

First Impressions

A tourism perspective
of
Standish, Michigan

April 2016



MAY 2, 2016

TOURISM FIRST IMPRESSIONS PUBLIC PRESENTATION

Agenda

- Welcome
- MSU Extension
- Sponsors
- First Impressions Background
- Standish First Impressions Results – April 2016
- Next Steps
- Questions/Comments



MSU Extension

- Greening Michigan Institute
- Agriculture and Agribusiness Institute
- Children and Youth Institute
- Health and Nutrition Institute



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MSU Extension Greening Michigan Institute

To foster the development of sustainable communities that contribute to the economic, social and environmental health and well-being of its people for generations to come.



- Community Food Systems
- Entrepreneurship and Capacity Building (CEC)
- Finance & Homeownership
- Government/Public Policy
- Land Use
- Leadership
- Natural Resource Management
- Tourism



First Impressions Standish Sponsors



- MSU Extension
- City of Standish
- Michigan Works



- Arenac Economic Development Association
- Huron Pines



Huron Pines



What is First Impressions?

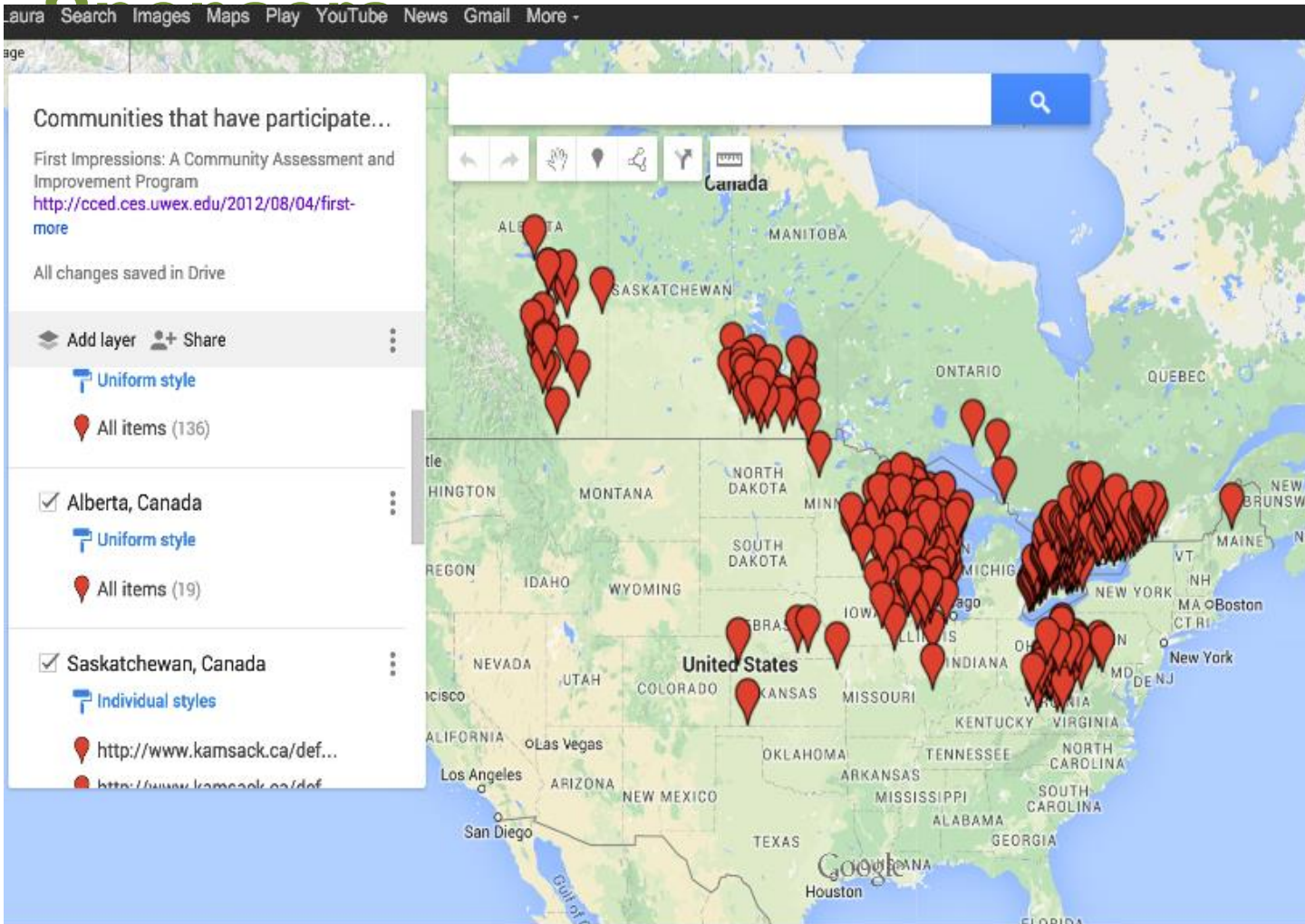


*Video produced by the Ontario
Canada Ministry of Food and
Agriculture Accessed at the
University of Wisconsin Center for
Community & Economic
Development*

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8nFWNv_HWsPWGdleVJIWXIFeXc/view



Participating Communities



Online at
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=zzhHqWZPOgBk.kXLEKLGPj2w>

Email
laura.brown@uconn.edu to update your communities to the map

**Michigan's first....
"First Impressions"
communities:**





The First Impressions Program aims to help communities learn about **existing strengths and weaknesses** as seen through the eyes of the first-time visitor.



To inform and guide public action by providing information that increases awareness of a community's assets and challenges.



Process

- Community application
- Plan/coordinate
 - Community Model (2 different communities)
 - Tourism/Outside Expert Model
 - Combination
- Conduct assessment
- Compile & evaluate data
- Public presentation
- Short written report
- Community action
- Six-month check-up



The Assessment Tool...

- West Virginia model
- Thirteen pages
- Revising
- Data compilation tool

Initial Impression

1. The "five-minute" impression: Upon entering the destination what was your initial impression?

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would feel compelled to stop if I were randomly passing by	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Community Information

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following:

