural Area				X			
Baldwin House			X				
Hartman House					X	X	
District 5 Schoolhouse/Mason Twp Hall	X				X		
Five Points Cemetery			X		X		
Bucklen House	X						
Underground Railroad Stop					X		
Miliken House			X				
Smith's Chapel	X				X		X
Edwardsburg First Presbyterian Church					X		

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- = Meets Criteria or Theme
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## Berrien County

SITE	HISTORIC THEMES						
	Agriculture & Industry	Transportation Developments	Migration & Settlement	Recreation & Tourism	Social, Political, & Institutional History	Art and Architecture	First, Most, or Unusual
The Chapin House	X					X	
Michigan Central Railroad Depot		X				X	X
Fort St. Joseph Marker			X		X		
St. Joseph River				X			X
Historic Downtown Buchanan							
Pears Mill	X						X
Union Hall					X		
Oak Ridge Cemetery			X				
Moccasin Bluff			X				X
Buffalo Road Cemetery			X				
Dayton Lake				X			
Galien Township Cemetery			X		X		
Spring Creek School	X				X		
Historic Downtown Three Oaks							
Three Oaks Spokes Bicycle Museum		X	X	X			
Dewey Cannon				X	X		
Warren Featherbone Office Building	X					X	
Acorn Theatre in Featherbone Factory	X					X	
Warren Woods Natural Area				X			X
Galien River				X			X
Galien River Preserve and County Park				X			
Lake Michigan and Lake Michigan Beaches				X			X
Railroad Museum		X	X				
State Line Rest Lodge		X		X			X

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## Application

The historic theme information presented on the preceding pages illustrates the considerable overlap among themes and between features throughout US-12. These broad interpretations are intentional so one can relate particular features to the entire corridor as a whole, and to other features that may be in different counties and perhaps separated by a hundred or more miles. This information may be used in conjunction with the prioritization criteria matrix in Section 6 to further aid in the identification of historical features and/or landscapes for preservation and enhancement strategies. Ultimately, these maps will be available on the US-12 Heritage Trail Council Web site. Ideally, individuals interested in a particular theme may use these maps as itineraries or as self-guided tours.



## **Section 5** **Corridor Improvement /** **Enhancement** **Recommendations**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Early on in the project, it was recognized that the high number of sites and competing interests would make it difficult to determine what priority should be given to preservation or enhancement projects as the Council moved forward.

In an attempt to provide structure, albeit somewhat subjectively, to the decision-making process, a prioritization matrix was developed, as one analytical tool that could be used to determine where attention is most needed.

The prioritization criteria presented in the following pages are considered preliminary for several reasons. These include:

- Lack of information on which to base decisions;
- Additional historic sites that could, and probably should, be added to the evaluation; and
- Additional categories that should be added to the evaluation.

The design and use of a matrix will be an evolving process as the Council becomes more familiar with its potential. The original design relies on a simple count of the number of categories checked for each site. The more

checks, the more important the site in terms of project priorities. The number of historic themes that apply to the site was also included in the count. In later stages, the Council should assess the value of the following modifications:

- Consider weighting criteria. While each county may have different perspectives or needs, it is recommended this decision be made and agreed upon at the Council level to ensure consistency in its application.
- Consider scoring each check; for example, using a 5, 3 or 1 as a way to judge the relative importance of each category to a particular historic site. This is an individual exercise.
- Consider combining the two.

Other variations to better objectify the results may be suggested by members of the Council.

In addition to completing the evaluation at the county level, the Council should apply this evaluation scheme to the corridor as a whole. Certainly each county has historic sites that are important to their particular story. However, there may be only a limited number of sites that are important to the overall US-12 story. These sites may benefit from the attention and support of the entire Council and may provide the most return to the US-12 Heritage Trail.

### **PRIORITIZATION METHOD**

Over 100 sites were selected by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council for mapping and evaluation, and there are additional historic

properties listed in this application at the conclusion of Section 3. A ranking system for the sites will:

- Help the Council prioritize sites and determine appropriate sample projects;
- Assist with future funding allocation; and
- Help focus marketing and interpretive efforts.

The sites included in the analysis on the following pages are not all of the historic sites on the corridor. The recommended system discussed here may be used by individual counties, or by the Council to think about the corridor as a whole.

The approach for site prioritization is similar to how a museum evaluates acquisitions. A theme or themes are selected, and the objects are acquired depending on how they support the theme. Other factors are the condition, and rarity of the object.

The prioritization process is difficult, and not entirely objective. The qualities of the given sites have been quantified in the form of a matrix analysis, where each site is mapped against a list of interpretive themes and other criteria. Essentially, the more “checks” a site has, the higher priority it should receive, however, priority must be given to not only the strongest, most impressive sites, but to the weak links. This will help preserve, or restore, the *continuity* of the corridor.



## Preliminary Criteria for Prioritization

- Illustrates theme(s) -  
The site illustrates the particular historic theme(s).
- Is at high risk -  
The site is at high risk of being lost to deterioration, or demolition (perhaps due to encroaching development).
- Is rare -  
The site is rare or unique (in the context of the *whole* corridor). It might be an excellent example of an architectural style, a “first”, or the site of a pivotal historic event.
- Has visible impact on the corridor -  
The site can be seen while on US-12. Improvements would have positive and recognizable impact on the corridor.
- Is a weak link to be strengthened -  
This designation is given to sites where improvements are needed to preserve a sense of continuity along the corridor. The unique rhythm of US-12 is that of historic downtowns separated by rural land. In places that rhythm is lost, and the traveler may forget that they are on historic US-12. The towns may appear run down, or there might be development in the place of farmland. The site is the only site between towns, or the site is in a generally deteriorated stretch of the corridor, or the site is the only historic site amid development. Such a site may be the only example of its type, and its loss would leave an interpretive “hole.”
- Has a documented history/story -  
If a site has a documented history, it is more valuable for interpretation, and is more likely to contribute to the designation. Documented cultural significance is one requirement for state or national register listing.
- Has not already been repaired -  
Sites that have not already been repaired should get priority over sites that are restored.
- Has no marker or signage -  
Some priority should be given to sites with no identifying or interpretive signage. Identification is the first step to interpreting the corridor to a public audience.
- Is not accessible to the public -  
The site is closed to the public (private) or is vacant. Some priority is given to either make the site accessible, or to interpret it through other means. Access (physical or otherwise) is the second step to interpreting the corridor to a public audience.

Analysis tables for each county are included on the following pages.



**Prioritization Analysis**

**Wayne County**

SITE	DATA					CRITERIA									
	Town	Type original/current	Date of Construction	Register Listings N = National Register S = State Register L = Local Register NL = National Landmark	Historic Marker on Site	Is at high risk	Is rare	Has visible impact on corridor	Is a weak link to be strengthened	Has a documented history/story	No other funds have been allocated	Is not accessible to the public	Has not already been repaired	Needs marker or signage	
Michigan Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument	Detroit	Monument	1872	N	X										
Cadillac Square Marker	Detroit	Marker	n/a	S	X										
Corktown Historic District	Detroit	Residential	1834	L, N			X							X	
Most Holy Trinity Church	Detroit	Religious	1849	L, S, N	X				X						
Workers' Rowhouse Museum	Detroit	Res/Museum	1950			X	X		X	X			X	X	
Tiger Stadium	Detroit	Sports/Vacant	1912	L, S, N	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		
Michigan Central Railroad Station	Detroit	RR/Vacant	1913	L, S, N		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	
St. Anne Church: Father Gabriel Richard Burial Site and Relic	Detroit	Religious	1886	S, N	X										
Ford Rouge Plant	Dearborn	Industrial	1917-38	S, N, NL			X	X				X		X	
Henry Ford Birthplace Marker	Dearborn	Marker	n/a	S	X										
The Henry Ford	Dearborn	Museum	varies	N	X		X	X							
Fair Lane: Henry Ford Estate and Jens Jensen Landscape	Dearborn	Res/Museum	1913-15	S, N	X		X								
McFadden Ross House	Dearborn	Res/Museum												X	
Commandant's Headquarters: Dearborn Historical Museum	Dearborn	Military/Museum	1833-37	S, N	X			X							
Eloise County Hospital	Dearborn	Hospital/Office						X				X		X	
Johnson's Tavern Marker	Dearborn	Marker	n/a	S	X			X							
Old Wayne Village Hall	Dearborn	Civic/Museum	1878	S	X										
1950's Era Motel Signs	Dearborn	Sign	1950's					X	X						

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**Prioritization Analysis**

**Washtenaw County**

SITE	DATA						CRITERIA									
	Town	Type original/current	Date of Construction	Register Listings N = National Register S = State Register L = Local Register NL = National Landmark	Historic Marker on Site	Is at high risk	Is rare	Has visible impact on corridor	Is a weak link to be strengthened	Has a documented history/story	No other funds have been allocated	Is not accessible to the public	Has not already been repaired	Needs marker or signage		
Willow Run Factory Complex	Ypsilanti Twp.	Industrial	1941-53					X	X			X		X		
Triple Level Highway Bridge	Ypsilanti Twp.	Bridge		N								X		X		
Greek Revival Structure	Ypsilanti Twp.											X		X		
Ypsilanti Historic District	Ypsilanti	varies	varies	N			X	X	X					X		
Ypsilanti City Hall	Ypsilanti	Civic						X						X		
Tap Room Restaurant	Ypsilanti	Commercial					X	X						X		
Ypsilanti District Library	Ypsilanti	Civic			X			X								
Schmidt House	Pittsfield	Res/Comrc						X				X		X		
Sutherland-Wilson Farm	Ann Arbor	Agr/Museum		Cent. Farm			X							X		
McCoy House	Pittsfield Twp.	Residential										X		X		
Rentschler Farm	Saline	Agricultural					X	X	X					X		
Davenport House	Saline	Residential	1875	S, N	X		X					X				
City of Saline Historic District	Saline	Res/Comrc	varies	S			X	X						X		
Schuyler Mill, Ford Soybean Factory Complex	Saline	Ind/Comrc		N			X	X						X		
Viewscape from Western City Limits of Saline to County Line	Saline	Natural	n/a			X	X	X	X					X		
Reynolds Corners Cemetery	Mansfield	Cemetery												X		

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**Prioritization Analysis**

**Lenawee County**

SITE	DATA					CRITERIA								
	Town	Type original/current	Date of Construction	Register Listings N = National Register S = State Register L = Local Register NL = National Landmark	Historic Marker on Site	Is at high risk	Is rare	Has visible impact on corridor	Is a weak link to be strengthened	Has a documented history/story	No other funds have been allocated	Is not accessible to the public	Has not already been repaired	Needs marker or signage
Gibbard House	Clinton	Residential	1830					X				X		X
Clinton Historic Business District	Clinton	Commercial	varies					X						X
Clinton Inn	Clinton	Commercial	1901	S				X						X
Smith-Kimball Community Center	Clinton	Res/Civic	1840	S	X									
Mortuary Chapel, Riverside Cemetery	Clinton	Religious	1914	S (pending)										X
Clinton Woolen Mill Buildings	Clinton	Industrial	1886	S	X	X		X	X			X		
Atlas Mill	Clinton	Industrial	1836	Centennial Bus		X			X					X
Southern Michigan Railroad	Clinton	Commercial	1853-90	N (pending)										X
The Lancaster House/ Bauer Manor	Franklin Twp.	Commercial	1864	S	X		X	X	X			X		
Hidden Lake Gardens	Tipton	Natural	n/a				X							X
Walter J. Hayes State Park/ Wampler's Lake	Onsted	Natural	1916					X						
Irish Hills Towers	Cambridge	Commercial	1924-44			X	X	X	X			X		X
St Joseph Shrine	Cambridge	Religious	1863	S	X			X						
Siam School	Onsted	Civic/Comrc	1853					X				X		X
Frame Walker Tavern	Brooklyn	Comrc/Museum	1832	S	X		X	X		X				
Drake School/The Enchanted Schoolhouse	Woodstock	Civic/Comrc	1871					X						X
Tourist Cabins at Bernie's Cedar Haven	Brooklyn	Commercial	1920			X	X	X	X					X
Artesian Wells Garage	Woodstock	Commercial	1930											X
St. Michael's Episcopal Church and Cemetery	Cambridge	Religious	1858	S	X									

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**Prioritization Analysis**

**Hillsdale County**

SITE	DATA					CRITERIA									
	Town	Type original/current	Date of Construction	Register Listings N = National Register S = State Register L = Local Register NL = National Landmark	Historic Marker on Site	Is at high risk	Is rare	Has visible impact on corridor	Is a weak link to be strengthened	Has a documented history/story	No other funds have been allocated	Is not accessible to the public	Has not already been repaired	Needs marker or signage	
George Smith General Store	Somerset Center	Commercial	1871					X	X					X	
George Smith House	Somerset Center	Residential	1888					X	X			X		X	
McCourtie Park	Somerset Center	Sculptural	1930?			X	X	X	X						
Fowle's Store	Moscow	Res/Comrc	1913				X	X				X		X	
O.B. Blackmar House	Moscow	Residential	1870					X				X		X	
Mallory House	Moscow	Res/Agricultural	1890			X	X	X	X			X		X	
Moscow Plains United Methodist Church	Moscow	Religious	1853				X	X						X	
Union School District #1 Schoolhouse	Moscow	Civic/Comrc	1854					X	X					X	
MDOT Roadside Park	Fayette	Natural	1930					X						X	
Grosvenor House	Jonesville	Res/Museum		S, N	X		X								
Village of Jonesville	Jonesville	Most Residential	varies					X	X						
White Marble Springs Campground & Park	Allen	Natural													

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- = Information to be confirmed.



