



*A Framework For*

# Arts & Culture

*In Northwest Michigan*



**FRAMEWORK  
FOR OUR FUTURE**  
A REGIONAL PROSPERITY PLAN  
FOR NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN

**MICHIGAN PROSPERITY REGION 2  
ARTS & CULTURE CHAPTER: 2015**

A *Framework for Arts & Culture in Northwest Michigan* was prepared as part of the *Framework for Our Future: A Regional Prosperity Plan for Northwest Michigan*, a regional resource for local governments, community organizations working to meet local goals. The *Framework* was developed as part of Michigan’s Regional Prosperity Initiative, as initiated by Governor Rick Snyder and signed into law as a part of the FY 2014 budget. The Regional Prosperity Initiative encourages local private, public, and non-profit partners to identify regionally aligned growth and investment strategies for the State of Michigan to support, not the other way around. It also provides the framework for streamlining state services and highlighting the regionally defined goals and strategies that will further Northwest Michigan’s success.

The *Framework for Our Future* includes information and tools that can help stakeholders address issues such as housing, transportation, land use, energy, arts and culture, workforce and economic development, community health, food and farming systems, and natural resources. Data and information will help communities supplement their local deliberation, planning, and decision-making processes, and will help

to identify the steps a community can take to address a local issue, if desired.

The *Framework for Our Future* was developed by Networks Northwest with input and partnerships from a variety of community stakeholders and members of the public. An intensive community outreach process featured a wide variety of opportunities for participation from the public: events, surveys, focus groups, online forums, and public discussions were held region-wide throughout the process. Outreach activities and engagement opportunities included a series of community dialogues, interviews, and other events designed to obtain input from individuals with disabilities, minorities, youth, those in poverty, and others that have historically been underrepresented in planning processes. Public input was used to identify priority community issues and concerns, and to help develop goals, strategies, and actions.

The goals, strategies, and actions included in the *Framework* were built upon public input heard throughout the process, as well as on existing and adopted goals from local plans and planning initiatives. Strategies are not intended as recommendations, nor do

they supersede and local government decision-making. Moreover, the *Framework* is not intended for, nor shall it be used for, infringing upon or the taking of personal property rights enjoyed by the residents of Northwest Michigan. Rather, the information included in the *Framework* is instead intended to serve as a compilation of best practices to help guide local decision-makers who would like to address the issues identified in the Framework.



## FRAMEWORK FOR OUR FUTURE

A REGIONAL PROSPERITY PLAN  
FOR NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN



## Networks Northwest

Talent / Business / Community

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## ➔ A Framework for Arts & Culture: Introduction

Northwest Michigan is blessed with a strong and thriving arts culture. Opportunities to participate in and access music, dance, the visual arts, theater, literature, architectural design, and historic preservation are available at museums, schools, performing arts centers, and community events throughout the region.

These opportunities are important economic assets, driving a significant portion of Northwest Michigan's vibrant tourism industry. In addition, arts and culture, along with other factors like housing opportunities and health care access, can help to attract new residents to an area—particularly the educated, professional talent that is needed for the region's transitioning economy. What's more, communities that record and celebrate their culture and history are more likely to preserve important icons from their past and to pass community traditions and pride onto the next generation. And for many residents, arts and cultural activities are important aspects of their quality of life, providing opportunities for social activities and personal enrichment, while also creating deep roots in an area, giving residents a reason to stay and invest.

Communities that offer a wide variety of artistic and cultural outlets, as well as an awareness and celebration of their traditions, values and history, are able to build on these assets to enhance placemaking activities, which help to create a vibrant, unique, and recognizable sense of place. Community support for arts and cultural organizations, businesses, and activities can also act as an important economic development strategy in efforts to retain and attract a workforce and build tourism.

However, many communities in Northwest Michigan have yet to engage in arts and cultural planning or coordination; and many of the region's arts and cultural organizations require

additional support. These and other issues were identified by arts and culture stakeholders in focus groups and interviews conducted as part of the *Framework for Our Future* process:

- Despite the economic advantages of a thriving arts culture, many communities do not plan for, or interact with, arts and cultural organizations. Arts and culture are rarely addressed in local master plans, recreation plans, or economic development strategies, limiting the potential to integrate the arts into community development and economic growth.
  - Input from stakeholders shows that there is a general lack of communication between arts organizations and other agencies, organizations, or the community as a whole—which creates barriers to the development of arts and culture as an economic development strategy.
  - Some stakeholders report that there is a lack of awareness of arts
- Many arts and cultural organizations in the region are small, with limited staff capacity or financial resources that act as obstacles to growing and enhancing arts opportunities and access.
  - Lower-income communities have fewer resources to support arts and cultural organizations, which depend largely on volunteers, donations, and grants to survive. With fewer outlets available, and with less disposable income, residents of lower-income communities often have more limited opportunities to access arts and cultural assets.

A broad range of stakeholders throughout the region is engaged in creating and enhancing access to arts and culture, including arts organizations, schools, philanthropy,



A former library building is home to the Charlevoix Circle of Arts, which provides a variety of arts and cultural opportunities.

and individuals. Creating dialogues, partnerships, and collaboration between these stakeholders and the broader community can help to build the supports and resources needed to enhance our region's arts and cultural opportunities. A Framework for Arts and Culture in Northwest Michigan provides an inventory of the region's cultural assets, as well as an overview of steps that arts and cultural stakeholders and community leaders can take to leverage these assets into positive community growth. For instance, incorporating arts and culture into master plans, economic development plans, and recreation plans creates opportunities for grant

dollars, while integrating this topic with larger community development issues. Coordination between local governments and arts organizations can enhance local placemaking efforts and provide opportunities for public art, in order to both support local artists while enhancing public access to the arts. Small business incubators and other community facilities can foster opportunities for creativity, innovation, and new business among the arts, design, and cultural sectors. Historic districts and other preservation efforts can protect the irreplaceable historic neighborhoods and monuments that are vital parts of the region's unique

character. A Framework for Arts and Culture in Northwest Michigan identifies these and other strategies that communities can adopt in order to support and build arts and cultural opportunities and capacities in communities throughout the region. Because arts and culture are infrequently addressed in detail by local community planning and economic development efforts, the strategies included in the Framework are intended to act as a first step, beginning the dialogue within and between communities and arts organizations about how stakeholders can better integrate the arts into community and economic development.

## Arts & Culture: Enhancing Economic Vitality

Arts and culture play direct and important roles in community prosperity:

- Arts and cultural events provide a strong attraction for both businesses and talent to a community
- Income from tourism is directly connected to arts and cultural opportunities
- Arts and culture organizations and events work to build community identities and vibrancy, helping to support downtown business districts



## ➔ Arts & Cultural Assets

The terms “arts” and “culture” refer to a wide range of activities such as music, dance, visual arts, theater, architectural design and historical preservation, as well as the traditions, values and history of a community or group of people. Culture can be defined to include both the arts as well as the intangible shared beliefs, values and practices of a community.

For many people, access to artistic and cultural pursuits is at the heart of their quality of life. Even beyond the impacts to residents’ quality of life, communities that offer arts and cultural opportunities also stand to benefit economically and socially: from drawing more tourists to the community and building a vibrant environment that’s attractive to entrepreneurs and knowledge workers, the arts can be an important tool in a community’s economic toolbox.

These amenities are created and supported by scores of dedicated organizations and individuals that work as volunteers, artists, or staff to create art, coordinate events and productions, fund and maintain historic and cultural assets, and provide educational opportunities. Across the ten-county Northwest Michigan region, nearly 100 nonprofit and public entities provide opportunities to access and participate in music, performing arts, visual arts, and etc. (see Map 1—Northwest Michigan Art and Cultural Resources and Appendix 1).