Community Information and Marketing:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Directions were accurate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It was easy to find a visitor center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor center hours were conducive to visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor center staff were helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It was easy to find a community/regional tourist brochure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It was easy to find a map of the town or community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The local/regional newspaper was informative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information booths/kiosks exist to help tourists locate attractions and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Standish, Michigan

First Impressions PILOT

Conducted the week of April 4, 2016



Basic Information

The Standish First Impression....

- ...is one of only two Michigan pilot destinations
- ...will be used to guide similar efforts across the state
- ...was delivered at no cost to the community
- ...used the West Virginia 13 page model
- ...is based on the perspective of 3 individuals
 - Abby Ertel (Huron Pines)
 - Brenda Bachelder (Michigan Works and Arenac EDC)
 - Bonnie Wichtner-Zoia (MSU Extension)
- ...is meant to provide community awareness & promote action



Please save your comments and questions for the end



Pre-Assessment

- Online research for 1.5 - 2 hours
- Used Smart Phone, Tablet and Laptop
- Social Media
- Searched for:
 - Things to Do
 - Places to Go
 - Events
 - The Authentic or Unusual



2 Hotels in Standish MI - Up to Half-Price on Hotels!

Ad · [Booking.com/Standish-Hotels](https://www.booking.com/standish-hotels) · Site secured by McAfee
Up to Half-Price on Hotels! Book your Hotel in **Standish MI**.

Standish, Michigan - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standish,_Michigan

Standish is a city in the U.S. state of **Michigan**. The population was 1,509 at the 2010 census. It is the county seat of Arenac County. ...

Welcome to the City of Standish

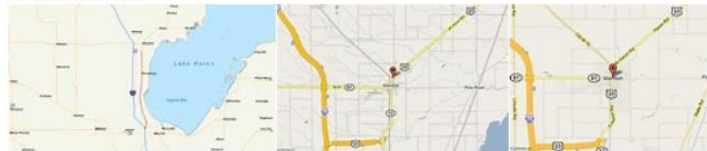
www.cityofstandish.com

Welcome to the **City of Standish**, the Gateway to **Michigan's** Sunrise Side. City government, news, meetings, community information, events and more. **City of Standish** ...

[City Clerk/Treasurer](#) · [Forms](#) · [Community Info](#) · [City Council](#) · [History](#) · [Board of Review](#)

Images of standish michigan

bing.com/images



See more images of **standish michigan**

Standish, MI - Standish, Michigan Map & Directions - MapQuest

www.mapquest.com/us/mi/standish

Standish is a city in the U.S. state of **Michigan**. As of the 2000 census, the city population was 1,581. It is the county seat of Arenac County.