**Prioritization Analysis**

**Branch County**

SITE	DATA					CRITERIA								
	Town	Type original/current	Date of Construction	Register Listings N = National Register S = State Register L = Local Register NL = National Landmark	Historic Marker on Site	Is at high risk	Is rare	Has visible impact on corridor	Is a weak link to be strengthened	Has a documented history/story	No other funds have been allocated	Is not accessible to the public	Has not already been repaired	Needs marker or signage
Downtown Bronson	Bronson	varies						X	X		X		X	X
Bronson Theater	Bronson	Commercial	1948					X	X	X				X
Old School House	Coldwater	Civic	1930					X		X		X		X
Fiske School	Coldwater	Civic/Comrc	1880			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jewell House	Coldwater	Residential	1861	S		X	X	X		X	X	X		X
East Chicago Street Historic District	Coldwater	Residential	varies	N	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Chicago Pike Inn	Coldwater	Res/Comrc	1903			X		X		X	X	X		X
Coldwater: Downtown Historic District	Coldwater	varies		N	X		X	X		X				X
Wing House Museum	Coldwater	Res/Museum	1875	S	X		X		X	X	X			X
Masonic Temple	Coldwater	Civic	1868-1920				X	X	X	X			X	X
Branch Co. District Library	Coldwater	Civic	1886	S			X	X		X				X
Tibbits Opera House	Coldwater	Commercial	1882	S		X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Allen's Root Beer Stand	Coldwater	Commercial	1950?				X	X		X	X			X
Old US-12 Bridge	Coldwater	Bridge	1933	S		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Capri Drive-In Movie Theater	Coldwater	Commercial	1964				X	X		X				X
Old Oakwood Cemetery	Coldwater	Cemetery	varies					X		X				X
Downtown Quincy	Quincy	varies	varies			X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Farming Scenes	varies	Agriculture	n/a			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X

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- = Information to be confirmed.



**Prioritization Analysis**

**St. Joseph County**

	DATA						CRITERIA							
	Town	Type original/current	Date of Construction	Register Listings N = National Register S = State Register L = Local Register NL = National Landmark	Historic Marker on Site	Is at high risk	Is rare	Has visible impact on corridor	Is a weak link to be strengthened	Has a documented history/story	No other funds have been allocated	Is not accessible to the public	Has not already been repaired	Needs marker or signage
<b>SITE</b>														
Halfway Road	Burr Oak	Residential	1835				X	X	X	X	X			X
R-11 Classic Car Museum	Burr Oak	Rec/Comrc					X							X
Freedom Cemetery	Fawn River	Cemetery	varies					X						X
Historic Downtown Sturgis	Sturgis	Commercial	n/a											
Christmere House Bed and Breakfast	Sturgis	Res/Comrc	1850's		X									X
Michigan Southern Depot Museum	Sturgis	RR/Museum	1916	S					X					X
1936 Electric Plant	Sturgis	Commercial	1936									X		X
Byler's Farm Market	Sturgis	Commercial						X						
Klinger Lake Country Club and Golf Course	Sturgis	Rec/Comrc						X						
White Pigeon	White Pigeon	Res/Comrc	varies		X		X	X	X					X
White Pigeon Land Office	White Pigeon	Hist/Cultural	1831	N	X		X	X						
Chief White Pigeon Monument (Wahbememe Park)	White Pigeon	Hist/Cultural		N	X		X	X	X					
Farmland View	n/a	Agricultural	n/a					X						X
Mottville Bridge (Camelback Bridge)	Mottville	Bridge	1922	S	X		X	X	X					
St. Joseph River	n/a	Natural	n/a					X	X					

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**Prioritization Analysis**

**Cass County**

SITE	DATA					CRITERIA									
	Town	Type original/current	Date of Construction	Register Listings N = National Register S = State Register L = Local Register NL = National Landmark	Historic Marker on Site	Is at high risk	Is rare	Has visible impact on corridor	Is a weak link to be strengthened	Has a documented history/story	No other funds have been allocated	Is not accessible to the public	Has not already been repaired	Needs marker or signage	
Sweet Road Natural Area	White Pigeon	Natural	n/a						X			X		X	
Baldwin House	Union	Residential	1836					X				X		X	
Hartman House	Union	Residential	1876					X				X		X	
District 5 Schoolhouse/Mason Twp Hall	Edwardsburg	Civic	1875	N	X			X	X						
Five Points Cemetery	Edwardsburg	Cemetery	early 1800's					X						X	
Bucklen House	Edwardsburg	Res/Vacant	1850's						X			X		X	
Underground Railroad Stop	Edwardsburg	Residential	1800's									X		X	
Miliken House	Niles	Residential	1830									X		X	
Smith's Chapel	Niles	Religious	1840	N	X		X								
Edwardsburg First Presbyterian Church	Edwardsburg	Religious	1856	S				X	X					X	

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- = Information to be confirmed.



**Prioritization Analysis**

**Berrien County**

SITE	DATA					CRITERIA									
	Town	Type original/current	Date of Construction	Register Listings N = National Register S = State Register L = Local Register NL = National Landmark	Historic Marker on Site	Is at high risk	Is rare	Has visible impact on corridor	Is a weak link to be strengthened	Has a documented history/story	No other funds have been allocated	Is not accessible to the public	Has not already been repaired	Needs marker or signage	
The Chapin House	Niles	Res/Civic	1882	N	X		X								
Michigan Central Railroad Depot	Niles	Commercial	1891	N	X		X								
Fort St. Joseph Marker	Niles	Marker	1691	N	X		X	X							
St. Joseph River	Bertrand Twp.	Rec/Natural	n/a					X						X	
Historic Downtown Buchanan	Buchanan	Res/Comrc	1856-92									X			
Pears Mill	Buchanan	Commercial	1857	S	X		X	X							
Union Hall	Buchanan	Commercial	1862								X			X	
Oak Ridge Cemetery	Buchanan	Cemetery	varies												
Moccasin Bluff	Buchanan	Natural	n/a	N	X		X	X							
Buffalo Road Cemetery		Cemetery	varies												
Dayton Lake	Bertrand Twp.	Rec/Natural	n/a					X						X	
Galien Township Cemetery	Galien	Civic	1861					X						X	
Spring Creek School	Three Oaks	Civic	1879	L							X	X	X		
Historic Downtown Three Oaks	Three Oaks	varies													
Three Oaks Spokes Bicycle Museum	Three Oaks	Recreational	1899											X	
Dewey Cannon	Three Oaks	Civic	1865	S	X			X							
Warren Featherbone Office Building	Three Oaks	Commercial	1905	S, N				X							
Acorn Theatre in Featherbone Factory	Three Oaks	Industrial	1883					X						X	
Warren Woods Natural Area	Three Oaks	Natural	n/a											X	
Galien River	New Buffalo	Natural	n/a					X						X	
Galien River Preserve and County Park	New Buffalo	Natural	n/a											X	
Lake Michigan and Lake Michigan Beaches	New Buffalo	Rec/Natural	n/a												
Railroad Museum	New Buffalo	Museum													
State Line Rest Lodge	New Buffalo	Commercial	1935	S	X		X	X	X					X	

- = Does not meet Criteria or Theme
- = Meets Criteria or Theme
- = Information not sufficient. To be determined by US-12 Heritage Trail Council or individuals familiar with repair history, funding, documentation, and local risk factors.
- = Information to be confirmed.



## CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT/ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

### Introduction

There are a variety of landscape and architectural project strategies that may be applied to various sites and communities along the corridor that would improve/restore a particular location, improve access to or within a property, or properly conserve an important historic resource. The organization of these project-specific recommendations in the following attachments has been designed to describe general preservation and enhancement concepts with recommendations as to where on the corridor these types of strategies may apply. The priority within which these improvements are implemented should be coordinated by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council.

The strategies are divided into architectural and landscape sections. Each section includes a written explanation and illustrations of each strategy. Four recommendations are discussed for each. For landscape, they are:

- Streetscape Improvements;
- Site Improvements;
- Visitor Enhancements; and
- Access Improvements.

The discussion of architectural project recommendations includes:

- Residential Recommendations;
- Façade Improvements;
- Maintenance and Conservation; and
- Policies and Guidelines.

The landscape recommendations described in the accompanying graphic sheets are intended to provide conceptual examples of various types of landscape treatments intended to generally improve a visitor's experience of the historic site. *Streetscape improvements* typically enhance the visual appearance of downtown areas and create a positive pedestrian and driving experience, which may result in greater commercial activity. Improvements to entrance(s) or exit(s) of an historic site improve a traveler's access to US-12 and can increase a location's "presence" on the corridor. They may also enhance pedestrian and vehicular circulation within the site and improve safety. Overall *site improvements* can enhance the appearance and functionality of a site and consequently increase its marketability. For example, additional amenities may be added to make a site more attractive to target markets, or expand the site's parking capacity to better support an adaptive re-use plan for a historic building such as implementing a visitor center or museum. *Visitor enhancements* are general planting improvements that may increase a site's marketability or attractiveness to a broader audience.

It must be emphasized, however, that any landscape improvement undertaken on a historical property should be tied to conformance to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Appendix C). Research should be included as an important part of any design process to assure that a site's historic integrity is maintained and pre-existing landscape features of historic importance are preserved.

Historically incompatible improvements or enhancements may interfere with qualification for the National Register of Historic Places and potential grant funding, or introduce an inappropriate landscape uniformity that would undermine the unique character of individual properties. For example, the same street lighting, benches and/or planters in more than one downtown area along US-12 would be historically inaccurate, particularly if none originally existed.

The landscape recommendations rely on conceptual projects to illustrate design elements that, among others, should be considered in a project of this type. A potential range of unit costs for the various design components is included and an Opinion of Probable Conceptual Cost is calculated for the project based on the given unit cost range. It should be noted that unit costs can vary according to a number of variables including region, scarcity or type of material, for example. Specific projects should calculate these costs based on local conditions. Design fees are not included in these calculations.

*Façade improvements* help to create or preserve downtown character, create visual interest, and enhance the pedestrian and driving experience. Attractive historic facades can be a source of community pride and are likely to be inviting to tourists and commuters. Where possible, historic, original materials are invaluable resources to the US-12 experience, therefore, *maintaining and conserving* these resources is essential. Maintenance and conservation



strategies provide suggestions for conserving existing structures and ensuring their survival into the future. A number of areas on US-12 contain beautiful historic homes which, although private, contribute to the character and strengths of US-12. This section provides several *residential recommendations* that will not only help protect homeowners' investments but will also contribute to the long-term attractiveness of the corridor. Finally, *policies and guidelines* provide an organizing structure and procedural framework to help protect sites from demolition, misuse, and misinterpretation. They can also educate property owners so that historic value is maintained.

Building recommendations provide before and after examples, sample design strategies and brief discussions on important elements of maintaining and restoring historic structures.

The images provided with each discussion illustrate a particular condition or design element, or convey a sense of the potential of a finished project. They may also help educate members of the US-12 communities about property enhancements and their value.

Some applicable locations throughout the corridor are included with each recommendation. These are not necessarily the only locations where these improvements apply. Council and/or township representatives may, in fact, choose to apply this form of recommendation to another property named in this report. Rather, the suggestions should, like the strategy itself, be considered illustrative of

locations within the US-12 Corridor where the recommendations could be applied.

As with landscape improvements, any architectural improvements or steps to conserve, enhance or maintain historic buildings should also be made only after assuring conformance to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Appendix C). This will ensure the work is completed in a style and manner that is historically compatible.

The selection of initial project sites should be carefully made using information gained through a number of variables. Sources should include, but not be limited to:

- US-12 Heritage Trail Council Goals and Strategies;
- US-12 Heritage Trail Corridor Management and Marketing Plans;
- Site priority based on the prioritization matrix analysis; and
- Local master plans, long-range plans and business and marketing goals.

## OUTCOME

Regular review and assessment of progress toward the goals defined by the US-12 Heritage Council in the Corridor Management Plan is also an important preservation/enhancement strategy. Potential projects should be prioritized using an assessment tool such as described in Section 5 and with consideration for their contribution in moving the marketing plan forward. In addition, given the future growth poised to occur along sections of the corridor, it is also recommended that local jurisdictions:

- Review master plan zoning and ordinance language;
- Consider implementing a possible overlay zone; and
- Give attention to developing needed design guidelines.

Coordinated effort between local jurisdictions will be valuable in achieving consistent results toward shared objectives. As various enhancement or protection projects are implemented and/or completed, their impact on US-12 and the views from the corridor should be assessed and their value publicized through the communication plan described in this report. This review process should also be used to update goals and strategies as needed, and to identify lessons learned within the corridor.



## **Section 6**

### **US-12 Historic Heritage Trail**

#### **Marketing Plan**

The marketing plan developed for the US-12 Heritage Trail is a guide, like a road map, for attracting residents and visitors to the US-12 Heritage Trail and encouraging them to enjoy and appreciate its many features. A marketing plan provides the ingredients and the innovative touch to connect people to the product, in this case, a visit to or drive along the route. The plan is segmented into two main parts: a marketing approach for internal stakeholders, and a marketing approach for external or visitor markets. Internal efforts refer to marketing communication within and between organizations and agencies involved (or targeted to be involved) in US-12 development and marketing efforts. External or visitor marketing refers to marketing programs focused primarily on product development and promotions targeted at residents and tourists.

The purpose of this plan is to guide the marketing efforts of the Council. The plan includes efforts that will compliment and expand current marketing activities, as well as providing strategies for a more comprehensive marketing effort by the Council and possibly other marketing professionals on behalf of the Council. The plan also provides suggested time frames for executing these efforts. Some are currently in place and warrant continuation. Others may require time to develop, fund, and implement, and, thus, are suggested for a future time period.