### **Museums & Historical Societies**

All counties in Northwest Michigan have at least one historical society—many have several. These grassroots organizations help to preserve historical buildings, documents and other important components of local history. Many of these organizations own and maintain historic buildings and/or run the local historical museum.

In addition to historical museums, a number of other museums are



Opportunities to engage in concert events range from multi-day music festivals to small outdoor community concerts and performances by nationally known musicians.

found throughout the region, such as the Dennon Museum, which features arts and exhibitions, the Great Lakes Children’s Museum, and the Music House Museum.

### **General Arts Councils & Organizations**

Most counties in the region are home to various types of arts related nonprofit organizations. Many of these organizations or arts councils run art galleries that house locally generated works of visual art, while others, such as the Interlochen Center for the Arts, engage in educational activities and bring arts of all kinds (visual, music, dance, etc.) to the region. Others, such as the Cadillac Area Council for the Arts, serve as umbrella organizations for other arts organizations in the area and act as conduits for funding.

### **Community Theater Groups & Performing Arts Organizations**

There are several community theater groups in the region, including the

Cadillac Footlites, Old Town Playhouse, and the Little Traverse Civic Theatre. These groups are typically made up of area residents who produce plays and other forms of live entertainment for their community. Other organizations, such as the Traverse City Opera House, provide programming and venues for musicians, theater, comedy, and other performing arts events and activities.

### **Music-Oriented Organizations**

Northwest Michigan is home to a range of entities that specialize in the musical arts, such as local chamber orchestras, chorale societies, music collectives, festivals, and educational organizations. Opportunities to engage in concert events range from those provided by local symphony orchestras, to multi-day music festivals, to small outdoor community concerts and nationally-known musicians at venues like Interlochen Center for the Arts and the Traverse City Opera House.



## Hybrid Organizations

There are a handful of non-profits in the region whose mission goes beyond arts and culture. An example is ISLAND (Institute for Sustainable Living, Arts and Design)—an organization dedicated to supporting artists, preserving traditional skills, and sharing tools for ecological living. Many of these organizations have a mission focused on education or the environment in addition to the arts.

## Tribal Heritage & Culture

Northwest Michigan is home to three federally recognized Indian Tribes: the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. Each of these tribes is deeply involved in researching and preserving their historical and cultural traditions.

The Little Traverse Bay Band, for example, preserves materials that help to document the rich and long history of their people in the area. They have recently been working with the National Park Service, Emmet County, and the states of Indiana and Michigan on projects commemorating the Odawa participation in the War of 1812 and the Civil War.

The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians created and manage the Eyaawing Museum and Cultural Center in Peshawbestown. The Tribe collects and maintains a record of their history and shares it with others, providing educational programs for school groups and other organizations. The Museum Store features arts and crafts of Tribal artists and educational materials.

The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians is committed to preserving tribal history. They help to find and protect sites of historical significance on Tribal lands. The preservation and dissemination of Tribal teachings and language is important to their people. They are presently working on writing a book of their Tribal history.

All tribes host and participate in annual pow wows, featuring native singers, dancers, artists, and artisans.

## Arts Organizations & the Community

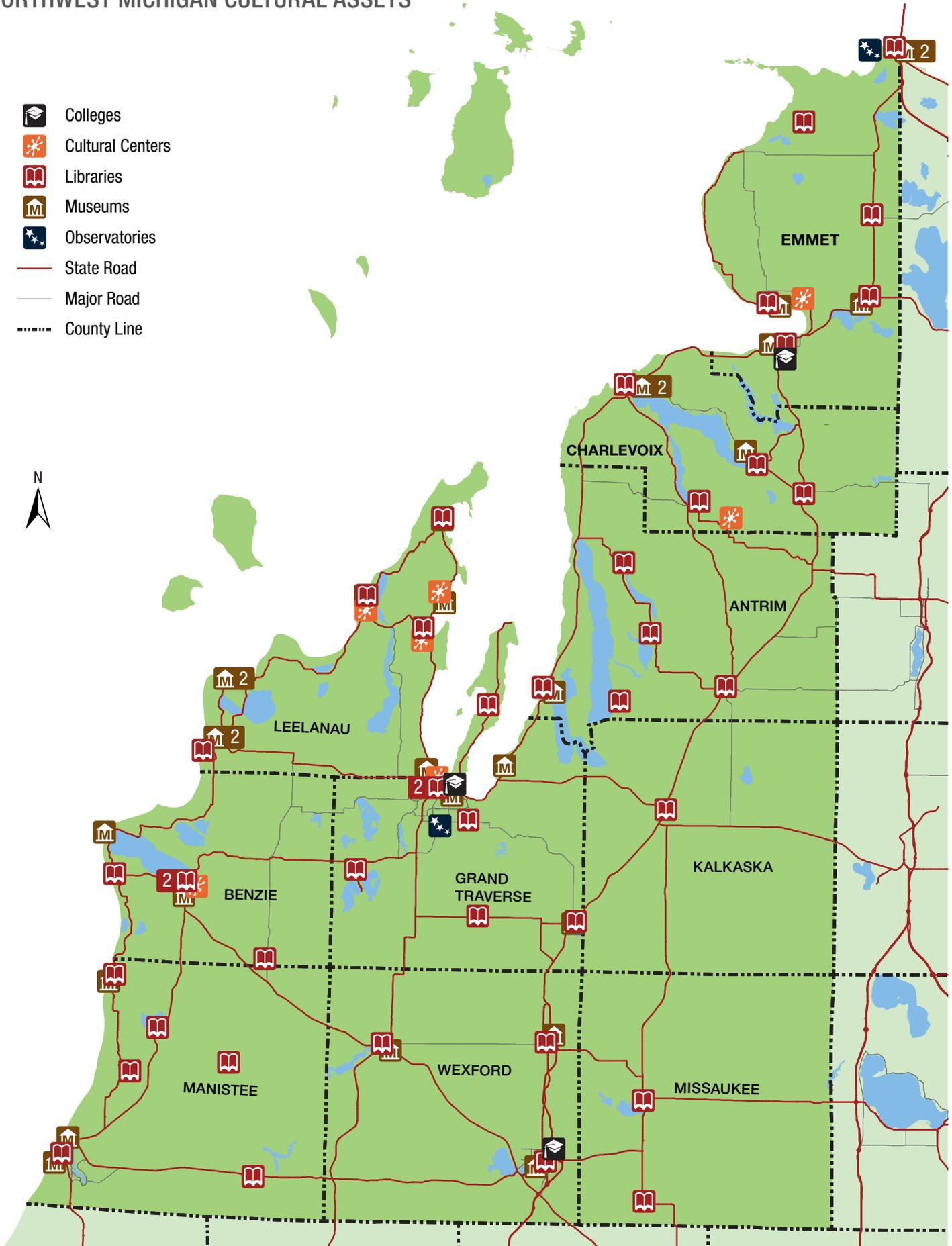
Communities can strengthen the process of encouraging more arts and cultural activities in their area with solid planning efforts that involve the entire community. In Northwest Michigan, however, planning efforts and the coordination of activities does not often take place

between local units of government and arts and culture organizations. The topics of arts and culture are rarely found in local master plans beyond a brief mention in conjunction with recreational facilities or historical preservation. Local recreation plans may touch on the topic, but mainly focus on publicly owned recreational facilities such as parks and trails. Most of the region's arts and culture non-profit organizations have their own strategic plans, which are used by staff and members to guide their organization. Rarely, however, do these planning efforts involve other segments of the community—such as the local unit of government, chambers of commerce, or local schools.