Welcome Standish Area Chamber Of Commerce

standishchamber.com

Welcome to **Standish Area Chamber of Commerce**, the sunrise side, The Great Up North Begins Here!



Standish

Michigan



Standish is a city in the U.S. state of Michigan. The population was 1,509 at the 2010 census. It is the county seat of Arenac County. The town was platted by John D. Standish in 1871. Before the plat was formally recorded, Standish sold so... +

[Wikipedia](#)

Local time: 9:02 AM 4/5/2016

Population: 1,461 (2014)

Area: 2.15 sq miles (5.57 km²)

Points of interest: [Saganing Eagles Landing Casino](#)

Weather

[See more](#)

21 °F Mostly sunny
H 33 °F · L 21 °F

People also search for

[See all \(15+\)](#)



[Pinconning](#)



[Au Gres](#)



[Cheboygan](#)



[Bay City](#)




[Rogers City](#)

1. Wikipedia 2. City of Standish 3. MapQuest 4. Standish Chamber


Things to do in Standish, Michigan Share

Breakfast Landmarks Lunch Outdoors Cafe Museums Dinner Nightlife Hotels More


Start your day with breakfast See all Breakfast in Standish



North Forest Cafe (4.4 ★)
Diner · Cafe
(989) 846-9841
Today 6:00AM - 7:00PM
224 N Main St



Burger King
Burger King in Standish, MI home of the WHOPPER® sandwich, is known for fast food burgers, breakfast, lunch and dinner.
(989) 846-9696
Today 6:00AM - 12:00AM
3855 South Huron Road




Wheeler's Restaurant (4.5 ★)
Wheeler's has been serving family-style fare since 1935. We serve breakfast, lunch and dinner and are open from 6:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.; 7 days/week.
(989) 846-6425
Today 6:30AM - 8:00PM
111 S Main St


WHAT PEOPLE SAY

"Best diner food I've had in a while! Miss restaurants like this with good food made by hand instead of microwave with good portions, quality, and price."
Katie Mueller

Check out local landmarks See all Landmarks in Standish



Lincoln Township, Arenac County, ...
Lincoln Township is a civil township of Arenac County in the U.S. state of Michigan. The population was 942 at the 2010 census. GeographyAccording to the United



Michigan Central Railroad Standish ...
The Michigan Central Railroad Standish Depot is a railroad depot located at 107 North Main Street in Standish, Michigan. It was designated a Michigan State



FaceBook page did not appear on a search for 'Standish, MI'...but is a Standish Area Chamber Facebook page found on their site and the city site





Welcome to Standish Michigan

Fake
5 years ago • 1,066 views
A movie of downtown Standish Michigan.



Standish Michigan Winter

chuckhundley
9 years ago • 1,316 views
Winter snow in Standish Michigan.



Standish Michigan april 2012

djkrik
3 years ago • 333 views



The Farm Standish Michigan

spfi38
7 years ago • 713 views
The (Compound)



Arenac County video:

Discover Arenac County

Home Videos Playlists Channels Discussion About

Uploads



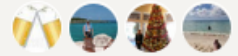
Arenac County, Michigan

3 years ago • 3,638 views
If you like the outdoors, Arenac County is great place to relocate your business, or to establish a new manufacturing facility. There are a multitude of outdoor recreational activities to enjoy...

First & third videos are drive-through.....might consider an 'official' video (City, EDC, Chamber, Depot, etc.)