The structure of the marketing plan is as follows:

- Marketing goals
- Situation analysis
- Target markets
- Marketing strategy, campaign, and activities
- Positioning statement
- Summary of the 4 P's – product, price, place, promotion
- Successes

Internal and External markets are discussed separately.



## INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER MARKETING PLAN

### Internal Stakeholder Marketing Goals

A marketing plan is most successful if achievable goals direct the efforts and investments made by internal stakeholders. Three goals are suggested:

- To have county-wide and regional cooperation across the eight Michigan counties through which the US-12 Heritage Trail runs
- To have similar heritage sites or businesses find shared interests and customer markets, so that they can sustain their sites or businesses more efficiently
- To have organizations, businesses, and agencies aware of the US-12 Heritage Trail designation so that a recognizable community asset is achieved



*Other Heritage attractions with extensive marketing programs with which the US-12 Heritage Trail can cooperate.*



## Internal Stakeholder Situation Analysis

A marketing plan must recognize the internal strengths and weaknesses of the Council, as well as opportunities and threats which exist in the larger environment of government initiatives and other heritage efforts in the state.



Selected tourism attractions or organizations with whom the US-12 Council could partner.

INTERNAL	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence and regular meetings of US-12 Heritage Trail Council and Advisory Committee</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irregular attendance of representatives from some counties at council meetings</li> <li>Limited staff to move marketing plan forward</li> </ul>
EXTERNAL	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MDOT, Travel Michigan, and HAL are all interested in the US-12 Heritage Trail's success</li> <li>Likely increase in emphasis by Travel Michigan on vacations based on heritage routes and cultural tourism</li> <li>Potential cooperation with The Henry Ford and Auto National Heritage Area</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited financial resources for funding heritage preservation, heritage marketing and other initiatives by Council</li> </ul>



## Internal Stakeholder Target Markets

Based on a survey of organizations that are currently involved in US-12 as well as other organizations that have an interest in tourism development and enhancing the quality of life for Michigan residents, this list of internal stakeholders was created. These internal target markets are prioritized high, medium, and low based on ease of access to these groups and prioritization of the Council's limited time and financial resources.

Priority	Target Markets
HIGH (now or soon)	<b>US-12 Heritage Trail Council and the US-12 Advisory Committee</b>
	<b>Sites featured in the Heritage Route Inventory (in Corridor Management Plan)</b>
	<b>Local, county and regional government departments and agencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southwestern Michigan Commission</li> <li>• SEMCOG</li> <li>• County, city, township and village governments (via supervisor, manager, planning commissions, etc.)</li> <li>• Downtown Development Authorities</li> </ul>
	<b>Transportation offices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MDOT regional offices</li> <li>• MDOT Heritage Route Program manager (Lansing)</li> <li>• County Road Commissions</li> </ul>
MEDIUM (next few years)	<b>Tourism agencies and organizations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel Michigan (MEDC)</li> <li>• Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL)</li> <li>• The Henry Ford</li> <li>• Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)</li> <li>• Auto National Heritage Area (ANHA) – Motor Cities</li> <li>• West Michigan Tourism Association</li> <li>• Southwestern Michigan Tourism Council</li> <li>• All Chambers, Convention and Visitor Bureaus, and Downtown Development Authorities</li> </ul>
	<b>Local businesses and organizations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic museums and historic societies</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• State, county or local parks</li> <li>• Bed and Breakfasts</li> <li>• U-Pick, farm stands, farm stays and tours</li> <li>• Motels, restaurants, retail stores</li> <li>• Bike touring companies</li> </ul>
	<b>Local/regional preservationists and historians</b>
LOW (later)	<b>Other Heritage and Scenic Byways</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• America's Byways Resource Center</li> <li>• National Scenic Byways</li> <li>• Other Michigan Heritage Routes (e.g., Woodward Heritage Avenue)</li> </ul>



## Internal Stakeholder Marketing Strategies, Campaigns, and Activities

Once goals, factors affecting the internal and external environment, and target markets are identified, then marketing strategic approaches and a marketing campaign comprised of many marketing activities can be created. For internal markets or stakeholders the emphasis is on audiences and programs.

Following strategic approaches, marketing campaigns, and activities are presented in the following charts. A final element of marketing strategies is a timeline and suggested leader of these efforts.

### Internal Stakeholder Marketing Strategic Approaches

Stakeholder Audiences	Existing Programs	New Programs
<b>Existing Stakeholder Audience(s)</b>	<p><b>Penetration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create more interaction or communications (off meeting times) from internal stakeholders</li> <li>• Invite more people from stakeholder groups to attend meetings and programs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Program Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add new programs for the current audiences who participate (e.g., PowerPoint presentation shown to all local governments along route)</li> </ul>
<b>New Stakeholder Audience(s)</b>	<p><b>Audience Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite and sustain new stakeholders to meetings and programs (e.g., Detroit Convention and Visitor Bureau)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Diversification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add a program for a new stakeholder group (e.g., route tour for councils of other heritage route programs)</li> </ul>

#### **Penetration**

The US-12 Heritage Trail Council should initially focus on “penetration” or activities which create more attendance and interest by current stakeholders through programs and meetings the Council currently offers. This is the easiest and possibly a very effective strategy to increase involvement of internal markets.

#### **Program/Audience Development**

After exhausting this approach, the Council might then look to “program development” and/or “audience development.” These strategic approaches might involve adding the medium priority target audiences such as Travel Michigan or local businesses near the US-12 corridor. These efforts will probably require more effort by the Council and should be emphasized over the next few years after the Heritage designation is received.

#### **Diversification**

A final or later effort to the internal market campaign is to “diversify” into new audiences and programs. This might include exchanges with other heritage route managers in Michigan or other Midwest states.



**Internal Stakeholder Marketing Campaigns and Activities**

Goal	Markets	Campaign and Activities
<p><b>County-wide and regional cooperation</b></p>	<p>US-12 Council Government (all levels) Transportation offices</p>	<p><b><i>Campaign Theme—Educate and Keep Stakeholders Informed</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue regular newsletter with information and stories showcasing the successes of US-12. Convey the social, economic and environmental benefits of a heritage trail.</li> <li>• E-mail meeting information and post on a “community” website maintained by the Council (e.g., agendas, minutes, handouts).</li> <li>• Fax or electronic press releases to inform and gain involvement by government and transportation offices.</li> <li>• Publish and continually update a calendar of US-12 meetings and events. Include in newsletter, website and press releases.</li> <li>• Construct a portable presentation on US-12 to share with community, government, and civic groups.</li> </ul>
	<p>Tourism agencies (Chambers, Convention and Visitor Bureaus, Regional Tourism Marketing)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share the marketing plan with these groups and ask how the Council can partner with them.</li> <li>• Work toward having tourism agency representation on the Council.</li> <li>• Conduct research to show US-12 is drawing tourists to the area and they are staying overnight in paid accommodations (e.g., use on-site event surveys)</li> <li>• Involve tourism agencies in new business or attraction grand openings and events at heritage sites.</li> <li>• Explore funding and fundraising opportunities with tourism agencies.</li> </ul>



**Internal Stakeholder Marketing Campaigns and Activities (continued)**

Goal	Markets	Campaign and Activities
<p><b>Heritage sites and US-12 businesses find shared interests</b></p>	<p>Sites featured in US-12 inventory</p> <p>Local businesses</p>	<p><b><i>Campaign Theme – Tourism Attractions and Businesses Collaborating</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite site and business owners/managers on bus tours, involve them in special events, and use the itinerary maps to show them that they are linked with other places along US-12. Try to work around their business schedules.</li> <li>• Invite several businesses to form Friends of the Heritage Trail organization. A Friends group can help raise funds, fund the printing of brochures, sponsor t-shirt sales, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Awareness of US-12 Heritage Trail by agencies, organizations, and businesses</b></p>	<p>Government (all levels)</p> <p>Transportation offices</p> <p>Tourism agencies</p> <p>Local businesses</p>	<p><b><i>Campaign Theme – US-12 is Everywhere!!</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create US -12 logo decals for businesses to place in their storefront windows.</li> <li>• Distribute logo (via website and e-mail) to agencies, businesses, and organizations for them to place on their own marketing materials “located on US -12 Heritage Trail.” For example, work with businesses who pay for billboards on I-80 and I-94 to use US-12 logo.</li> </ul>



**Internal Stakeholder Marketing Plan Timeline**

	2003	2004 (Jan-Jun)	2004 (Jul-Dec)	2005	3 – 5 years	7 – 10 years
	Council	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Part-time Exec. Director (potential) and Council	Exec. Director, staff, and Council
<b>Develop Marketing Goals</b>						
Cooperation <sup>i</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year				
Shared interests <sup>ii</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year				
Awareness <sup>iii</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year				
<b>Identify Target Markets</b>						
Council/Committee <sup>A</sup>	identified	market		revisit market each year		
Sites <sup>B</sup>	identified	market		revisit market each year		
Government <sup>C</sup>	identified	market		revisit market each year		
Transportation <sup>D</sup>	identified	market		revisit market each year		
Tourism <sup>E</sup>	identified			market		revisit market
Businesses <sup>F</sup>	identified			market		revisit market
Preservation/history <sup>G</sup>	identified			market		revisit market
Other heritage routes <sup>H</sup>	identified					market
<b>Marketing Activities (in superscript goal &amp; target market)</b>						
Newsletter <sup>i-A,C,D</sup>	done	continue				
Meeting information <sup>i-A,C,D</sup>	done	continue				
Press releases <sup>i-A,C,D</sup>	done	continue				
Portable presentation <sup>i-A,C,D</sup>	done	continue				
Share marketing plan <sup>i-E</sup>		implement				
Agency representation <sup>i-E</sup>		Plan/implement				
Research <sup>i-E</sup>			Plan	implement		
Involve tourism agencies <sup>i-E</sup>			Plan	implement		
Fundraising opportunities <sup>i-E</sup>			Plan	implement		
Involve sites/businesses <sup>ii-B,F</sup>		Plan/implement				
Friends group <sup>ii-B,F</sup>		Plan	Plan	implement		
Create logo <sup>iii-C,D,E,F</sup>		Plan/implement				
Distribute logo <sup>iii-C,D,E,F</sup>		Plan/implement				
<b>Evaluation and Expected Successes</b>						
Representation			evaluate			
Responsiveness			evaluate			
Travel MI website				evaluate		
Logo			evaluate			



## Internal Stakeholder Positioning Statement

Promotion of the US-12 Heritage Trail offers the residents, businesses and public agencies of eight Michigan counties the opportunity to boost the economic, social and environmental prosperity of dozens of their communities. Increased visitation by both local and non-local travelers will stimulate new, and sustain existing, businesses, as well as enhance community spirit and pride. Initial marketing efforts should focus on encouraging existing travelers to the area to stay longer and see more of the US-12 heritage sites and communities along the route. Future marketing efforts should create new site experiences through itineraries, additional preservation efforts, and special events. Promotional plans should also be created to draw existing travelers off I-94 and the Indiana Toll Road to enjoy the relaxing, rewarding alternative that US-12 offers.

## Summary of the Internal Stakeholder 4 P's

This section provides a summary of the classic four P's of a marketing plan – program/people, place, price, and promotions/communications. In the case of US-12, price is not really of interest unless a contribution from organizations.

### ***Program/People Involved***

- US-12 Heritage Trail Council meetings and activities
- US-12 Advisory Committee

### ***Place***

- St. Joseph MSU-Extension Office provides a central place for activities of the council
- US-12 Heritage Trails has a website ([www.swmicomm.org/swmc/us12.thm](http://www.swmicomm.org/swmc/us12.thm)) and their own website is under development

### ***Promotions/Communications***

- **Publicity and press releases** – a media list should be maintained that includes local, state, and regional stakeholder groups (see target market list). Contact names, phone and fax number, address, and e-mail should be on record. A press release calendar should be created by season and calendar year to plan out the “newsworthy” efforts and activities of the Council. The newsletter should be mailed or e-mailed to these stakeholders. Meeting announcements and minutes should be communicated to stakeholders. A presentation (e.g., PowerPoint, exhibit, poster) should be created and maintained by the Council for presentation to stakeholder groups.
- **Word-of-mouth** – The Council should engage interested stakeholders in US-12 business and activities.
- **Plans** – The Corridor Management Plan, including the Marketing Plan, and the Heritage Route application should be shared with stakeholders and posted on the Council's website.
- **Sales** – Council members will need to use personalized communications and approaches to reach out to businesses, heritage sites, state agencies, tourism organizations, and the media to interest them in the US-12 Heritage Trail and its activities.
- **Merchandise** – Using artwork and photography, new printed and electronic products can feature the US-12 Heritage Trail logo.



### **Potential Successes of the Internal Stakeholder Marketing Plan**

After the efforts suggested in this internal marketing plan are implemented, some or all of these successes are possible for the Council to achieve.