Further, input obtained from stakeholders during the Framework for Our Future process indicates that the region lacks a formal platform for coordination and cooperation between arts organizations. The ability for arts organizations to coordinate and partner can create opportunities for new initiatives while expanding financial and staff capacity; however, arts and culture stakeholders lack a network or other venue in which they can formally or informally meet with peers and community members on a regular basis, to discuss common concerns, work toward shared priorities, and identify opportunities to partner.

# NORTHWEST MICHIGAN CULTURAL ASSETS

-  Colleges
-  Cultural Centers
-  Libraries
-  Museums
-  Observatories
-  State Road
-  Major Road
-  County Line



# Opportunities: Arts & Cultural Assets

The arts can have profound and positive impacts on local economies and residents' quality of life. To capitalize on these potential benefits, community leaders can play an active role in encouraging arts and cultural activities in their area with solid planning efforts that involve the entire community.

Some communities may consider incorporating arts and cultural assets into their recreation planning process; while others might include discussion in their community master plan or economic development strategy. In local master plans, communities might include a chapter or sub-chapter related to arts and culture; or in other communities, where there is a strong interest in incorporating cultural elements into community and economic development initiatives, a specific arts and culture plan can be developed to identify detailed actionable goals for building on and encouraging the arts.

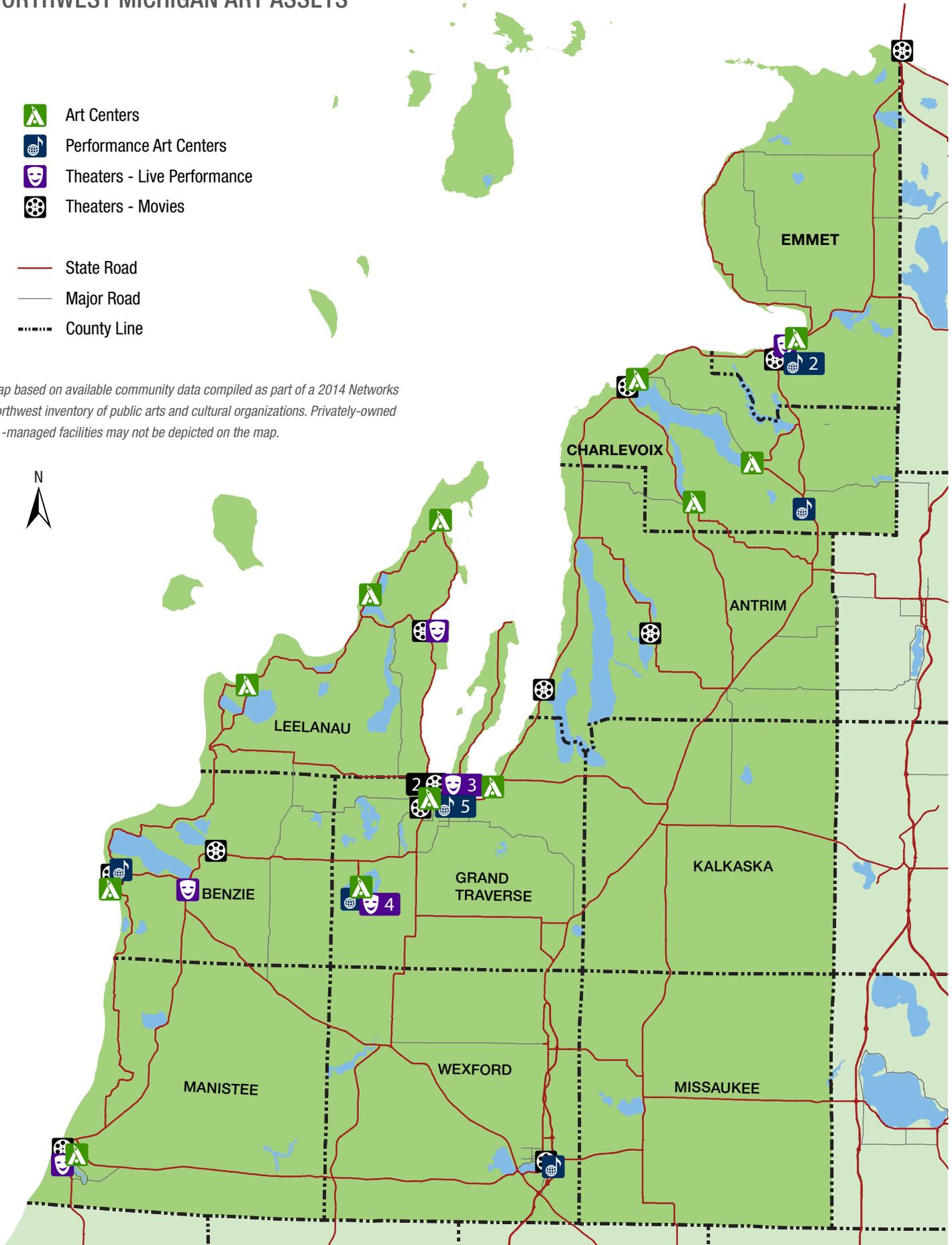
As part of the arts and cultural planning process, it's important for communities to identify and map key cultural assets, such as historic resources, arts and cultural non-profits, and arts-related businesses. Additionally, it's vital to include arts and culture discussions in any public input activities or questionnaires related to the development of the master plan, in order to identify public priorities and opinions related to arts and culture. For more insight and information on the community's arts and cultural assets, needs, trends, and opportunities, communities should also consider inviting arts and cultural stakeholders to participate in the development of local master plans. Communities can also consider opportunities to connect through formal or informal networks that provide a venue for dialogue and partnerships. Improving coordination and communication between community leaders and arts groups can be an important step in expanding local cultural capacities, while further integrating the arts into the community.



# NORTHWEST MICHIGAN ART ASSETS

-  Art Centers
  -  Performance Art Centers
  -  Theaters - Live Performance
  -  Theaters - Movies
- 
-  State Road
  -  Major Road
  -  County Line

Map based on available community data compiled as part of a 2014 Networks Northwest inventory of public arts and cultural organizations. Privately-owned or -managed facilities may not be depicted on the map.



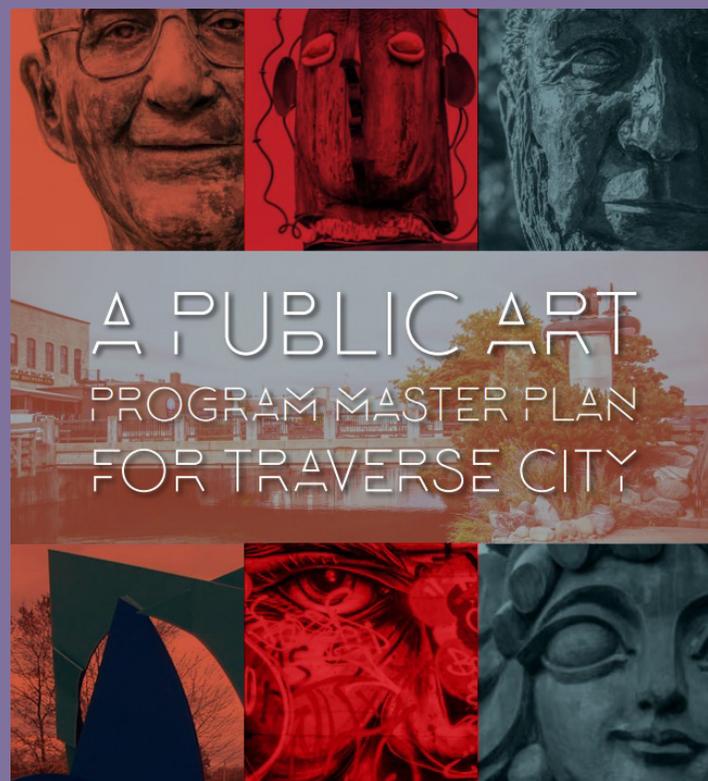
# Best Practice: Planning for the Arts

Arts and culture has not traditionally been a focus of community planning efforts in Northwest Michigan. However, some communities have developed community plans designed to integrate the arts into community and economic development efforts—through stand-alone cultural plans, recreation plans, and specific cultural economic development plans.

involving many segments of the community and contained many goals that are still relevant today; however, the plan has not been updated since that time.