Standish, Michigan

11,331 reviews and opinions



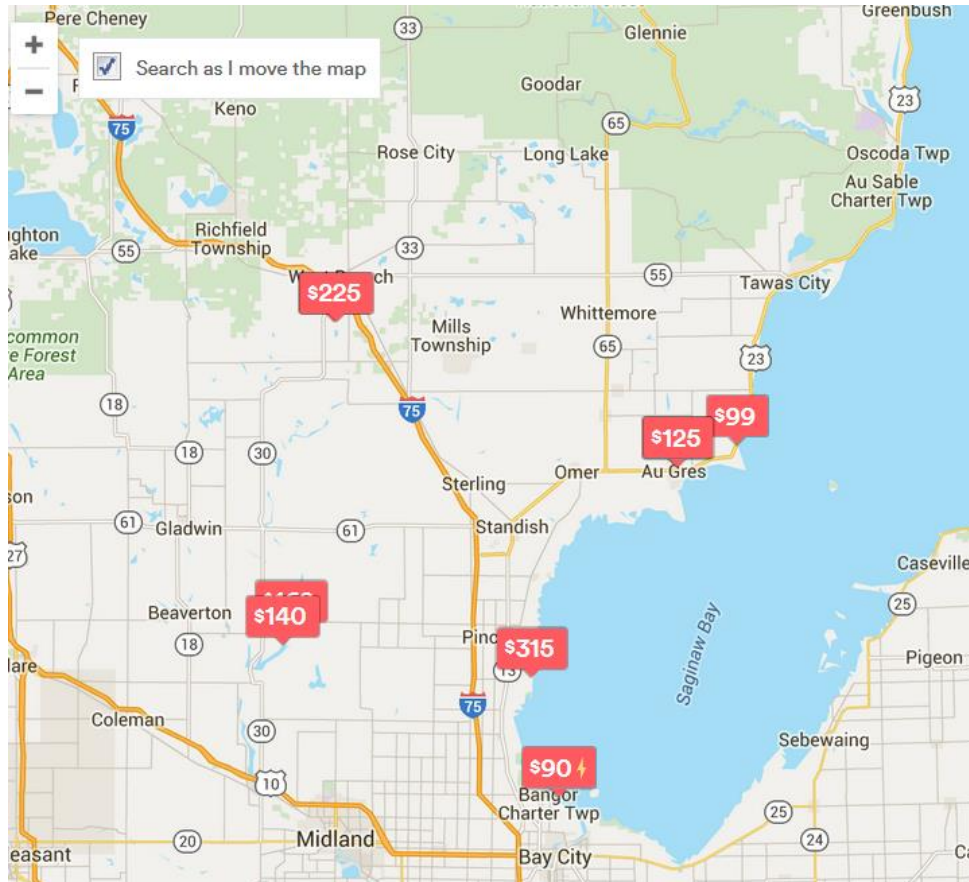
-  **Lodging (2)**
14 Reviews >
-  **Vacation Rentals (20)** >
-  **Flights** >
-  **Things to Do (6)**
25 Reviews >
-  **Restaurants (17)**
101 Reviews >
-  **Forum**
11,191 Posts >

Overview | Location | Things to Do

**Search for 'what-to-do' in Standish, MI took us to
Trip Advisor**



Accommodations



No Airbnb lodging located in the City of Standish

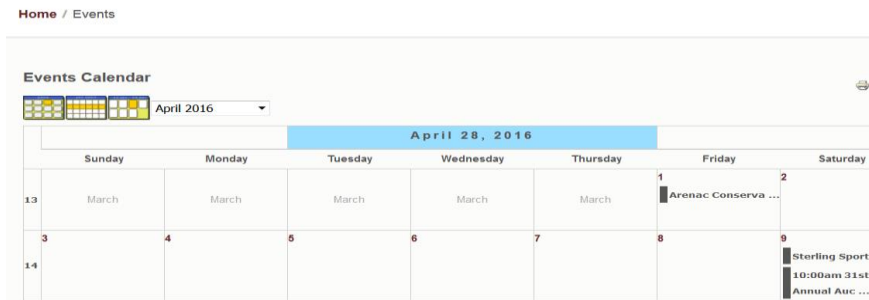




- Beautiful site!
- Some visitor information
- Quick
- Easy to navigate
- No city street map
- Links – calendar (chamber)



- Excellent *google map*
- Community calendar
- Hard to find who to contact
- A lot of verbiage
- Clicking on items in circle did not provide info
- Loved fishing reports!