- Representation of 75% of the counties at each Council meeting
- 100% county responsiveness to business-at-hand of the Council
- Travel Michigan works with the US-12 Council and the MDOT Heritage Route Manager in new web-site design for a proposed initiative to further develop and promote heritage route-based vacations
- US-12 Heritage Trail logo appears in storefronts, on business and organization letterhead, and in advertisements (e.g., Yellow-pages, billboards, local advertising circulars)



## VISITOR MARKETING PLAN

### Visitor Marketing Goals

A marketing plan is most successful if achievable goals directed at external markets, such as tourists or bus companies, are followed. Goals are suggested for two main areas – visitor demand, and economic and community development:

#### *Visitor Demand*

- To have residents of the eight counties, particularly those living within several miles of the route, aware of the US-12 Heritage Trail designation in an effort to create community pride and to recognize the significance of this area in settlement and travel patterns
- To attract cultural/heritage tourists to US-12 sites and corridor
- To attract bus tours to US-12 sites and corridor

#### *Economic and community development*

- To increase patronage of businesses, attractions, and events by locals residents and tourists from identified target markets
- To attract new businesses, preferably non-chain and locally owned
- To encourage new businesses established along US-12 to be sustainable by investing in their facility and the larger community
- To stimulate spending in local communities by tourists and residents visiting sites and businesses along the US-12 Heritage Trail



## Visitor Situation Analysis

A marketing plan must recognize the internal strengths and weaknesses of the Council and the Heritage Trail's product offerings. In addition, it should recognize opportunities and threats presented by consumer trends, other heritage efforts, and, more generally, in other vacation alternatives.

INTERNAL	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership of preservationists and development professionals involved in the council</li> <li>• Council Promotion and Marketing Committee headed by Sally Carpenter</li> <li>• Companion marketing effort by Auto National Heritage Area for the eastern portion of US-12</li> <li>• Established special events, familiarization tours</li> <li>• Numerous quaint, historic downtown areas, many offering B&amp;B accommodations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy commercial truck use of the route, particularly in towns</li> <li>• Speed limit encourages fast driving, often 55 miles per hour</li> <li>• Highway noise in towns makes outdoor activities such as dining less attractive</li> </ul>
EXTERNAL	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MDOT, Travel Michigan, and HAL are all interested in the US-12 Heritage Trail's success</li> <li>• Popularity of driving for pleasure, and willingness of many drivers to take longer but more interesting routes</li> <li>• Popularity of sightseeing and shopping among tourists</li> <li>• Continued, strong growth in cultural and heritage tourism – more and more tourists are seeking historic/authentic/educational experiences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing and future commercial development is changing the sense of place and heritage aesthetics of area</li> <li>• Commercialization and homogenization (same businesses everywhere)</li> <li>• The Heritage Route in northern Indiana featuring Amish culture is heavily marketed in print and electronic mediums</li> <li>• Deterioration of original downtowns with some towns not having downtown development authorities or chambers to plan and market downtown businesses</li> <li>• Fewer original residents with long standing families not as invested in area</li> </ul>



## Visitor Target Markets

Based on a survey of destination marketing organizations in the US-12 area, as well as site visits to the regional area noting the tourists in the area, a set of target markets have been identified for US-12. These target markets are placed on a time or priority continuum from those markets that are easier to attract to the groups requiring greater effort and investment. The high priority markets include: residents of the US-12 area, independent or individual travelers interested in travel or auto history, and school and youth groups in the area. The entire Trail, sections of the Trail, or individual sites along the Trail should be marketed to these groups. The next level of markets to be targeted include: I-80 and I-94 travelers, organized bus tour companies and their customers, residents of target markets that the US-12 area's convention and visitor bureaus are targeting with their own marketing programs, and finally, clubs and groups that represent special interests or demographics such as senior citizen groups which often travel with park district or community education lead tours.

Market research also suggests additional consumer characteristics of travelers in southern Michigan or travelers who show an interest in sightseeing/driving and experiences that go along with slower-driving routes. These profiles are useful in making better promotional decisions about copy subject matter, picture selection, media placement, or distribution channels.

Based on a study of summer motorists who stopped at Michigan's welcome centers (conducted in 1998 by Michigan State University), the following traveler characteristics were identified:

- Travelers were most likely from Illinois, Ohio and Michigan.
- New Buffalo Welcome Center (on I-94) saw the greatest number of travelers who stayed in the southern Michigan area, followed by Monroe, Dundee and Coldwater. In 2002, New Buffalo recorded 432,000 car counts, Monroe 378,000, Dundee 216,000 and Coldwater 176,000 (the Center was closed for a few months due to construction). At these Welcome Centers, about 50% of the motorists obtain printed travel materials.
- Two-thirds of the motorists live in households without children; 46% are employed full-time and 31% are retired; 22% earn over \$75,000 of household income, and 30% earn between \$50 and \$75 thousand per year.

- The most popular primary destinations are Detroit, Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Flint, South Haven, Saugatuck and Ypsilanti.
- Half of these motorists are on a trip visiting family or relatives, one-quarter are on a sightseeing trip, and 16% are on a trip featuring outdoor recreation.
- Popular trip activities include: driving for pleasure (55%), shopping (54%), exploring a small town (53%), and visiting a historic site (41%). All these are activities that US-12 can offer!!
- Common information sources used to plan a trip include: one's own past experiences at a destination (60%), maps (55%), welcome centers (40%), and one's own travel files (24%).



Another study from Michigan State University shows that of, residents living in the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and Ontario (Canada), three percent took a pleasure trip to Michigan during 2002 that included one of the eight counties where US-12 is located. The following traveler characteristics were identified:

- Travelers were most likely from Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana
- Six out of ten households did not include children
- Six out of ten households were employed full-time, only 14% were retired
- 38% earned income of over \$65,000; 36% earned between \$42 and \$65 thousand
- Detroit was clearly the most visited destination, followed by Ann Arbor, Coldwater, St. Joseph.
- One out of four trips is to visit family or relatives and another quarter of trips are for entertainment (events)
- Popular trip activities include: driving for pleasure (61%), shopping (60%), exploring a small town (40%), and visiting a historic site (17%). All these are activities that US-12 can offer!!
- Three out of four individuals obtained travel information about Michigan on the web

- Seven out of ten of these travelers stayed overnight in Michigan on average three nights

A final study conducted by Strategic Marketing and Research for the National Scenic Byways Organization presents a national customer profile of byway enthusiasts. The national byway visitor profile shows that:

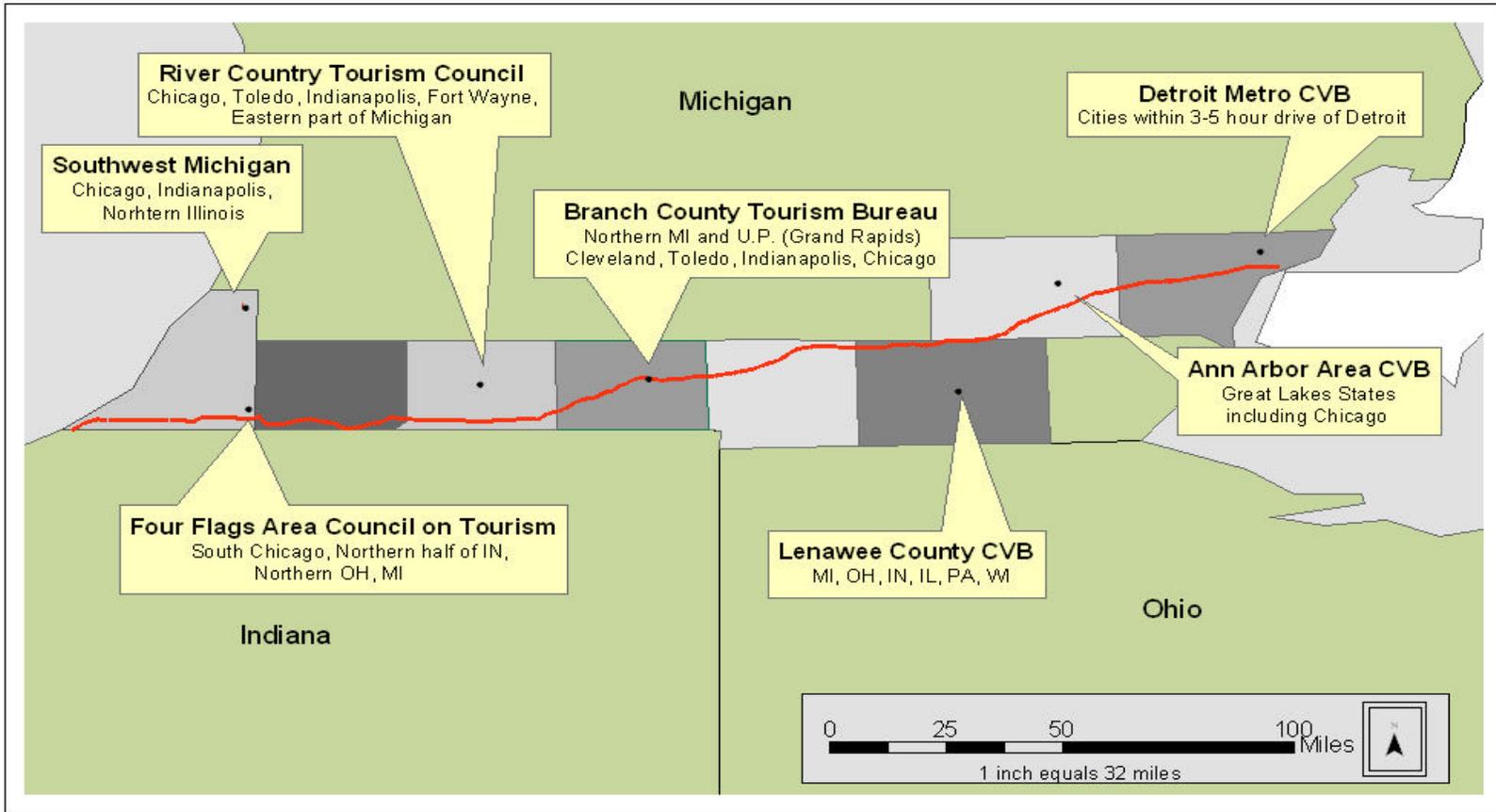
- 65% are households without children and the average age is 47 years old
- Three-quarters of this national sample indicated that they will take a more interesting route (if one is available), whereas the remainder will always take the fastest travel route
- Taking driving tours of various areas and sites without a single destination is common for 14% who said they often take these kinds of vacations, 53% said they take these trips every once in a while, and 33% said never
- The types of trip activities that are associated with byway excursions include history (20%), child-oriented interests (17%), a variety of activities (17%), perpetual shoppers (16%), outdoor activities (15%), or classic experiences (15%)
- Information sources vary by trip activity interests. History buffs prefer travel clubs, 800 numbers, magazine articles, and brochures. The Internet was the top information source for outdoor recreation

oriented byway travelers. Shoppers use travel clubs and the Internet to plan trips

Priority	Target Markets
HIGH (now or soon)	<b>Residents of US-12 counties</b> taking excursions
	<b>Individual travelers</b> interested in travel history, auto history, and small town experiences
	<b>Schools and youth clubs (e.g., 4-H)</b>
MEDIUM (next few years)	<b>I-80 and I-94 travelers</b>
	<b>Bus tours</b> focused on small town experiences, heritage routes, or cultural tourism
	<b>Residents of target markets</b> (primarily outside US area) promoted to by the tourism agencies within the US-12 area (e.g., Chicago, northern Indiana, Grand Rapids, Toledo, Detroit, broader Great Lakes region)
	<b>Clubs and Groups</b> – recreation vehicle, classic car, motorcycle, bicycle, canoe, park district senior citizens, etc.



# Geographic Target Markets of Key US-12 Tourism Agencies



## Visitor Marketing Strategies, Campaigns, and Activities

Once goals, factors affecting the internal and external environment, and target markets are identified, then marketing strategic approaches and marketing campaigns, comprised of many marketing activities, can be created.

Following strategic approaches, marketing campaigns, and activities are presented in the following charts. A final element of marketing strategies is a timeline and suggested leader of these efforts.

### Visitor Marketing Strategic Approaches

Customer	Existing Products <sup>a</sup>	New Products <sup>a</sup>
<b>Existing Visitors</b>	<p><b>Penetration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More visits</li> <li>• More people in travel party</li> <li>• Longer stays</li> <li>• Visits to more places in a single trip</li> </ul>	<p><b>Product Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore existing sites so that they can be open and enjoyed by the public</li> <li>• Create new park or scenic viewing areas</li> <li>• Adaptive reuse of a historic site into a bed and breakfast</li> </ul>
<b>New Visitors</b>	<p><b>Market Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find new tourist markets not currently visiting US-12 area</li> </ul>	<p><b>Diversification</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• US-12 Council creates a heritage park that features how agricultural lives were once lived</li> </ul>

a. Product(s), including the entire Route, specific sites or communities

#### **Penetration**

The US-12 Heritage Trail Council should initially focus on “penetration” or marketing activities which create more visitation by those who currently visit sites and communities along US-12. This is the easiest and possibly a very effective strategy to increase visitation at sites and establish a loyal customer base.

#### **Product Development**

After exhausting this approach, the Council might then look to market development and/or product development. These strategic approaches might involve adding the medium priority target markets such as bus companies, clubs, group travel, or residents living in areas targeted by the area’s tourism marketing organizations.

#### **Market Development**

A product development approach is implementing some of the preservation recommendations for the selected sites along US-12 or working with potential investors to open additional businesses that personify the heritage of the area. These efforts will probably require more effort by the Council and be emphasized over the next few years after the Heritage designation is received.

#### **Diversification**

A final or later effort to the visitor market campaign is to “diversify” into new markets and products. This might include the creation of a heritage site that re-creates a family homestead.