More recently, in 2009, Benzie County developed and adopted a Recreation and Cultural Plan that incorporates arts and cultural assets into its 5-year recreation plan. The plan includes an inventory of both recreation and cultural assets, as well as goals and actions designed to integrate cultural facilities and activities—including historic assets, the arts, and libraries—into recreational planning. As a recreation plan approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, actions listed in the recreation plan are eligible for grant dollars from state recreational funding programs.

Also in 2009, with funding from the Michigan Main Street Program and participation from diverse community groups, the City of Boyne City developed *Boyne Appetit: The Creative Food Experience*, a Cultural Economic Development Plan. The plan helps to strengthen the community's capacity to create jobs, attract dollars to the community, and provide opportunities to spend and invest locally. It focuses on creating and innovative food experience, with goals including; 1) positioning Boyne City as the “got-to” place for unique and creative regional food experiences and “take-home” food products; 2) maintaining and building on the vitality of the Historic Downtown and lake front; 3) creating a favorable working environment for traditional and creative artists and performers, as well as craftmakers and food producers in all forms; 4) promoting the area's natural environment and outdoor recreation opportunities as a draw for visitors and as quality of life amenities for residents; and 5) improving communication coordination, and effectiveness of local development efforts.



In 1999, the Grand Traverse region produced a “Cultural Plan” in a cooperative effort by the Traverse Area Chamber of Commerce, Northwestern Michigan College, the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, and area arts organizations. The Cultural Plan represented a very broad-based planning effort

## Arts & the Economy

In addition to public and non-profit arts and cultural organizations and activities, arts-related businesses abound in the ten Northwest Michigan counties of Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee and Wexford. These businesses employ thousands of workers and contribute millions of dollars annually to the regional economy, with even larger economic impacts from the critical role they play in tourism.

### Arts Businesses & Employment

Americans for the Arts has published data on the number of businesses in “creative industries” for each Michigan county, which includes non-

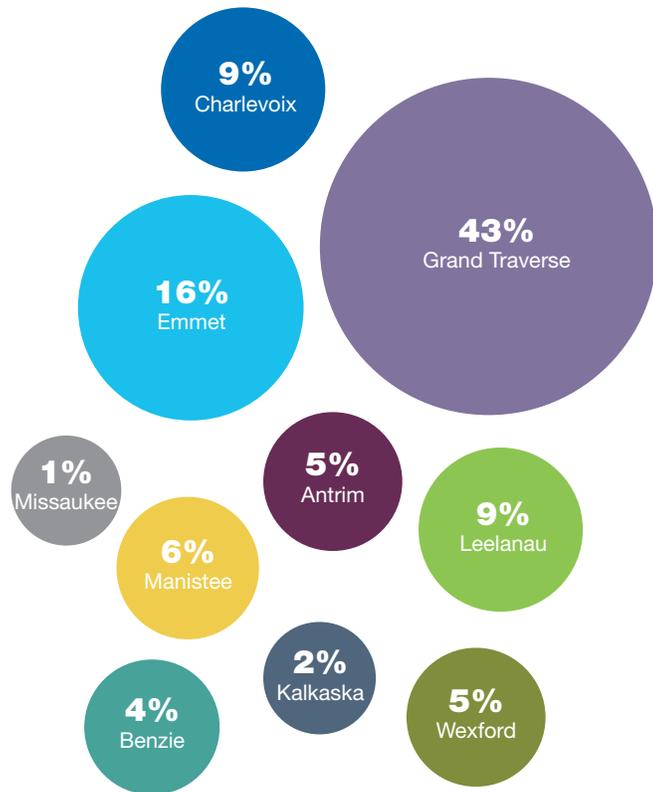
profit arts and culture organizations plus private sector arts-related businesses like theaters, architecture, design, and photography. Their data shows that majority of the region’s creative businesses are located in Grand Traverse and Emmet counties (see Figure 1).

Creative industries do not tend to make up a large percentage of the businesses in any given geography. For both the U.S. and Michigan, creative industries make up about 4% of the total businesses. In Northwest Michigan, the percentage of creative industries slightly exceeded the state and national rate in Grand Traverse, Emmet, and Charlevoix counties (see Figure 3).<sup>1</sup>

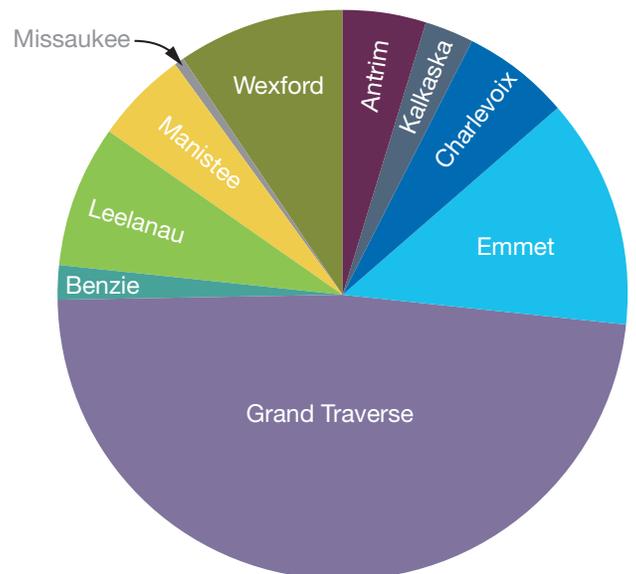
The sizes of arts- and culture-related businesses and organizations vary widely. Many are operated solely by volunteers or the business owner, although some very large organizations do operate in the region, however. The largest, by far, is the Interlochen Center for the Arts, located in Grand Traverse County, with staff and volunteers of over 1,300 people.

Information from American for the Arts shows the number of employees found in “creative industries” of Northwest Michigan (see Figure 2). Nearly two-thirds of all “creative industries” employees worked in Grand Traverse (48%) or Emmet (13%) counties.

**FIGURE 1 SHARE OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN**



**FIGURE 2 SHARE OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES EMPLOYEES IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN**



Year: 2014

## Arts, Entrepreneurs, & Knowledge Workers

While arts and cultural related organizations and businesses do not make up a very large part of the NW Michigan economy, there is a body of evidence that shows creative communities are home to more job creation, higher salaries, more innovations and more growth in high-tech industries than other areas (“The Rise of the Creative Class” by Richard Florida).

Michigan State University’s 2013 study entitled “Arts and the Innovative Workplace” surveyed innovative, high growth and high wage firms in Michigan. They found that a majority

apply knowledge acquired from arts and crafts activities in their day-to-day work activities. Many of those interviewed (40%) believe that an arts background is essential to innovation. This report suggests that it is very important for communities and schools to offer a wide range of arts and cultural activities if they wish to grow and attract innovative, high-wage firms and knowledge workers to their area.