Most Helpful Tourism Sites

- **Standish Depot** – a lot of tourism information and useful links
- **Pure Michigan** – listed relevant tourist attractions and information
- **Facebook** – provided listings of eateries, some outdoor/outfitting options and hotels
- **Enchanted Forest** – provided a list with direct links of things to do

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Standish Depot website. At the top, it says "Start your Northeast Michigan Travels with a Visit to the Standish Historical Depot and Welcome Center". The navigation menu includes Home, Calendar of Events, Photo Gallery, Depot History, Become a Friend of the Standish Depot, Depot for Public Use, Memorial Bricks, Contact Us, Related Links, and Sitemap. A highlighted section titled "Arenac Conservation District Workshops in April for trees and gardening" includes a "Check here" link. Below this, there are sections for "Local Events" (listing dates from April to July), "Experience turn-of-the-20th Century locomotive history, view our museum room", and "Vietnam Veterans Memorial".

The screenshot shows the search results page on the Pure Michigan website for the keyword "standish". The search bar at the top shows "standish" and "SEARCH". Below the search bar, it says "Search Results - standish" and "About 74 results (0:10 seconds)". The results are categorized into "All", "Events", "Deals", "Properties", and "Blog". Several results are listed, including "City of Standish - Pure Michigan Travel", "The Standish Historical Depot, Welcome Center and Farm Market...", and "Saganing Eagles Landing Casino - Pure Michigan Travel".

The screenshot shows the Michigan Wineries & Vineyards website. It features a navigation bar with categories like "Historic Depot, Welcome Center & Farm Market", "Yellow Lake/Shipper Orchard", "Eastern Chippewak", and "Standish Destinations". The main content area includes a "Weather" widget showing 44°F / 7°C, a "DINING OUT: Breweries, Dinner Trains & Cruises, Restaurants, and Wineries" section, and a "Michigan Wineries & Vineyards" banner with the website URL www.MichiganWineriesAndVineyards.com. Below the banner, there are several articles or listings, including "The Pumpkin Farm [Farm Market, Petting Zoo]", "Saganing Eagles Landing Casino", "The Standish Historical Depot, Welcome Center and Farm Market", "Wigwam Bay Wildlife Area", and "Fergie's Pizza [Pizzeria]".

The screenshot shows a travel website for Standish, Michigan. The top navigation bar includes "Things to do in Standish, Michigan" and "Share". Below this, there are sections for "Breakfast Landmarks Lunch Outdoors Cafe Museums Dinner Nightlife Hotels More" and a search bar. The main content area is titled "Start your day with breakfast" and lists several local businesses: "North Forest Cafe", "Burger King", "Wheeler's Restaurant", and "Fergie's Pizza". Each business listing includes a photo, name, address, phone number, and hours. There is also a "WHAT PEOPLE SAY" section with a quote from Katie Mueller. At the bottom, there is a "Check out local landmarks" section with a map and two landmark listings: "Lincoln Township, Arenac County, ..." and "Michigan Central Railroad Standish ...".

Additional Comments

- General information about Standish easy to find
 - Sites menu's helpful
- City and Chamber sites visually appealing
 - Did not notice typographical errors



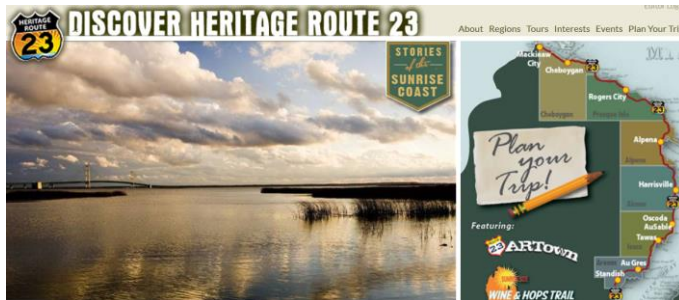
Welcome

pages to learn more about the Society, the exciting projects that are underway, our Arenac County.