**Visitor Marketing Campaign and Activities**

Goal	Market	Activities
<p><b>Awareness of US-12 Heritage Trail by area residents</b></p>	<p>Residents of US-12 counties</p>	<p><b><i>Campaign theme – US-12: A local treasure</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue and expand special events. New event ideas from community meeting included: quilting shows, “what the hay – a fall event”, Art after Dark, poker playing card tour, underground railroad, Volksmarch, and antique car shows.</li> <li>• Use press releases to market special events and history of US-12. Establish a calendar year press release schedule to follow.</li> <li>• Work with businesses and organizations to use US -12 logo.</li> <li>• Work with successful businesses (e.g., McDonalds) and attractions (e.g., MIS, The Henry Ford) to feature US-12 History (pictures, logos, brochures, maps)</li> <li>• Request special highway signs designating US-12 Heritage Trail (with logo). Work on beautifying US -12 signage with seasonal plantings, possibly involving local gardening clubs.</li> <li>• Work with area meeting planners to create unique US-12 experiences for meetings, excursions, and birthday/anniversary celebrations.</li> <li>• Create a Friends group to assist with promoting the trail locally with residents and businesses.</li> </ul>



**Visitor Marketing Campaign and Activities (continued)**

Goal	Market	Activities
<p><b>Attract tourists to US-12</b></p>	<p>Heritage tourists – independent travelers</p>	<p><b><i>Campaign theme– US-12 is a destination!!</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote US-12 through <b>Travel Michigan</b> with US-12 brochures distributed at four area welcome centers (New Buffalo, Dundee, Coldwater, Monroe), web-site listing, and events placed in their calendar of events. Continue discussions with Ken Yarsevich and Pete Hanses on a specialized Travel Michigan Heritage web-site.</li> <li>• Promote US-12 through the state’s <b>Department of History, Arts and Library (HAL)</b> and <b>Auto National Heritage Area (ANHA)</b>. Work with their staff to be featured in the Lansing Museum and brochures distributed through their outlets and events.</li> <li>• Use press releases to market events and history of US-12. Establish relationship with editors of selected media through continual contact and possibly inviting them on a bus tour or other type of familiarization trip.</li> <li>• Distribute US-12 brochures and themed itineraries to area information centers, including Chambers, libraries, government offices, and heritage sites (e.g., Walker Tavern). Talk to receptionist about the Trail so that they can market the route and experiences along it. Consider a US-12 information center at Walker Tavern, a location in Coldwater, or The Henry Ford museum.</li> <li>• Create and maintain a consumer web-site for all visitors to access to plan trips to/along the trail.</li> <li>• Work with Equity Studies, Sturgis, MI to produce “Moccasins to Main Street,” to be aired on PBS.</li> </ul>
	<p>I-80 and I-94 travelers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Transportation signage to inform motorists of attractions and scenic drive route.</li> <li>• Billboards sponsored by local tourism promoters or businesses (indicating along US-12 Heritage Trail with text or logo)</li> <li>• Brochure distribution in regional welcome centers and visitor information centers.</li> <li>• Department of Transportation designation of US -12 Heritage Trail on the official state highway map.</li> </ul>
	<p>Target markets of area convention and visitor bureaus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with marketing/communication manager of the bureaus to ensure that US-12 Heritage Trail is included in their publications and website. Provide pictures, copy, and listing of events.</li> </ul>



**Visitor Marketing Campaign and Activities (continued)**

Goal	Market	Activities
<p><b>Attract bus tours and groups to US-12</b></p>	<p>In-state and out-of-state bus tours</p>	<p><b><i>Campaign theme – US-12: A tour day awaits your group</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local convention and visitor bureaus to identify bus tour companies. Create itinerary and excursions for these companies by working with sites and local businesses.</li> <li>• Work with bus tour companies who tour the Amish area of Northern Indiana to interest them in a route to visit on the way or the return trip.</li> </ul>
	<p>Clubs and group tours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify park districts or community education programs that program bus trips. Discuss what their customers/members are interested in (for example, shopping, restaurants, plays, gaming). Work with these interests to create a package and determine a price and visitation schedule.</li> <li>• Identify groups/clubs in the area with special interests such as biking, motorcycling, canoeing, antiques, quilting, just to name a few. Ask them for “trade” newsletters from state or regional groups that feature places to visit or events to attend, then target their newsletters with submissions about US-12. Also, see if these local groups can host a state or regional group in the US-12 area. Help plan their meeting and offer excursions.</li> </ul>
	<p>School groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop education lesson plans that are age appropriate, available via website for pre-trip or classroom teaching. Include contact person(s)/place(s) for organized school tours along US-12.</li> <li>• Solicit for studio or field courses for high school and college programs to assist with preservation, planning, marketing, and interpretation needs.</li> </ul>



**Visitor Marketing Plan Timeline**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004 (Jan–Jun)</b>	<b>2004 (Jul–Dec)</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>3 – 5 years</b>	<b>7 – 10 years</b>
	Council	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Part-time Exec. Director (potential) and Council	Exec. Director, staff, and Council
<b>Develop Marketing Goals</b>						
Local awareness <sup>1</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year	_____>	_____>	_____>	_____>
Individual tourists <sup>2</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year	_____>	_____>	_____>	_____>
Bus tours <sup>3</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year	_____>	_____>	_____>	_____>
Increased patronage <sup>4</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year	_____>	_____>	_____>	_____>
New businesses <sup>5</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year	_____>	_____>	_____>	_____>
Business sustainability <sup>6</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year	_____>	_____>	_____>	_____>
Stimulate spending <sup>7</sup>	developed	revisit goals each year	_____>	_____>	_____>	_____>
<b>Identify Target Markets</b>						
Residents <sup>a</sup>	identified	market	_____>	revisit market each year	_____>	_____>
Individual tourists <sup>b</sup>	identified	market	_____>	revisit market each year	_____>	_____>
Schools/youth clubs <sup>c</sup>	identified	market	_____>	revisit market each year	_____>	_____>
I-80/I-94 <sup>d</sup>	identified			market	_____>	revisit market
Bus tours <sup>e</sup>	identified			market	_____>	revisit market
Target markets <sup>f</sup>	identified			market	_____>	revisit market
Clubs and groups <sup>g</sup>	identified			market	_____>	revisit market



**Visitor Marketing Plan Timeline (continued)**

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004 (Jan–Jun)</b>	<b>2004 (Jul–Dec)</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>3 – 5 years</b>	<b>7 – 10 years</b>
	Council	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Council with CVBs, DDA and Chambers	Part-time Exec. Director (potential) and Council	Exec. Director, staff, and Council
<b>Marketing Activities (in superscript goal &amp; target market)</b>						
Special events <sup>1a</sup>	done	continue				
Press releases <sup>1a</sup>	done	continue				
Use of logo <sup>1a</sup>	developed	implement				
Feature history <sup>1a</sup>		implement				
Highway signs <sup>1a</sup>		plan	implement			
Meeting planners <sup>1a</sup>			plan	implement		
Friends group <sup>1a</sup>			plan	implement		
Coop. with Travel Michigan <sup>2b,d</sup>		plan	implement			
HAL/ANHA <sup>2b</sup>		plan	implement			
Itineraries <sup>2b,f</sup>		plan	implement			
Website <sup>2b,f</sup>		continue to develop host site				
Moccasins to Main Street <sup>2b</sup>		consult with producers				
Billboards <sup>2d</sup>			plan	implement		
Bus tour companies <sup>3e</sup>			plan	implement		
Groups/clubs <sup>3g</sup>			plan	implement		
Lesson plans <sup>3c</sup>		plan	implement			
Studio/field courses <sup>3c</sup>		plan	implement			
<b>Evaluation and Expected Successes</b>						
Bus tours					evaluate	
Non-local attendance		evaluate				
New special events		evaluate				
Newsletter subscribers			evaluate			
Website				evaluate		
Magazine article					evaluate	
New businesses				evaluate		





*Monroe Welcome Center, located on I-75, south of Detroit. While not close to US-12, the center is located at a major gateway into the southern portion of the state.*



*New Buffalo Welcome Center, located on I-94, in the western corner of the state. The center is only minutes away from the western gateway of Michigan US-12. Both printed material and travel counselors can suggest US-12 as a more interesting route across the southern part of the state.*

Following these types of marketing activities will lead to increased awareness and visitation by these targeted groups. When target markets visit the area and have a good time, then they are highly likely to tell others about the US-12 Heritage Trail and the communities and sites along it. Tourism is highly dependent on word-of-mouth communications. Positive experiences that leave visitors satisfied will be a very effective marketing tool; however, the opposite can also happen, driving away potential visitors who were told about other's poor experiences. Hospitality and high quality visitor experiences are critical to retaining and attracting visitors.

Additional marketing strategies the Council might consider are themed around cross marketing and future product development:

- **Cross marketing** – at any US-12 event or community promote the next US-12 event. This might be done using banners, adding a sentence to a press release about upcoming events, or through the calendar of event. With sites along the corridor, there should be signage that suggests nearby places to visit (heritage site, accommodations, services).
- **Product development** – the Council might try to organize additional tours featuring houses or gardens, farms, homesteads, downtowns, architecture, just to name a few.
- **Image and copy creation** – the Council might encourage or sponsor photo competitions or ethnographies. Such creative activities can bring attention to the Trail and possibly generate material for marketing or educational purposes.

The three additional visitor marketing goals address the economic impact of increased tourism. Increased spending in the area comes primarily from selling goods and services along the Trail that residents and visitors are likely to purchase. Heritage sites should try to offer goods to buy such as US-12 postcards or other types of merchandise. Locally produced or grown products are generally welcomed by tourists, over goods from overseas. Spending also occurs when visitors stay overnight in local hotels, motels, campgrounds or bed and breakfasts. The more businesses that are locally owned and employ local residents, the greater the economic impact on the local area. Additional economic impact occurs when businesses reinvest in the operation by expanding or improving their site. Signs of successful tourist activity include an increase in: business revenues, jobs, sales and lodging taxes, traffic, and business development and expansion.



## Visitor Positioning Statement

The US-12 Heritage Trail affords a scenic driving experience through 212 miles of southern Michigan. On their trip between downtown Detroit and the picturesque shores of Lake Michigan, modern day US-12 travelers can learn about past journeys along this route and the men and women who made them. US-12 is easily accessible at several points from both I-94 (to the north) and the Indiana Toll Road (to the south), and makes a rewarding yet convenient alternative to these fast-paced highways. Travelers who venture onto this historic route will enjoy a leisurely yet educational experience as they pass through the many small communities, complete with traditional family businesses housed in vibrant Main Street settings, which lie along it. In between, they will appreciate the intact agricultural landscapes that dominate the area. Follow in the footsteps of America's forebears along historic US-12!

## Summary of the Visitor 4 P's

This section provides a summary of the classic four P's of a marketing plan – product/program, place, price, and promotions/communications. The Council at this time is not setting prices, so this “p” is not considered in this marketing plan.

### *Product*

- 212 mile Michigan state highway
- A day or overnight trip along the US-12 Heritage Trail
- Visits to several heritage sites, following one of many Trail itineraries

### *Place*

- Eight counties in southern Michigan
- Corridor used for transportation by animals and people ranging from “on-foot” to a 55 miles an hour car ride
- A string of communities and open spaces, often agricultural farms and pastures, that benefited from travel along the corridor and its location in between two major cities – Detroit and Chicago
- Alternative, slower transportation route located between I-80 (Indiana Toll Road) to the south and I-94 to the north

### *Promotions*

- **Publicity and press releases** – a media list should be maintained that includes local, state, and regional media outlets. In addition to the media, these press releases should also be sent to tourism marketing organizations so that they can direct media to the Council and tourists to US-12 events and sites. Contact names, phone and fax number, address, and e-mail should be on record. A press release calendar should be created by season and calendar year to plan out the “newsworthy” efforts and activities of the Council.
- **Advertising** – paid placement of ads is probably not likely by the Council. Distribution of the logo so that others who advertise can co-brand with the US-12 product is more feasible for a group without a marketing budget.
- **Word-of-mouth** – the Council should ask businesses, heritage sites, and accommodations to ask visitors/customers how they learned about US-12. One out of every two travel parties will probably say a friend or relative visited the area and recommended it as a great place to learn about history and take a vacation.
- **Sales** – Council members will need to use personalized communications and approaches to reach out to businesses, heritage sites, state agencies, tourism organizations, the and media to interest them in US-12 Heritage Trail. Efforts to interest bus and group tours will also require personalized selling approaches.
- **Merchandise** – using artwork and photography, new printed and electronic products can feature US-12 Heritage Trail. Some examples include: a postcard series, posters/pictures, decals/appliqués/stickers, jewelry, history books, and coloring books.



### Potential Successes of the Visitor Marketing Plan

- Attract several in- and out-of-state bus tour companies to add segments of US-12 to their itineraries
- Increase number of residents from outside eight US-12 counties attending existing US-12 events
- Develop several new corridor-wide special events to add to existing offerings, and focus on attracting non-local MI and IN residents (from outside US-12 counties) to them
- Increase number of subscribers to newsletter – trade-type organizations by 10%, residents and visitors by 20%
- Launch new website by December 2004, set and meet targets for numbers of visitors
- One feature article in regional magazine such as *Midwest Living* by December 2005
- New shops, restaurants and B&Bs opened in all major corridor communities



# **SECTION 7** **US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL** **COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Methods for effectively communicating the value of the history of the US-12 corridor and the news and events relative to the US-12 Heritage Trail are critical to successfully building on and expanding the interest and momentum generated to date by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council. They are also integral to the marketing effort of the Council. A coordinated communication approach has been designed and presented in this plan that will give the US-12 Heritage Trail further identity and legitimacy. The graphic design central to this task plays an important role in presenting the US-12 story in a way that is attractive and inviting and visually integrates each communication piece in a cohesive identity that evokes US-12 and its history.

In a series of county meetings, participants were asked to adopt a historical persona, famous or otherwise, and write one or two postcards about their experiences on US-12 to someone else in the same time period. The historical themes emphasized by these responses were used in conjunction with site analysis information and historical readings provided in Council files in a brainstorming session to develop a broad-scale theme for the US-12 corridor.