Interestingly, this study also found that while those interviewed valued arts and crafts activities, they did not tend to be involved with or contribute to local arts organizations. This finding seems to show the critical importance

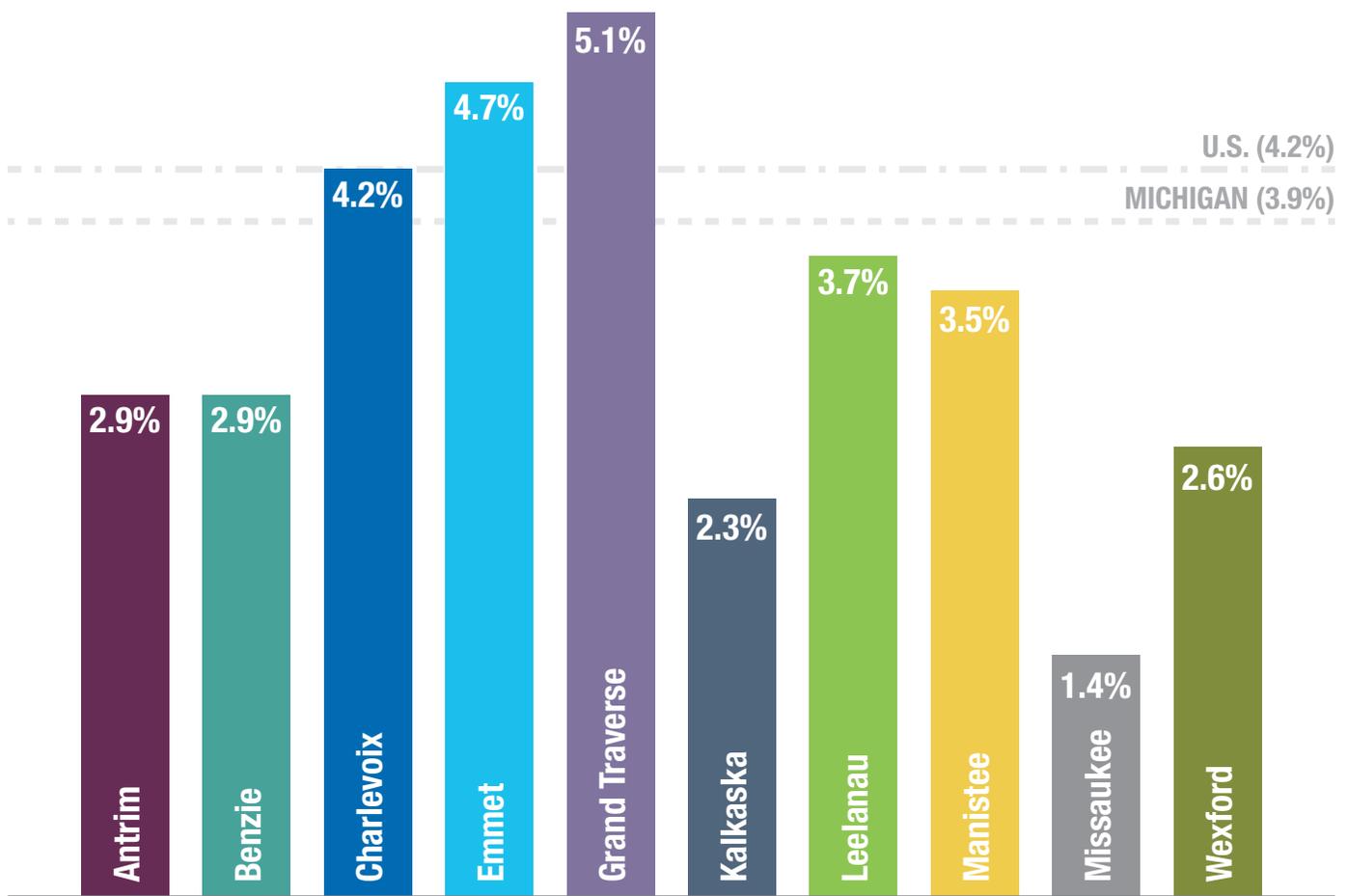
of building relationships between these firms and local arts organizations.

## Arts, Culture, & Tourism

Arts and cultural activities are important to many communities, particularly in popular vacation destinations like Northwest Michigan, for their ability to attract tourists to an area.

Studies have found that over three-quarters (78%) of U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling. Cultural and heritage tourists travel more frequently (5.01 annual leisure trips) than non-cultural and heritage tourists (3.98 annual leisure trips). They also

**FIGURE 3 CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL BUSINESS IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN**



Year: 2014

travel further and spend more money than non-cultural and heritage.<sup>2</sup>

While economic impact data relative to arts and culture tourism in Northwest Michigan is limited, information from the 2011 County Business Patterns data series helps to quantify the impact that tourism and the arts has on the Northwest Michigan region. Tourism-related occupations and businesses are typically included in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Accommodations and Food Services, and Retail Trade sectors—which employ nearly 28,000 residents and contribute over \$625 million annually to the local economy through payroll. While some of the businesses included in this industry cluster (such as food service and retail) don't cater only to tourists, the data nevertheless shows a significant tourism-related economic impact on the region's economy.

Additionally, a study conducted in the greater Traverse City area estimated that over 3.3 million visitor trips were made to the area in 2012, resulting in \$1.18 billion in total spending at local businesses.<sup>3</sup> The study also shows there were approximately 1.3 million visitor parties to the Traverse City area in 2012, staying an average of three days each. Spending on entertainment, recreation, shopping and retail ranged from \$90 to \$135 per day for each party, for an estimated expenditure of between \$351 and \$487.5 million per year. Arts and culture-related businesses were not specifically identified in the study; but their strong presence in the area is likely to have acted as an important draw for many visitors.

While these data and studies paint a partial picture of the sizable impact that arts and culture have on our region's economy, more accurate and precise information can reinforce support for the arts as an economic development strategy. Both locally and regionally, economic impact studies and data are needed to better understand the profound impact that the region's tourism industries—and its arts and cultural opportunities—have on the economy.

**27,788** # OF PAID EMPLOYEES IN TOURISM-RELATED ESTABLISHMENTS\* IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN\*\*

**2,615** # OF TOURISM-RELATED ESTABLISHMENTS\* IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN

**626** ANNUAL PAYROLL FOR TOURISM-RELATED ESTABLISHMENTS\*, IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS, IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN

*Source: 2011 County Business Patterns, U.S. Census Bureau <sup>1</sup>*



# Opportunities: Arts & the Economy

Opportunities exist in every community to encourage and support arts- and culture-related businesses and organizations. When taken in conjunction with other economic development initiatives, strengthening arts and culture can improve the local economy, add to a community's sense of place, and make it more attractive to businesses, entrepreneurs, residents and tourists.

Local policy, planning, and partnerships can help communities encourage and foster arts and cultural activities and development. Incorporating arts and culture in master plans and recreation plans creates linkages between these assets and community development goals. Additionally, some local zoning regulations can play a part in supporting creative industries or businesses. For instance, ordinances that allow cottage industries or home occupations are important for artists and others that are producing art and other products at a smaller scale. Creative industries can also benefit from regulations that provide for office or production space in close proximity to retail, residential, and other complementary uses.

Further, economic development incentives, plans, and initiatives can create opportunities for new arts and cultural businesses. Small business incubators, which can be supported through both zoning and incentives, can encourage entrepreneurial arts and cultural activity by offering space for producers to experiment with and market new products, in an environment that allows for cross-collaboration with and synergy between other creative workers and business people.

Community leaders can also work hand-in-hand with local arts and cultural organizations and others to actively encourage and support this sector, by convening, participating in, or contributing to arts and cultural networks or groups.

In any planning and economic development activities, reliable data and information is needed to identify priorities and establish goals. To provide a solid planning foundation for these initiatives, communities can consider conducting arts and cultural economic impact studies to inform local planning efforts and to identify specific arts-related economic opportunities.



