Natural Advantages: The Power of Parks, Heritage and Outdoor Assets in the Place-Based Economy

Brad Garmon, Michigan Environmental Council
Michigan Municipal League Conference: Marquette, MI
October 15, 2014
“The most valuable **natural resource** in the 21st century is brains. Smart people tend to be mobile. Watch where they go! Because where they go, robust economic activity will follow.”

- Rich Karlgaard, publisher of *Forbes* magazine. October 6, 2003
Educated, young talent vital factor for success

“The ‘knowledge economy’ is fueled by young talent — people with four-year-college degrees.

“There are more 25-to 34-year olds with four-year degrees in the Minneapolis metro area than in all of Michigan.”

Knowledge Workers

Who Are They?

• Highly educated
• Leading force of growth in the economy

Characteristics

• Mobile
• Entrepreneurial
• Value Outdoor Amenities
• Social/cultural amenities
• Lifestyle
Grand Traverse

Population (2010): 86,986
Inbound income per cap. (2010): $21,700
Outbound income per cap. (2010): $17,600

Forbes Magazine’s “American Migration Interactive Map.” February 24, 2012 | By Jon Brune
Marquette County

Population (2005): 65,785
Inbound income per cap. (2010): $18,700
Outbound income per cap. (2010): $19,400

Forbes Magazine’s “American Migration Interactive Map.” February 24, 2012 | By Jon Brune
Denver County, CO

Population (2010): 600,158
Population (2005): 551,691
Inbound income per cap. (2010): $24,400
Outbound income per cap. (2010): $29,400
Non-migrant income per cap. (2010): $29,000

Forbes Magazine’s “American Migration Interactive Map.” February 24, 2012 | By Jon Brune
### Most Desired Community Assets for recent Michigan college graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ease of commute from home to office</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of K12 education system</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variety of outdoor amenities - parks, bike &amp; hiking trails, etc.</strong></td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good paying job opportunities</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing market</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to advance my career (not just start it)</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variety of social activities - restaurants, bars clubs, shopping</strong></td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variety of cultural activities - theaters, galleries, concerts</strong></td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public safety, low crime</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to my family</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Michigan Colleges Foundation Study*, April 2011
Wayne County

Population (2010): 1,820,584
Population (2005): 1,960,263
Inbound income per cap. (2010): $17,500
Outbound income per cap. (2010): $19,800

Forbes Magazine’s “American Migration Interactive Map.” February 24, 2012 | By Jon Brune
“To revitalize Michigan we must examine our state through a new lens, taking into account the types of places where New Economy workers, entrepreneurs and businesses want to locate, invest and expand.”
Governor’s Executive Order No. 2011-10 (Sept. 2011-Sept. 2012)

“The Panel is advisory in nature and shall:

1. Identify the role of state parks and importance of outdoor recreation areas
2. Provide a vision for the future of state parks
3. Recommend a strategy for the expansion and proper allocation of expected resources in order to meet the new vision of state parks
4. Propose a vision and a strategy for future consideration aimed at creating stronger linkages between the state parks system and county and local parks to maximize use and cost efficiencies”

Final report submitted to the Governor on September 23, 2012
Co-Chairs:
• Jon Allan of East Lansing, Consumers Energy Company
• Erin McDonough of Williamston, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC)

Members:
• Thomas Bailey (Petoskey) Little Traverse Conservancy
• Bryan Barnhill (Detroit) Detroit City Council, Office of the President
• Rich Bowman (Grand Rapids) The Nature Conservancy
• Ryan Cartwright (Petoskey) Eagle Scout and Student, U of M School of Engineering
• Julie Clark (Traverse City) Traverse Area Recreation & Transportation Trails Inc.
• Brad Garmon (Lansing) Michigan Environmental Council
• Jefferson Gray (Alpena) Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
• Rachel Kuntzsch (Grand Ledge) KBS, Inc. and Heart of the Lakes Center Conversation
• Lydia Lohrer (Oak Park) Outdoor Explorers in the Classroom
• Amy McMillan (Flint) Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission
• Faye Nelson (Troy) Detroit RiverFront Conservancy
• Timothy Nichols (Cadillac) Chair, Natural Resource Commission
• Bradley Petzke (Marquette) Rivers North Fly Fishing Guide Service
• Mary Treder Lang (Grosse Pointe Farms) Owner, Mary Treder Lang CPA
Desired Outcomes:
1. Demonstrate value
2. Drive economic prosperity
2. Drive economic prosperity
3. Make Michigan Healthier

Detroitriverfront.org
4. Inspire Regional Identity
5. Experience the Best of Michigan

- Most Beautiful Place in America *GMA*
- Best Town for Mountain Biking *Outside*
- Best State for Flyfishing *Field & Stream*
- “Best Little Beach Towns” *Travel + Leisure*
- Top 25 “Best Towns Ever” *Outside*
- IMBA Global “Epic Rides”
6. Connect People (to Places and Each Other)
Recommendations: Placemaking

Rec. 4

Encourage greater connections between communities and their recreational assets to strengthen **regional identities**

Rec. 6

**Integrate tourism and economic development marketing** in order to fully leverage the economic and social benefits that parks and outdoor recreation resources can provide.
Recommendations: Trails

Rec. 3

Make the development of statewide and regional systems of connected trail networks one of the state’s highest priorities.

- “Pure Michigan Places,” GIS database
- We’ve seen:
  - Governor’s Detroit to Ironwood Trail
  - New “Pure Michigan” TrailTowns and Trails
Recommendation: Great Cities

Rec. 5
Revitalize Michigan’s core urban areas by creating four to five **Signature Parks**.

“A Signature Park is a focal point in a city, a ‘must-see destination’ that provides quality programming and embodies the character and brand of a city.”

Rec. 7
Invest in **safety and maintenance** of parks and recreation spaces.
Millennium Park, Chicago
Central Park, NYC
SteelStacks at Bethlehem Steel, PA