The results of this exercise, shown on this page, have been integrated in the three communication pieces developed for the Heritage Trail Council. These are a promotional brochure, newsletter design, and web site.

## **RESULTS**

The brainstorming activity attempted to focus on the essence of what the story of US-12 is all about, and sought a simple compelling message that was representative of all sections of the corridor. "Evolution of a Corridor Theme" represents the ideas and transitions in thinking that occurred through the session. Interestingly, the theme "*Pathway to Highway*" was suggested only at the conclusion of the discussion. It was not an idea presented in the middle of the process. Nor was it one of several representative phrases that were voted upon. Once voiced, all concurred that the concept is a strong yet simple distillation of the history of the US-12 corridor, one that is easy to understand at a glance yet subtle in the breadth of change that is implied by three simple words. Its simplicity is also an important consideration when using it as part of any promotional message about the corridor. Using this theme/brand, three communication pieces were designed for this project: a marketing brochure, a newsletter layout, and a basic web site for the corridor. Each is discussed in more detail below. Samples of each communication piece are provided at the end of the section.

### **US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL EVOLUTION OF A CORRIDOR THEME**

Tracing the landscape, Growth,  
Struggles for the Homeland (settlement),  
Food for a Nation (Agriculture), Evolution of Movement,  
Crossroads, Commerce, Great Lakes,  
Pathway to Place, Movement through Time,  
History of Movement and Connection, Adventure,  
Transportation-Transformation,  
New Beginnings, Two Great Cities, Change,  
New Starts (Beginnings), Migration,  
Destination, Commerce, Barns to Businesses,  
Great Lakes Connection (arterial, history of movement),  
Between the Great Lakes,  
Linking the Great Lakes, Traveling and Settling,  
Migration and Settlement,  
Journey and Rest, Access-Connection,  
Technology-Evolution  
Rhythm of \_\_\_\_\_ (life, travel & development, itineraries across landscape),  
Footpaths to Wheels, Path of History (immigration),  
Connection - Thread - Link,  
Progression, History of Movement between the Great Lakes,  
Traveling and Settling between the Great Lakes,  
Michigan History between the Great Lakes,  
Moving through History-The Great Lakes Connection,

***Pathway to Highway-the History of US-12***

## **EVOLUTION OF A CORRIDOR THEME**

## **PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE**

A four-panel promotional brochure has been developed as a marketing aid in promoting the US-12 Heritage Trail to potential travelers. It will be distributed by mail on request, through the US-12 web site and will be on display at public places along the corridor likely to experience tourist travel such as welcome centers, museums, bed and breakfasts, and other points



of travel interest that would display travel brochures.

The display method for distribution of the brochure dictates that its appearance must be individualized enough so that it stands out among other brochures in the display and successfully competes for attention by the casual browser. It is designed in 8 ½ x 14" format, four-color gateway fold. The cover displays the corridor theme and name, and a historic photo representative of one of the eras in which US-12 was the predominant transportation corridor between Detroit and Chicago. Upon opening, the gateway fold presents the browser with a message that invites people to explore US-12 as a leisurely yet educational alternative to the hectic travel of today.

Opening the brochure further reveals a map of the full corridor set in its southern Michigan context with county names, major cities and crossroads easily identifiable. Images and sites that were selected from each county for display would be attractive to visitors in their present condition and are all, with the exception of Davenport House, open to the public.

## NEWSLETTER

### Layout Design

The newsletter design builds on the foundation of the existing publications and incorporates the theme identity used in the brochure coupled with the corridor logo. It is expected to be circulated

both electronically and by U.S. mail as the Council builds their electronic circulation list.

The layout has been designed to provide flexibility within the context of an unchanging recognizable format. The front and back page banners, and the inside corridor map remain constant and are intended to become a recognized component of US-12 Heritage Trail communications. The map may be keyed both electronically and in printed format with an article featuring a particular place on the corridor.

Within that familiar framework, variables include the color scheme, the corridor image shown in the banner, and how the internal space is used for articles. For example, the front page will easily accommodate three short articles, one long one or any other variation. The inside and back pages have been similarly designed for flexibility. The rear panel may also be used for display ad space for US-12 Heritage Trail financial sponsors.

Since a certain consistency is useful in building identity and reader familiarity, we recommend that, in addition to the graphic format, the following remain constant:

- Locate the US-12 calendar in a consistent space in the newsletter, preferably on the back page where it is easily visible;
- Always include a featured destination. Whether educational or promotional, readers seek feature articles and are likely to visit them in their travels;

- Each feature should have a "Did you know" about the featured county. It's a fun educational tool and challenges readers about their knowledge of US-12 history; and
- Use the Kid's Korner to draw in younger travelers and make them feel as though someone is also thinking of them. The puzzler, word search and fun facts may each be designed to appeal to different ages. Besides, kids are not always young!

### Suggested Content

Content ideas for the US-12 newsletter and website have evolved from concepts for individual articles to broader ideas for ongoing "columns" whose content would change on a regular basis. The selected themes of each series provide information about various aspects of US-12, both historic and present day, that would be of interest to the US-12 traveler and local community. As set up, they will serve as marketing, promotional and educational tools that will foster a stronger sense of identity for the corridor, community pride in its history and present day features, and tourist interest from the broader region. Conceptual themes for these ongoing "columns" include:

- ❑ The Faces of US-12;
- ❑ Recognizing Historical Building Styles;
- ❑ US-12 Stories;
- ❑ On the Road: Eats and Treats;
- ❑ Biking, Hiking and Other Fun Things;
- ❑ The US-12 Community;
- ❑ The Kids Korner; and
- ❑ Shopping Treasures.



Article ideas, a suggested outline for each series, and topic ideas for most of these ideas are discussed in the following pages.

**Series One: The Faces of US-12**

Although the history of US-12 is strongly reflected in the historic structures along the road, it is the people of the US-12 community that really make the corridor come alive for visitors. This series showcases the variety of people – historical or alive today, important or not, that are part of the history of US-12. Their stories reflect our own and strengthen the connection between the US-12 community and those who travel it for work or pleasure.

This series should also be used to document the personal stories of those who settled US-12 that would otherwise be lost. Many of these stories are well documented. Others are little-known personal stories from family histories.

**Content Outline**

- Introduce the Character
- Historical Connection
- Character Background
- The Story
- Excerpted Writing (if applicable)
- Summary – Sources for further information
- Location, Hours, Web site (if applicable)

**Suggested People**

(Possible titles for some are included in italics)

- John Farmer: Reflections on Walking US-12 Today*
- Father Gabriel Richard
- Jens Jensen
- Henry Ford
- Drier's Meat Market: *One of US-12's Favorite Places*
- Chief White Pigeon
- George Smith
- Atlas Mill-Brian Reilly: Revitalizing a Centennial Business, Living Principles of Sustainability*
- E.O. Grosvenor
- Centennial Farm families

**Series Two:**

**Recognizing Historical Building Styles**

The US-12 built environment reflects a variety of historical building styles that have evolved since its early beginnings. From signs to bridges to residences and commercial buildings, there are many fine examples along the corridor. Some are exquisite examples of a particular period; others represent the unique style of one individual or have evolved in response to unique regional or functional influences. Each speaks to a facet of US-12 history.

**Content Outline**

- Introduction
- Background/Historical period
- Identifying characteristics
- Designer or Builder (if applicable)
- Influencing factors associated with history or the region

- Other Corridor examples
- Related Web sites or other references

**Suggested Buildings**

- Davenport House
- White Pigeon Land Office
- Christmere House
- 1950 Motel signs
- Mottville Camelback Bridge
- Gas Stations
- Clinton Inn
- Michigan Central Railroad Depot, Niles
- Capri Drive-In / Allen's Root Beer Stand
- The One-Room Schoolhouse

**Series Three: US-12 Stories**

Some US-12 stories are broader in scope or permit a more general discussion of an aspect of the Corridor's history. These stories set a broader historical framework that helps orient readers and travelers to the larger history of the road. This series may include articles that involve only places, or also individuals.

**Content Outline**

- Introduction
- Historical background
- Story
- Associated Structures
- Today's Issues & Solutions (if applicable)
- Related Web sites or other references

**Suggested Topics**

- Irish Hills Towers
- Michigan Central Railroad Station, Detroit



- ❑ The Evolution of the Ford Rouge Plant
- ❑ McFadden Ross House: Early Dearborn History
- ❑ The Turkey/Corset Connection and the Featherbone Factory
- ❑ The Settlement Landscape Pattern
- ❑ The Influence of the Automobile
- ❑ US-12's Farming Heritage: It's value and peril
- ❑ US-12 and the Underground Railroad
- ❑ Moccasin Bluff
- ❑ Traveling US-12 by Stagecoach
- ❑ The changing surface of US-12: The real meaning of potholes!
- ❑ Pear's Mill

#### Series Four:

##### On The Road – Eats & Treats

This series offers an alternative way to profile special places on the corridor and a way to provide additional information by profiling 1-2 places in each newsletter issue. Each profile should include a description of the place, including known history and alternative features written to market the corridor to new and familiar travelers. Profiles should include museums, B&B's, restaurants and parks. Information may overlap with the arts.

##### Content Outline

- ❑ Description of what it is
- ❑ History of its evolution
- ❑ Special features
- ❑ Hours/address/website (if applicable)
- ❑ Apple Cider Century, Three Oaks
- ❑ Apple Fest and Craft Show, Coldwater

- ❑ Harvest Time at the Rentschler Farm Museum, Saline
- ❑ Celtic Festival, Saline
- ❑ Blossom time Festival, St. Joseph/Benton Harbor, MI

##### Possible Locations

- ❑ McCourtie Park, Somerset Center
- ❑ Drier's Meat Market, Three Oaks
- ❑ R-11 Classic Car Museum, Burr Oak
- ❑ Christmere House Bed & Breakfast, Sturgis
- ❑ Allen's Root Beer Stand/Capri Drive-In, Coldwater
- ❑ Profiling US-12's Farm Markets: Byler's Farm Market, Sturgis
- ❑ Three Oaks Spokes Bicycle Museum, Three Oaks
- ❑ Michigan Southern Depot Museum, Sturgis
- ❑ Henry Ford Estate: Fair Lane, Dearborn
- ❑ Commandant's Headquarters: Dearborn Historical Museum, Dearborn
- ❑ Corner Café, Sturgis
- ❑ Vickers Theater, Three Oaks
- ❑ Tap Room Restaurant, Ypsilanti
- ❑ Beaches, State Parks, and Natural areas
- ❑ Special Picnic Places
- ❑ US-12 Recipes

#### Series Five:

##### Biking, Hiking and Other Fun Things

Many people today are interested in recreational cycling, hiking, canoeing, or other active or passive recreation in their leisure time. These activities offer entirely different perspectives of US-12's changing landscape and provide a more intimate close-up view. Biking trail maps are currently available for certain areas around the corridor such as Three Oaks and New Buffalo, but others could also be mapped if not currently available. Maps may be prepared by theme, corollary activity and/or location. Because of the heavy traffic on US-12 and the absence of a good shoulder on portions of it, biking and walking trails are best kept to side roads or paths near US-12 with trailheads in public locations where parking is available. This is also a great way to see some of the many lakes that are near the corridor. The concept of a cycling event may be expanded into an annual, marketing/fund-raising event, such as "Bicycle Through History," that takes cyclists across the state traveling US-12.

##### Content Outline

- ❑ Name and description of the route (include map and length)
- ❑ Description of the region's geological/agricultural history
- ❑ Present conditions
- ❑ Nearby historic features
- ❑ Suggested places to eat and stay



#### Suggested Self-Guided Tours

- Fall Color Tour
- Harvest Tour
- On the Trail of the Underground Railroad
- Spring Wildflower Tour
- Centennial Farm Tour
- Bicycle Through History
- Three Rivers Fall Color Tour, Three Rivers
- National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary, Detroit

#### **Series Six: The US-12 Community**

In addition to many who travel the highway today, much of the US-12 community is likely to be unknown to those in target markets. This series is designed to introduce the local jurisdictions that form the backbone of today's US-12 Corridor and to provide some background knowledge about the travel environment. Related Web sites/references should also be provided.

#### Content Outline/Suggested Topics

- County/Township profiles (include history if available)
  - population
  - key industries
  - major towns
  - recreational features: public access, parks, fishing, boating, markets, contact information for Chambers of Commerce and Convention and Visitor Bureaus
  - historical structure: outside villages, register status
  - rentals

- important facts
- City Village – History – Associated structures
  - key figures
  - travel amenities
  - museums/hours topic
  - restaurants/hours
  - places to stay
- Other Activities along US-12
  - antiquing
  - theater
  - walking tours – season/hours
  - markets
- Current Events – corridor wide, by county



## WEB SITE

The US-12 Heritage Trail Web site home page carries the corridor theme and logo in the banner similar to the newsletter however the banner images will be programmed to scroll through a series of views of the corridor that are descriptive of its character. The views may be changed, such as according to the season, as determined by the Council. The home page will present users with a variety of ways to explore and gather information about US-12's history and present-day features:

- The subjects for three of the four quadrants of the home page have been selected to appeal to a broad range of interests to travelers;
- A US-12 calendar provides current activity information along the corridor; and
- A key word search may be done by topic.

As with the newsletter, opportunities have been provided to include information that will be of interest to a variety of audiences ranging from school children to travelers from outside the corridor, to tourist industry professionals. Although, as of this writing, the Southwestern Michigan Commission is hosting the Web site, we expect it will ultimately be hosted by the US-12 Heritage Trail Council. This report suggests an expansion plan for the site that may be followed as information about corridor features and the ability of the US-12 Heritage Trail Council to manage the site grows. Entries that are noted with a (\*) are functional and/or contain information at the time of delivery to the US-12 Heritage Trail Council. Other screens will bear an "Under Construction" message.