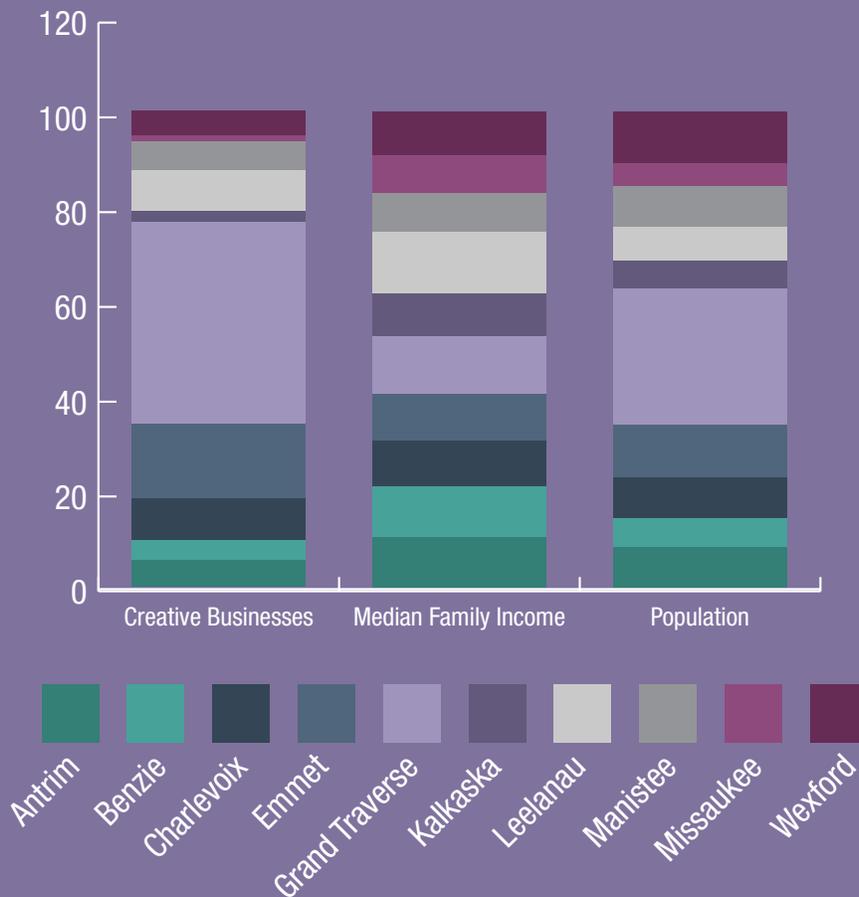
# Income, Population & Arts & Culture

Arts and cultural non-profit organizations depend upon volunteers and donations in order to survive. An area with higher incomes is more likely to contain individuals with the time and money needed to support such arts-related organizations or businesses. In addition, a larger population also lends itself to having more non-profit organizations, as there are more individuals available to band together into formal non-profit entities. In Northwest Michigan, the number of creative industries in Northwest Michigan counties appears to be closely connected to each county's median family income and the population size. Missaukee County has the smallest number of creative industries and also the lowest income and population in

the region. Conversely, Grand Traverse County has the second highest income in the region, the largest population and, by far, the largest number of creative industries.

While smaller, lower-income communities may have fewer arts-related businesses, non-profits, or industries, residents of these communities may still have access to arts and cultural activities. In communities where arts and culture related non-profit organizations are missing, activities are often sponsored by schools, religious organizations, and community groups like Rotary and Kiwanis. Additionally, in our very mobile society, residents of smaller communities often take part in the arts and cultural activities found in larger and prosperous towns nearby. Involvement in and access to arts and culture activities, however, is more difficult for poorer families, due to lack of disposable income.

**NUMBER OF CREATIVE BUSINESSES, MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME, AND POPULATION BY COUNTY IN NORTHWEST MICHIGAN**



## ➔ Public Art, Events & Placemaking

“Placemaking” refers to a wide range of community improvement strategies and initiatives that result in vibrant, safe, and friendly places that are cherished by both residents and visitors. Placemaking capitalizes on a community’s unique assets—including its history, natural resources, or public spaces and buildings. It can include efforts to preserve the scenic or historic character of a place, expand the affordability or type of housing choices, increase the visibility of public art, market local products to attract tourists, or provide broadband connections in all public places.

Arts and cultural activities are key elements in any placemaking efforts. Public art, events, festivals, and historic preservation all use and build on a community’s unique assets to create the kind of place that people want to live in and visit.

Many Northwest Michigan communities actively engage in placemaking activities, often incorporating arts and cultural events into these initiatives. Festivals, concerts, movies, wayfinding, mobile food vendors, street musicians, and public art are all used to create and enhance local “brands” while building community.

### Public Art

Public art represents a very tangible approach to placemaking by incorporating arts into community development. It can include murals, sculptures, and other visual arts that may be installed in parks, downtowns, public buildings like courthouses, or other public spaces. Public art helps to reflect a community’s values while invigorating public spaces and building a community identity or brand.

### Streetscapes & Wayfinding

Art can be integrated into other placemaking strategies as well, such as wayfinding and streetscape improvements. Streetscapes include



landscaping and other elements like benches and lighting that are designed to improve the aesthetics of downtown or other neighborhood streets.

Wayfinding—the use of consistent, easy-to-follow signage to direct visitors and residents to points of interest—is important in both promoting and connecting a community’s assets, such as shopping districts, libraries, markets, employment centers, parks, and other destinations. Creative approaches to streetscapes and wayfinding—such as asking local artists to design or produce signage, benches, or other streetscape elements—can highlight a community’s unique character by integrating it into some of its most visible areas.

### Community Events

Events and festivals are important placemaking activities. By drawing visitors and others into the community for activities, events spur business activity, raise awareness of community assets, and help to build the community’s social fabric. Communities and organizations throughout the region hold annual festivals to celebrate

local agriculture, food, heritage, and arts. These events are beloved by residents and annually bring hundreds of thousands of visitors to the region, ultimately helping to support and build local economies. Many communities are now also beginning to feature smaller, regularly scheduled events, such as outdoor movies or concerts, street fairs, sporting events or competitions, and other events that bring residents and visitors to the downtown, parks, or other community focal point. These smaller, community-focused events contribute to the ongoing vitality of a place while creating stronger social ties.

### Mobile Vendors & Street Performers

Vacant or under-used space in cities and villages is often a liability. However, some communities are directing mobile vendors, street performers, “pop up” markets, and other small-scale activities to these unused or vacant spaces. These innovative activities help to draw pedestrians and other traffic to an area, creating a more vibrant and friendly place.

# Opportunities: Public Art, Events & Placemaking

Placemaking offers many opportunities to draw from, integrate, and support local arts and culture while building vibrant communities.

To support a broad range of placemaking activities, it's important for communities to include placemaking strategies in local master plans and recreation plans. These plans might call for actions such as street art, outdoor restaurant seating,

In addition to the annual events and festivals that are supported by many communities, stakeholders can also help to support the arts and placemaking by creating and encouraging smaller, regular events like concerts, art fairs, outdoor movies, and performing arts events in local parks and open spaces. Support for activities such as street performances or mobile vendors can be a similar and important arts-related placemaking tool. To encourage or

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## Some communities have adopted regulations permitting food trucks and street performances that provide opportunities for emerging artists.

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historic preservation, festivals, and mixed-use development. The master plan may also provide the groundwork for form-based codes, which provide opportunities to focus on the design of the public realm while offering more flexibility in terms of how a structure or space is used.