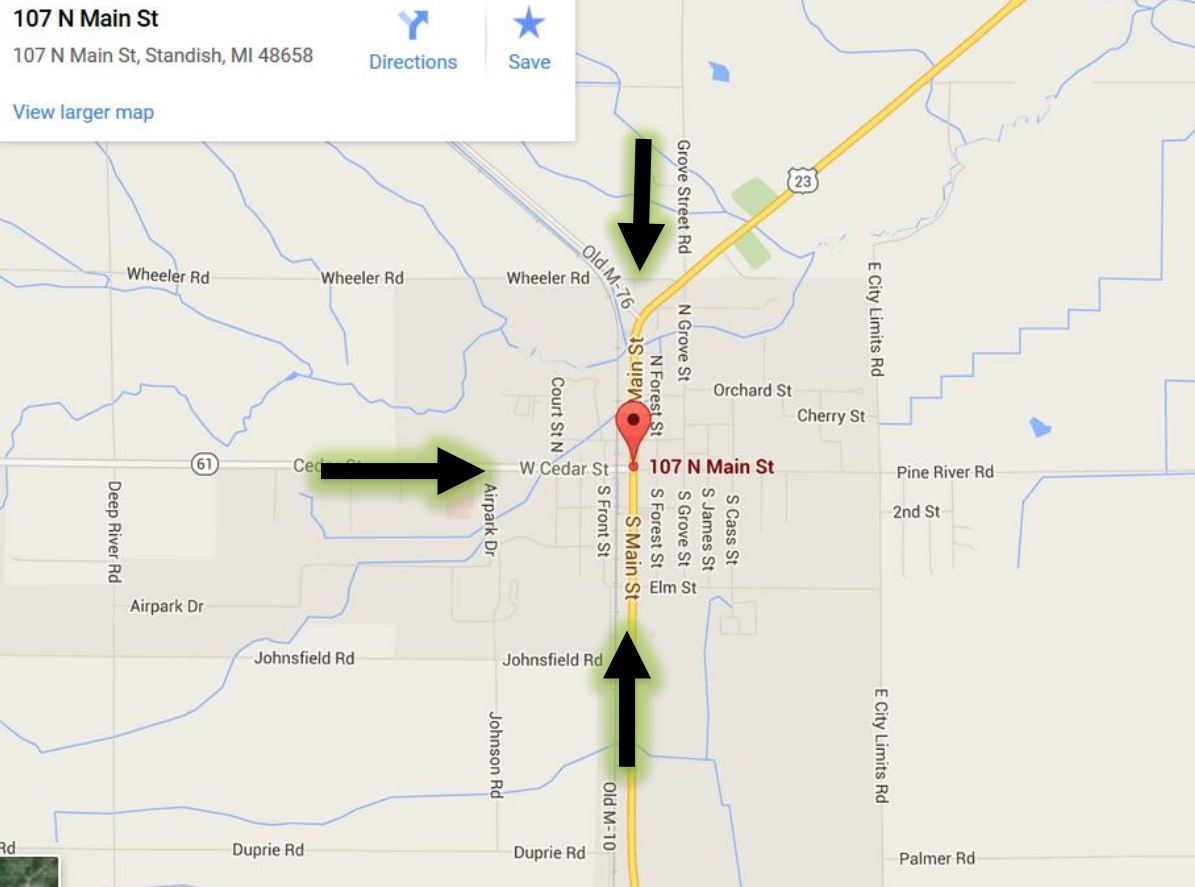
Iron in the Great Lakes. It is rich in Indian history because of its abundance of hard white pine and hardwoods as well as being a conduit to the lake for shipping the lumber reed by ship. Its history was gradually reshaped due to the disastrous wildfires that

Programs at the Museum in Au Gres

- More 'points of interest'
 - Parks, picnic areas?
- Some sites took time to download – timed out on the carp report
 - Parks, picnic areas?



On-site Assessment



Entered at these three gateways



Initial Impressions



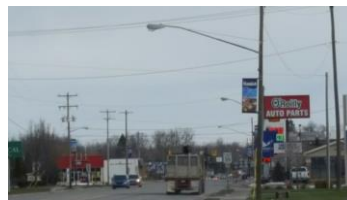
I-75

Very pleasant. Farm character. Became a bit patchy with businesses and residential, but nicer as entered Standish. Arrival at US-23 was not very welcoming.



US -23

Older rural town. Bigger than I thought. North of town welcoming, less so as I progressed. Some attractive areas – especially residential. Traffic moved very quickly through town.



M-13

Lots of billboards, retail and fast food businesses. Old storefronts, with many vacant. Traffic flow was busy and moving quickly through the city limits.