## US-12 WEB SITE SUGGESTED HIERARCHY

### Level One

**About US-12\***

### Level Two

US-12 Heritage Trail Council  
History and Purpose\*  
Get Involved\*

Learning Opportunities

US-12 Photo Gallery

US-12 Newsletters\*  
US-12 FAQs\*  
US-12 History\*

### Level Three

*Meeting Minutes*  
*Meeting Schedule*  
*US-12 Application and Management Plan\**  
*Contacts*

*Lectures/Events*  
*Architectural Styles*  
*Preservation Guidelines*  
*School Programs*  
*Coloring for kids*

*Berrien County*  
*Cass County*  
*St. Joseph County*  
*Branch County*  
*Hillsdale County*  
*Lenawee County*  
*Washtenaw County*  
*Wayne County*



**US-12 WEB SITE SUGGESTED HIERARCHY**  
continued

**Level One**  
**Things to do**

**Level Two**  
Theme tours\*

**Level Three**

Outdoor recreation

*Biking*  
*Canoeing*  
*Hiking*  
*Nearby parks and natural areas*

Festivals and Events

Shopping

*Antiques*  
*Food*  
*Farm markets*

Special places

*McCourtie Park*  
*Moccasin Bluff*  
*Lake Michigan beaches*  
*Warren Woods*  
*Search by County*

Restaurants

**Places to stay**

Searcy by City

Search by type

Book a room

**Brochures  
and maps**

Tours\*

US-12 Brochure\*

**Deals and  
discounts**



**US-12 WEB SITE SUGGESTED HIERARCHY**  
continued

**Level One**  
**Trade**  
**Professionals**

**Level Two**  
Sample Itineraries

**Level Three**  
*Tours*  
*Antiquing on US-12*  
*Centennial Farms*  
*Tracing the Underground Railroad*

Marketing/Promotion Suggestions

Convention and Visitor Bureaus

**Links\***

Travel Michigan  
Michigan Department of Transportation  
MDOT Heritage Route Program  
Michigan Historical Society  
H.A.L.  
National Register of Historic Places  
Michigan State Historic Preservation Office  
Berrien County  
Cass County  
St. Joseph County  
Branch County  
Hillsdale County  
Lenawee County  
Washtenaw County  
Wayne County

As perhaps all know who have used the worldwide web, several cautions may be in order. At the time of the release of this report the pages/information available through the site is limited. It is critical to both expand the information the site offers quickly and format it in a way that is its own. While adding links to travel sites that constantly update their information is useful (such as is provided at kickoff), the US-12 Web site will only draw repeat visitors if the information is changing and up to date. For this reason, expanding the site menu, increasing the number of pages and articles, and keeping the calendar filled and changing is vital to its success.



## Conclusion

The US-12 Corridor is an incredible historical resource that, if developed well, can speak eloquently for the history of southern Michigan. In doing so, it represents the stories of many of our fore-bearers, both those who settled in southern Michigan and those who moved through on their way to points west.

In this, the start of the Twenty-first Century, at a time when people are perhaps less and less rooted to a sense of place in the landscape, preserving this history and sharing its story can reconnect us and promote the values of what we have.

With designation as a Historic Heritage Route, the US-12 Heritage Trail Council is poised to continue to lead an effective campaign to enhance these important resources, and teach others in the community of their value.



*LENAWEE COUNTY*



*BRANCH COUNTY*



*CASS COUNTY*



# **US-12 Heritage Trail**

Heritage Route Application  
and  
Corridor Management Plan

APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX A** **RESOLUTIONS OF SUPPORT**

### **SIGNATORY ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING US-12 HERITAGE TRAIL NOMINATION**

City of Wayne  
City of Ypsilanti  
Charter Township of Ypsilanti  
Pittsfield Charter Township  
City of Saline  
Bridgewater Township  
Lenawee County-  
Board of Commissioners  
City of Hillsdale  
Township of Somerset  
Village of Jonesville  
City of Coldwater  
City of Bronson  
City of Niles  
Washtenaw County-  
Board of Commissioners  
Congressman Nick Smith  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Ypsilanti Area Visitors and  
Convention Bureau  
Hillsdale College  
Ypsilanti Historical Society  
Order of Eastern Star  
Saline Area Historical Society  
St. Joseph County Historical Society  
Bronson Kiwanis Club

Washtenaw County Historic District  
Commission  
Michigan Department of Transportation  
Congresswoman Debbie Stabenow  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Representative Gene DeRossett  
Michigan House of Representatives  
Bronson Rotary Club  
Quincy Lions Club  
Museum Gallery Gift Shop  
Country Table Restaurant  
Bronson Community Foundation  
Branch County Historical Society  
Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society  
Livonia Historic Preservation  
Commission  
Franklin Historical Society

In addition, 10 individuals have provided letters of support.



# **APPENDIX B** **SUGGESTED PROGRAM** **INITIATIVES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In addition to the more site- or building-related preservation/enhancement recommendations included in Section 5, there are a wide variety of strategies and existing program initiatives available that can serve as tools to help preserve or improve the general character of the US-12 corridor. Most of these apply to more rural rather than urban sections of the corridor and can be used by local governments, private property owners, civic organizations, businesses or others alone or in partnerships. A brief discussion of a number of regulatory and policy initiatives follows.

## **ROADSIDE LANDSCAPING AS ENHANCEMENT OR SCREENING**

Roadside landscaping generally involves planting trees, shrubs or herbaceous plants to enhance views from the road, or selectively screen those that are less desirable. This type of planting may occur within or out of the US-12 right-of-way and may extend across more than one parcel. The design style is likely to be an informal one, intended to improve barren areas or complement sections with existing vegetation. Restoring larger areas of fallow land through ecological restoration should also be considered as opportunities are presented. Native

landscape restoration will improve habitat and storm water management, and help recreate a sense of the pre-settlement landscape crossed by many early travelers. This kind of restoration effort may include prairie, woodland and wetland components. The NRCS Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program should be considered if there is interest in this level of effort. Further information may be found through local NRCS offices.

Most common screening techniques use a variety of trees and shrubs to at least partially block undesirable views from the road. This may be appropriate for areas of heavier industrial use or areas where a particular land use is out of context with the surrounding landscape. Evergreen varieties will usually predominate the plant selection, however, a mix of evergreen, deciduous and/or ornamental trees can enhance the seasonal interest of the plan.

In contrast, views from other sections of US-12 may benefit from selective removal of vegetation to better reveal the striking views that sections of the roadway offer. This clearing should be done carefully and in a way that maintains a natural appearance. Like planting enhancement or screening, clearing may also be done within or outside the corridor right-of-way. If done within MDOT's right-of-way, a permit is required.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Policy recommendations typically involve some type of agreement, control or motivation for landowners owning land adjacent to or within

view of US-12 where current land use is believed to be important to the vision of the US-12 Heritage Trail. The programs briefly discussed in this section involve purchase, regulatory or owner incentive strategies. A purchase strategy typically involves the transfer of some intrinsic value associated with a property, and often includes the exchange of money. Regulatory strategies control land use and site design through zoning and ordinances imposed by local governments. Owner incentives provide a benefit to a landowner in exchange for an improvement on the land that benefits the vision for US-12.

## **Purchase Programs**

A purchase approach, of property or specific property rights, provides the highest degree of certainty in supporting the goals for US-12 at a landscape scale.

## **Transfer of Development Rights**

Under a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, rights to develop one property are acquired and moved (or transferred) to a second property. Typically, this type of transfer is applied in areas to promote farmland and open space preservation. Farmers sell development rights from a "sending zone" and allow them to be transferred to a "receiving zone" where allowable development density is increased. TDR programs can be funded through local government or developer purchase. The transfer of development rights is legally documented and permanently enforced by incorporating the change in the property deed language of the respective properties. Property taxes on the donating property are reduced



accordingly. Although township authority to engage in a TDR program has not been officially confirmed by the State, at least one township is developing a creative approach that includes some TDR components.

### **Purchase of Development Rights**

Similar in many respects to Transfer of Development Rights, PDR allows for the rights to develop a property to be acquired outright often by a land trust or non-profit conservancy organization. This acquisition protects the property in its current condition by restrictive language incorporated into the deed. Typically, the land remains in agricultural or open space use. Tax benefits are often realized by the seller. Under PDR programs, the rights to develop are not transferred to another area. Farmland in the Mission Peninsula near Traverse City has been preserved using this program.

### **Donation of Development Rights**

The development rights of a specific property may also be donated for a nominal cost or as a gift to another party, such as a land conservancy. Donation may be appropriate where an owner is interested in reducing the amount of property held in whole, or part. As with TDR/PDR programs, there may also be substantial tax benefits with donation. The responsibilities of managing the property may be transferred to an organization or second party that would oversee the management of the land and preserve its scenic and natural values.

### **Land Conservancies or Land Trusts**

Typically, a land conservancy is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to protecting land through direct purchase, donation, or protective easements. These organizations preserve farmland, important habitat, natural areas or areas of scenic quality by working directly with interested land owners to develop options for protecting and preserving land in a way that meets the land owner's goals. Because these purchase, donation or conservation agreements are legally binding, they enable the land owner to permanently protect his/her land and restrict its uses to those that are defined in the agreement.

Land trusts and conservancies may vary in their charter and focus and should be contacted for the specific types of programs offered. They are often supported through their members and are administered locally by staff and residents. They may consult regularly with experienced specialists. Due to its length, US-12 is likely served by several conservancies including the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, based in Portage, Michigan ([www.swmlc.org](http://www.swmlc.org)), the Washtenaw Land Trust in Ann Arbor, Michigan ([www.washtenawlandtrust.org](http://www.washtenawlandtrust.org)), and the Superior Land Conservancy in Ypsilanti, Michigan ([www.bendor.org/slc.shtml](http://www.bendor.org/slc.shtml)).

### **Wetland Reserve Program**

The Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for landowners interested in protecting, restoring and enhancing wetlands on their property. Funding is available

to restore wetlands previously drained for agricultural purposes. Interested landowners should apply to their respective county NRCS office. Applications are evaluated by the NRCS State offices in Lansing. While the sign-up period is continuous, selections are typically made three times a year in March, May and June.

The WRP offers three options:

- a permanent easement (USDA pays 100 percent restoration and legal costs),
- a 30-year easement (USDA pays 75 percent restoration and 100 percent of legal costs), or
- a 10-year cost share agreement (USDA pays 75 percent restoration costs).

The selection process is competitive. Factors considered include but are not limited to: size, benefits vs. relative cost of the restoration, and location. Landowner benefits include:

- retaining control over access;
- maintaining ownership of the land and the ability to sell the land, including the easement; and
- maintaining rights to hunt, fish, trap, or pursue other appropriate recreation.

Permanent easements also provide negotiated payment to the landowner. The WRP has been extremely successful nationwide. Further details of the program are available through local NRCS offices for each county.

### **Conservation Easement**

A conservation easement is a legal agreement on an existing property that can be used by the owner to protect farmland, agricultural lands or



other important natural features and their respective functions and values. The grantor of the easement (property owner) stipulates that the property is to be maintained in a specified condition, and conveys that intent to the receiving government agency, conservancy or land trust. Often a conservation easement will limit or define the extent of activities on the property that would alter its current condition, such as:

- Logging;
- Changing topography;
- Placing fill material;
- Dredging, removing or excavating soil or materials;
- Building a structure;
- Draining surface water;
- Plowing, tilling, or cultivating; or
- removing vegetation.

Easements may also be used to conserve a property's scenic value. Typically, conservation easements run with the land in perpetuity unless modified or terminated by written agreement of both parties.

Easements for the purpose of preserving a historic building are usually façade easements. Typically, they involve agreement between the property owner and governing body – usually the city – and include either low-interest loans, or a tax incentive agreement with the property owner in exchange for preservation of the historic façade in its original configuration.

Important facts about conservation easements include:

- Conservation easements allow the owner to place permanent restrictions on the land while keeping it in private ownership.
- Conservation easements allow the owner to continue living on the land while it is protected.
- Conservation easements allow the landowner to retain title to the property, while potentially reducing future real estate taxes. Income taxes and capital gains taxes may also be reduced based on the form of the agreement.
- Conservation easements may be structured to permit some land development.

## REGULATORY STRATEGIES

Where desired, local governments may use a variety of regulatory mechanisms to help maintain the existing character of the US-12 corridor. While local governments may have some tools described in this section in place such as design standards in some communities, others may provide a new means for maintaining a favorable environment relative to the historical nature of US-12. Use of these regulatory tools should be used to guide the evolution of growth along US-12 in a manner that is compatible with its historic nature.

### Design Standards

Design standards help define the appearance of allowable land uses within a defined zoning

district, as well as the type of architectural changes that may occur in a formally designated historic district. For example, language in the zoning ordinance may stipulate the types of materials that can or cannot be used, the number of canopy trees per 100-feet of property line or the minimum size of parking lot islands. Typically, standards of this type are tied to a zoning or historic district instead of a specific land area. Design standards may also include:

- lighting styles,
- building heights,
- architectural styles,
- landscape buffers,
- approved plant material,
- curb cuts; and
- parking lot locations.