To provide public art, some communities commission and/or display works of local or other artists in their downtown. Others take advantage of vacant or blighted buildings or lots to showcase local art. For instance, some cities or villages provide gallery space in empty downtown storefronts or windows, while others capitalize on unused public space for sculpture or other art installations.

accommodate these activities, some communities have adopted regulations permitting food trucks and street performances that provide opportunities for emerging artists.

In addition to regulatory support, some communities also provide financial support for arts-related placemaking activities, using specific funds, recreation budgets, or the general fund to enhance their downtowns or other neighborhoods with public art. Downtown development authorities and corridor improvement authorities also offer tax increment financing options to support activities such as wayfinding and streetscape improvements that can incorporate public art and/or local artists into downtown improvements.



# Placemaking in Northwest Michigan

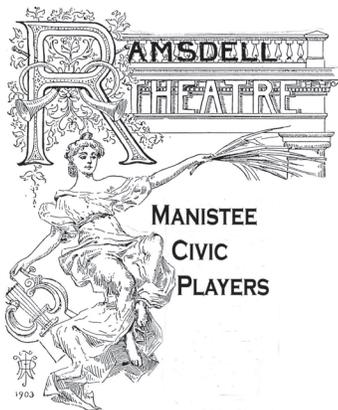
Because it offers a variety of tools and techniques, with an emphasis on activities that are “lighter, quicker, and cheaper” than large-scale community development initiatives, placemaking has become an important community development strategy. It can involve tangible public infrastructure improvements, like new sidewalks, or it can focus on the social aspects of a place, by simply making room for new events in unused spaces. It can be put into practice on the micro-scale—addressing the aesthetics or functionality of a single street corner or crosswalk—or community-wide, addressing larger issues such as street design or trail connectivity. It can be initiated by community groups, individual members of the public, or community leaders. The sheer range of activities that can occur with placemaking makes it a valuable tool for communities throughout the region, regardless of the size, budgets, or priorities of the community.

To help guide communities and individuals that are interested in placemaking as a community and economic development strategy, the Northern Michigan Community Placemaking Guidebook was developed in 2010 by the Networks Northwest, with participation from local and county governments and community organizations. The Guidebook is designed to empower local citizens and collaborative groups throughout Northwest Michigan with community pride and placemaking tools. It includes background information, case studies, and step-by-step information on developing both short-term actions and long-term plans around placemaking.

The Guidebook and additional placemaking resources are available for local units of government and other community stakeholders on [www.createmiplace.org](http://www.createmiplace.org). The website features videos, resources, and examples of placemaking efforts in Northwest Michigan.



# Placemaking in Northwest Michigan



**National Writers Series**  
Writers Series of Traverse City™



**Traverse City Film Festival 2015**

## ↻ Historic Preservation

Northwest Michigan has a rich history that forms an important part of our communities' character. Many of the region's communities were developed around the logging industry, shipping, or railroads in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and their character reflects the historic architecture and design of that period, along with the individual heritage of each community. Preserving the design and heritage of these historic communities—as manifested in their buildings and landscapes—is an important part of enhancing a community's sense of place, helping to connect residents and visitors with the historic events that shaped the community, while also providing a sense of continuity.

Historic preservation initiatives offer tools to preserve, conserve, and protect these historic buildings, objects, landscapes or other artifacts of historical significance. It tends to refer specifically to the preservation of the built environment, like buildings, neighborhoods, bridges, lighthouses, or ships. While historic preservation is often the mission of non-profit organizations like historic societies, there are ways in which communities can support and encourage these types of activities in order to preserve and enhance their local heritage and unique sense of place.

### Historic Districts

Under the authority of Local Historic Districts Act, Act 169 of 1970, local governmental units can create local historic districts. This Act gives the community tools to help preserve an entire area that is deemed to be historically significant. Historic districts are often designated for particular historic neighborhoods, based on shared architectural character or significant historical context. Local historic districts have been designated throughout the region, including those in the cities of Boyne City, Cadillac, Charlevoix, Manistee, and Traverse City (see Map 1).



Adaptive reuse preserves the historic integrity of the former Traverse City State Hospital while integrating new residential and business uses.

More information about local historical districts can be found in Appendix 2.

Apart from a local historic district designation through Michigan's Local Historic District Act, some communities may work to preserve important landscapes with other programs or tools. Examples include Fishtown, a historic waterfront in Leelanau County, is preserved and maintained by a nonprofit organization, Port Oneida Rural Historic District and the Glen Haven Village Historic District, which are both part of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

The integrity and character of historic neighborhoods, particularly those that haven't been designated as a local historic district, are often threatened by new development or development patterns that aren't compatible with the neighborhood's historic character. For instance, in some neighborhoods, historically-significant homes may be demolished

to make way for newer or larger homes or other types of development.

### Local and National Historic Landmarks

Individuals, groups or communities can nominate buildings, neighborhoods or other resources to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places or on the State's List of Historic Sites. Especially significant historic properties can be designated as a National Historic Landmark. When a property is listed on the Federal or State list of historic places or is designated as a National Historic Landmark, certain protections are provided, depending on which designation it falls under and if it is publicly or privately owned (More information can be found about historic preservation tools and resources in Appendix 2.)

In Northwest Michigan there are four properties that are National Historic Landmarks: the Bay View resort community in Emmet County; Ernest

Hemmingway Cottage in Emmet County; the North Manitou Island Lifesaving Station in Leelanau County; and the SS. City of Milwaukee in Manistee County.

In addition to national landmarks, many communities maintain and preserve local historic landmarks, such as lighthouses, homes of early settlers, or public buildings. These landmarks may be owned and maintained by a municipality, nonprofit, or “friends” group that provides access to the public. The preservation and upkeep of these public, historic structures is often dependent largely on volunteer labor, donations, and grant dollars.

Many privately-owned historic landmarks—such as historic hotels, storefronts, or homes—are preserved when private individuals, businesses, community groups, and others purchase,

renovate, and reuse the building. However, the expense associated with renovation and maintenance of both public and privately-owned historic buildings often acts as an obstacle to preservation, leaving these important community assets susceptible to deterioration and eventual demolition.

## Scenic Byways & Heritage Routes

Historic value and heritage are not limited to our region’s communities, neighborhoods, or buildings: many roads in Northwest Michigan feature important aesthetic or historic assets that are worthy of preservation.

Under the National Scenic Byway or a State Heritage Route (Michigan Byway), a highway that is deemed to have special scenic, historic, cultural, recreation qualities can achieve

designation through local support. Roadways with these designations achieve certain protections and in some cases have access to additional funding sources (more information about these programs can be found in Appendix 2).