Signs



Business Signs



Downtown



- Flags and banners on display
- Friendly people
- Connectivity
- Public restrooms and waste receptacles
- Parking
- Felt safe
- Depot welcoming
- Some nice older buildings



- Limited signage to indicate other tourist sites besides depot
- Lack of walker/biker signs or accessibility
- Traffic moves quickly
- Not cohesive



Downtown - Landmarks

- Depot
- Downtown Buildings
- Library
- Wheelers



Residential



- Definitely a community asset!
- Pleasant surprise
- Well kept and landscaped
- Sidewalks
- Walkable to downtown
- Many unique homes
- Quiet and peaceful
- Interesting architecture



- Westside unpaved roads





Strengths

- **Downtown landmarks**
 - Depot, historic buildings, library, Wheelers
- **Residential neighborhoods**
- **Friendly and helpful people**
- **Customer service**
- **Several new entrepreneurs**
- **US-Heritage Route**
- **Proximity to Lake Huron**

- **Nearby natural resources**
- **Quiet and relaxing**
- **Woodwork in some of downtown buildings**
- **Welcome banners**
- **Farmers market**
- **Summer concert series**
- **WiFi**
- **City, Chamber, Welcome Center and EDC**
- **Depot**



Suggestions



- **Improve signage**
 - Encourage people to stop
 - Create a welcome environment
 - Update worn signs
- **Stronger web-presence/social media**
 - Example: Promo video/Youtube
- **Coordination among downtown businesses**
 - Develop list of things to do
 - Ensure all businesses are aware of and promoting things to do in Standish
- **Make connections (half-day experience?)**
 - Campgrounds, industries, farms
 - Residential walking tour
 - Health/fitness (SlowRoll or Urban obstacle course)



- **Establish an identity**
 - Half-way stop
 - Authentic & unusual experiences
 - Determine audience (s)
- **Educate and involve community**
 - Be a Tourist in your own Community
 - Promote natural resources of area
 - Art (Grayling)
 - Create a game – “Discover our Community”
 - Geocaching on the Sunrise Side
 - Encourage and support entrepreneurship



- **Crosswalks and pedestrian crossings**
- **Bike lanes and racks downtown**



Next Steps



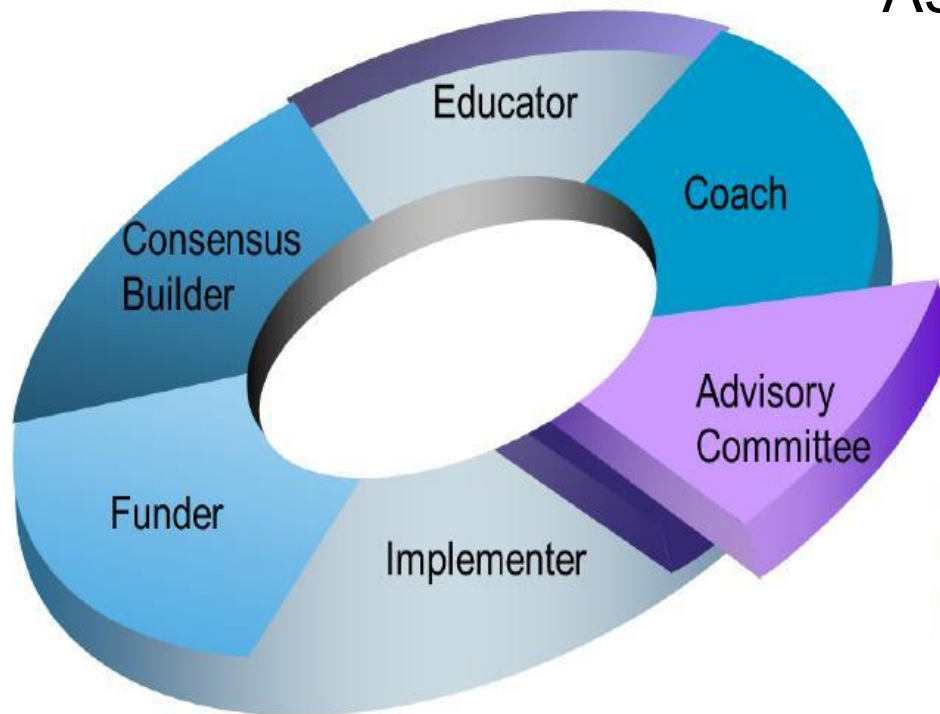
- Deliver short written report
- Community action
- Six-month check-up
- Consider Julie avery's site





What Role Will You Play as an Individual?

As a Community?
As a Business?



These roles are all very important! There is room for everyone to play an important role.



Questions and/or Comments?



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