The American Planning Association (APA) ([www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)), can provide further resources in this regard. For example, for a subscription service fee of \$100, the APA's Planning Advisory Service (PAS) will assemble an informational packet of material including sample regulations and excerpts from PAS Reports, APA publications and other sources on the issues such as view protection in rural areas. Local townships may find two APA resources helpful. One, PAS Report 489/490 titled, "Aesthetics, Community Character and the Law" may be of interest, as well as a second APA report, "Designing Urban Corridors," which may offer more general information. Contact the APA through the web or by calling (312) 431-9100. Design standards more directly applicable to historic structures are discussed in *Policies and Guidelines* at the end of this section. The Michigan Main Streets program at



www.medc.michigan.org is also likely to be helpful.

### **Overlay Districts**

An overlay district is a land use regulation applied to a designated land area to protect specific features or mandate specific enhancements when land within the district is developed, regardless of its zoning category. This form of regulation is tied to a specified land area rather than to a particular zoning district. With respect to the Corridor Management Plan for US-12, townships should consider adopting this tool for land within the limits defined for the corridor. If adopted, regulations must be developed that apply to the land within the overlay district. For example, if the underlying zoning were industrial, and allowed three story buildings with a dimension no greater than 300 feet long, an overlay district might limit height to one story with a maximum building length of 150 feet. Or, it could dictate that the view from the highway not be blocked more than 20 percent on any parcel. The magnitude of landscaping for new development in the overlay might be increased above what would otherwise be required in that zoning district. Language applied to land development within the district might also increase setbacks and require protection of mapped natural features or historic structures.

The purpose of the overlay district should be clearly defined. For the US-12 Corridor Management Plan, suggested language might include "The landscape, woodlands, wetlands, farming vistas and historic buildings (public and private) within the US-12 corridor are important

to the overall historic character, scenic quality and commercial value of [\_\_\_\_\_ Township, \_\_\_\_\_ County] and the State of Michigan. For many, the historic nature of the corridor provides community identity, a sense of their own history and places of interest attractive to tourists. As such, it should serve to leave a positive impression of the history of US-12 on those driving within it or living in its communities. For these reasons, scenic views and historic properties within the corridor, as defined by three miles to each side of US-12, shall be protected by adhering to the following standards for development..."

### **Billboard and Cellular Tower Policies**

Billboard regulation is a sensitive, often polarizing issue. While there is general dislike of this form of advertisement, billboards continue to be a common roadside element. Some municipalities have enacted billboard regulation ordinances that may prohibit billboards within certain zoning districts and establish a minimum distance from that district where they can be placed. The spacing between billboards, their size, height and linear dimension can also be regulated. Other ordinance provisions can control level and time of lighting, moving elements, attached elements (e.g., flags or pinwheels) and intensity of paint or color (e.g., prohibit phosphorescent paint). Scenic America, a national organization dedicated to protecting natural beauty and distinctive community character provides helpful information in a variety of formats about a number of development-related issues including billboards. They have developed a model sign ordinance for municipalities that may be helpful to US-12

communities. Their web site is [www.scenic.org](http://www.scenic.org). Their Michigan affiliate is [www.scenicmichign.org](http://www.scenicmichign.org).

As an alternative to prohibiting the signs altogether, municipalities could work with sign companies to develop design standards for billboards that reflect the historic style of a particular period. Support by Scenic America in this effort would be helpful. Recognized adoption of the US-12 Corridor Management Plan by the township, city or village may first be necessary as the basis for enacting any further regulation of this practice.

Logo Signs are increasingly popular along highways for conveying commercial information. A single sign near an approaching exit typically displays the name and logo of nearby restaurants, hotels or service stations, and provides location information in one, easy to read unobtrusive sign. Because information is presented clearly and simply, logo signs are proving to be useful tools for motorists desiring specifics about a certain exit than a large number of billboards along the corridor competing for attention. Fees are relatively low. Another program called Tourist Oriented Directional Signs, or TODS, similarly advertises historic sites, natural areas and other tourist attractions located off the state rural roadway system. Further information regarding these programs is available from the MDOT at (517) 335-2625 or by calling 1-888-645-6467.

Similarly, cell towers are also becoming a dominant part of the roadway landscape. Regulating a tower's height, lighting, and



appearance and requiring it accommodate multiple antennae will help reduce their dominance in the landscape. Generally, towers less than 200 feet high are less likely to need lighting. Red lights tend to be less obtrusive than white strobe lights and can be used as part of a dual lighting system for nighttime use if white lights are still required during the day. Towers can be constructed in "mono-pole" fashion to minimize the dominance of larger scale lattice structures. Approval of new cell towers can be made contingent upon the ability of the tower to accommodate several antennae representing several companies (commonly referred to as co-location). Co-location can also be applied to existing features such as silos or water towers by working with companies to locate antennae on these types of existing structures. Landscaping requirements around the base of the towers would also improve the view of these structures from the road.

### **Ordinance and Master Plan Revisions**

New ordinances or revisions to existing ordinances such as increasing setback or landscaping requirements may be required to implement regulatory strategies. Revisions may be easier to enact and may be effective more quickly. Members of the US-12 Heritage Trail Council should work with individual municipalities to evaluate if revising an existing ordinance or drafting a new one would most appropriately support the goals for the Heritage Trail as noted in this plan.

Recognition of the historic character and value of the US-12 Corridor in the township and county Master Plans that are crossed by US-12 is

also a valuable strategy. With this formal recognition, municipalities may enact more detailed codes that will protect the qualities emphasized in the Corridor Management Plan. For example, by recognizing in the Master Plan that southern Michigan's agricultural heritage is a valued resource that contributes greatly to a traveler's experience along significant portions of US-12, municipalities will be in a stronger position to enact zoning and ordinance regulations that support its preservation.

Completing natural resource inventories will also better enable municipalities to enact measures to protect natural features they feel are important to the visual character of US-12. Members of the Council should work with the townships to develop an understanding of which features are important to preserve. These inventories may be incorporated into a zoning overlay district that prescribes protective measures when developing near these features, such as increasing wetland setbacks or requiring smaller building footprints in wooded areas. The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service office may be helpful in this regard. MNFI maintains a database of land use/land cover maps, natural communities and other natural features, and is able to provide this information to land managers and local officials. The MNFI website address is [www.dnr.state.mi.us/wildlife/heritage/mnfi/](http://www.dnr.state.mi.us/wildlife/heritage/mnfi/).

### **Cluster Zoning**

The principal of cluster zoning may also be helpful in preserving important aspects of the US-12 landscape. The advantage of cluster

zoning is that it provides developers with a way to preserve an aspect of the landscape while receiving benefit in return, typically more intensive development than might otherwise have been permitted. For example, a 40-acre parcel might be zoned for one-acre residential lots, or 40 lots placed on the parcel, although development regulations are likely to more realistically limit development to 32 lots. Applying cluster zoning and building on smaller lots may permit a prospective developer to construct the theoretical 40-lot density if natural resources such as a significant woodlands is preserved. The community is able to protect an important natural resource that will help preserve US-12's landscape character and which may result in a number of ecological benefits. The developer is able to build at higher density and lower construction cost because less roadway and other infrastructure, such as sewer, is required as a result of the clustering. Finally, the property owner is able to develop the property and the new homeowners are able to enjoy the protected natural features.

### **Sign Ordinances**

Like billboards, business identification signs on buildings and at property entrances can become intrusive visual elements that distract from the historic character of US-12. Historically appropriate signs are briefly discussed under *Façade Improvements* at the end of this section, however, this approach may only be appropriate in downtown areas. Recommendations for the design of business signs may be reviewed as part of a general strategy to develop model design guidelines for the US-12 communities. The US-12 Heritage Trail Council should work



within the township to seek an appropriate balance between conveying a company identity or purpose, and maintaining the valued character of US-12.

### **OWNER AND COMMUNITY INCENTIVES**

Various community and owner incentives may also be explored by the Council – in partnership with the county and township officials – to protect certain land assets and viewshed quality in the US-12 corridor.

### **Michigan History, Arts and Libraries (HAL)**

Through administration by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), federal funds received by the National Park Service are made available annually to local governments through the *Historic Preservation Fund*. The fund is a 60-40 matching grant-in-aid program provided to support various historic-related projects. Sources of matching funds may be private, local government, in-kind services, state, certain federal, donated services and/or donated equipment or material. For more information contact the Michigan State Historic Preservation office at 517-373-1630.

### **Michigan's Main Street Program**

Michigan Main Street Program, one of 39 such programs across the United States, is part of a larger National Main Street program that has been at work for approximately 25 years. The program supports economic development and assists communities in developing strategies that create jobs and encourage investment in downtown communities, with a historic preservation twist. It is managed by the

Michigan Economic Development Council (MEDC). The first four Michigan cities to receive the award were announced in June, 2003. A new application process began in September. More information about the program is available by visiting [www.michigan.org](http://www.michigan.org).

### **Farmland Protection**

Many in the farming communities that are adjacent to US-12 may be familiar with the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (Part 361, Public Act 451 of 1994). The act authorizes the state to use the PDR program discussed earlier to preserve valuable farmland. When development rights are sold for farmland protection, a landowner may construct buildings and improvements necessary to support farming operations but may not develop beyond these needs unless specified in the PDR easement. Land that is most strongly considered attractive for the program includes:

- parcels larger than 40 acres with at least 51 percent of the land in agricultural use;
- parcels with a large percentage of prime and unique soils;
- parcels faced with development pressure or located near property already in the PDR program; and
- parcels with a large contiguous land area involving neighboring farmers.

A property owner's willingness to accept reduced payment for development rights may also improve the odds of being selected. The maximum payment for development rights is limited to \$5,000 per acre. Financial benefits of the farmland PDR program are offset by the program requiring repayment of tax credits plus

six percent simple interest earned under the Farmland Agreement program. Applications for the program may be requested by calling the Farmland and Open Space Preservation program at (517) 373-3328. Additional information about a variety of farmland protection strategies in Michigan may be found at <http://www.farmlandinfo.org/fic/laws/state/stmi.html>.

### **COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

Often historic properties are damaged because the owner or administrator didn't know the right thing to do. People may tend to resist and argue because a policy or a designation is misunderstood. Knowledge is power. The more people understand the history of US-12, and the benefits of designation, the more they can contribute to its success. Examples of public workshops that would be supportive of the vision of the US-12 Heritage Trail may include but not be limited to:

### **Workshops on the Secretary of Interior Standards**

The Secretary of Interior Standards is the basis of preservation philosophy. If projects are funded by the State or Federal government, the work must comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards. If owners, contractors, and administrators are aware of the Standards, they can make better decisions about their properties.



### **Workshops/meetings about State Tax Credits for restoration**

State income tax credits may be available for work on a historic resource if it is a contributing resource in a certified local historic district, or if it is listed on the State or National Register in a local unit of government with a population less than 5,000. Other restrictions apply, and the work must comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards. This relatively new program is the first to allow tax credits for residential properties. For more information about State Tax Incentives for preservation, see [www.michigan.gov/hal](http://www.michigan.gov/hal).

### **Workshops/meetings about Federal Tax Credits for restoration**

Federal tax credits may be available for work on historic commercial, industrial, and rental properties that are listed on the National Register or that are contributing structures in a certified historic district. Other restrictions apply, and the work must comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards. For more information about Federal Tax Incentives for preservation, see [www.michigan.gov/hal](http://www.michigan.gov/hal).



# APPENDIX C

National Park Service

HPS



# Standards



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## The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

### Introduction to the Standards

The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for establishing standards for all programs under Departmental authority and for advising Federal agencies on the preservation of historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### The Standards for Rehabilitation

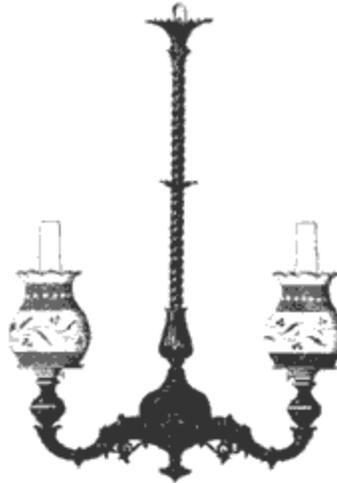
(codified in 36 CFR 67 for use in the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program) address the most prevalent treatment. "Rehabilitation" is defined as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."



Initially developed by the Secretary of the Interior to determine the appropriateness of proposed project work on registered properties within the Historic Preservation Fund grant-in-aid program, the **Standards for Rehabilitation** have been widely used over the years--particularly to determine if a rehabilitation qualifies as a Certified Rehabilitation for Federal tax purposes. In addition, the Standards have guided Federal agencies in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities for properties in Federal ownership or control; and State and local officials in reviewing both Federal and nonfederal rehabilitation proposals. They have also been adopted by historic district and planning commissions across the country.

The intent of the Standards is to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features. The Standards pertain to historic buildings of all materials,

**"Rehabilitation" is defined as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."**



construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and interior of the buildings. They also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment, as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. To be certified for Federal tax purposes, a rehabilitation project must be determined by the Secretary to be consistent with the historic character of the structure(s), and where applicable, the district in which it is located.

As stated in the definition, the treatment "rehabilitation" assumes that at least some repair or alteration of the historic building will be needed in order to provide for an efficient contemporary use; however, these repairs and alterations must not damage or destroy materials, features or finishes that are important in defining the building's historic character. For example, certain treatments--if improperly applied--may cause or accelerate physical deterioration of the historic building. This can include using improper repointing or exterior masonry cleaning techniques, or introducing insulation that damages historic fabric. In almost all of these situations, use of these materials and treatments will result in a project that does not meet the Standards. Similarly, exterior additions that duplicate the form, material, and detailing of the structure to the extent that they compromise the historic character of the structure will fail to meet the Standards.

## **The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

The Standards (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

- 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.**
- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.**
- 3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.**

**The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.**

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

From: Historic Preservation Services of the National Park Service  
Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm>

November 2003