In Northwest Michigan, there are three roads listed under the State’s Heritage Route (Michigan Byways) program:

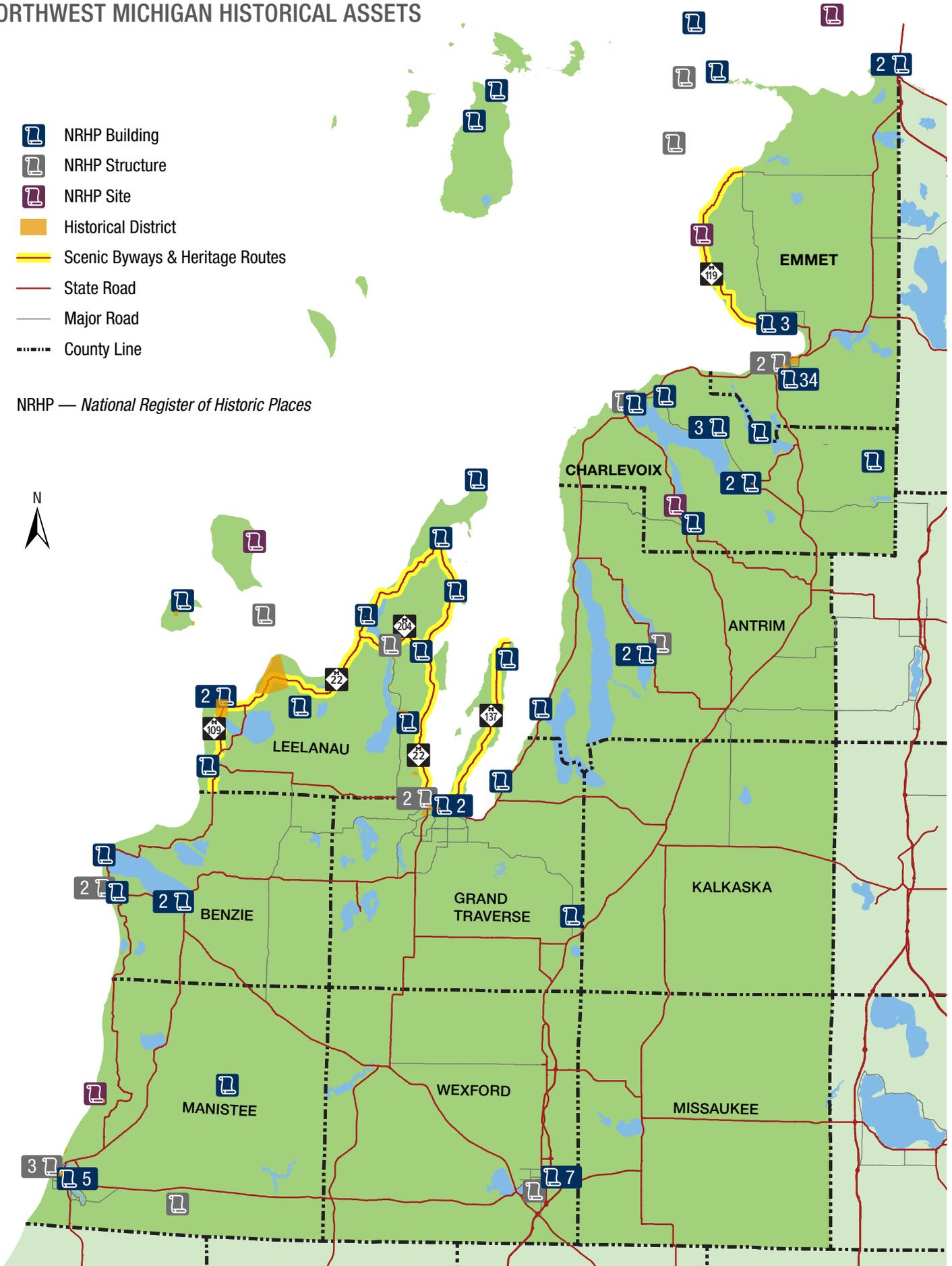
- **Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route:** M-22, M-109, M-204 in Leelanau County
- **Old Mission Peninsula Scenic Heritage Route:** M-37 in Grand Traverse County
- **M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route:** M-119 in Emmet County



# NORTHWEST MICHIGAN HISTORICAL ASSETS

-  NRHP Building
-  NRHP Structure
-  NRHP Site
-  Historical District
-  Scenic Byways & Heritage Routes
-  State Road
-  Major Road
-  County Line

NRHP — *National Register of Historic Places*



# Opportunities: Historic Preservation

Designating local historic districts or heritage routes can be an important first step in preserving and maintaining a community's historic character and heritage. These districts offer opportunities to guide the design and aesthetics of new development in an area, in order to prevent incompatible development or renovations and to ensure that the historic character remains intact.

In addition to a formal historic designation, communities can also use regulatory or policy tools to encourage the reuse and renovation of historic structures. Many historic structures are no longer able to serve the purpose for which they were originally built; yet their architectural features or historic significance remain valuable to the community. Renovating and reusing these structures for a new purpose - or "adaptive reuse" - provides an important opportunity to preserve history while allowing and integrating new business or residential development. Examples range from the conversion of a historic residence into offices or restaurant space, to the large-scale renovation and reuse of the historic State Hospital, now the Village at Grand Traverse Commons, in Traverse City. Often, high renovation costs and complex regulatory issues act as obstacles to the reuse of important historic structures. Communities can help ease the way for adaptive reuse by adopting zoning codes that permit a variety of uses to occur in historic neighborhoods. Form-based zoning, which regulates the design and form of a structure to a greater extent than its use, is a particularly useful tool in encouraging adaptive reuse of historic structures; form-based codes can also be used to ensure that new development is architecturally compatible with the historic character of a particular neighborhood.

Overlay zoning districts may also be used to regulate design in historic neighborhoods, by creating additional design requirements based on the neighborhood's specific character.

Historic preservation tax credits and grant programs offer ways for communities and developers to finance preservation and reuse activities. Historic preservation tax credits have been used by developers at important historic sites throughout the region, resulting in the profitable redevelopment and reuse of valuable historic assets. A number of grants may also be available to communities that are working to preserve local historic sites for public access. In addition, some communities work in partnership with friends groups, volunteers, or nonprofits to preserve and maintain historic structures. Partnerships can enhance fundraising activities while providing opportunities for volunteer engagement.

Communities can also encourage the renovation of historic residences and commercial structures by participating in incentive or grant programs offered through the State of Michigan. For instance, the Michigan Main Street Program offers a number of tools that help communities capitalize on their historic commercial buildings. Additional state and federal programs help to encourage investment in historic homes: housing rehabilitation and downtown rental rehabilitation programs are available through the Michigan State Housing Development Program and the USDA, which offer grant dollars to property owners to make home repairs. Other programs, such as locally-established Neighborhood Enterprise Zones, provide tax abatements for the renovation of existing homes in certain areas.



## ➔ Local Implementation Checklist: Arts & Culture

Planning and zoning are important implementation tools for communities that are interested in integrating the arts into community initiatives and economic development. The Local Implementation Checklist identifies some examples of how communities in Northwest Michigan and other parts of Michigan have integrated arts and culture into their local policies. Communities may consider this language, and/or Framework for Our Future Strategies, when updating their own local policies.

### Master Plan Goals and Objectives

A master plan is a guide that's intended to shape local decisions about managing resources, directing growth, and how development should be designed. Master plans help the community understand current conditions, build a vision for the future, make recommendations about actions to take on various community issues, and act as the foundation for zoning ordinances.

Communities have an important role to play in supporting and encouraging arts and culture, and there are significant opportunities to enhance economic development efforts by integrating arts and culture into local plans, development, and initiatives. Incorporating arts and culture into the local master plan can be an important first step in enhancing the community's arts and cultural assets and economic opportunities. Some sample master plan language follows:

#### Incorporate arts and cultural assets in placemaking efforts

- Implement wayfinding and streetscape improvements
- Encourage events, festivals, and street performances in downtown parks, and other community focal areas.

#### Preserve and protect the community's historic structures and character

- Conduct an existing and potential historic sites survey
- Restore and enhance local historically significant structures
- Establish a historic preservation ordinance or district
- Consider the effects of development or redevelopment on historic sites or structures
- Ensure ongoing use and maintenance of historic properties and structures
- Create an environment that makes it economically feasible to preserve historic structures and sites

#### Create a sense of community through the expansion of educational, arts, cultural, and leisure opportunities

- Promote displays of art in public buildings, parks and other public spaces
- Develop cultural experiences for all ages and abilities
- Seek opportunities to create space for art, culture, and leisure activities in new and redeveloped facilities

#### Highlight the community's heritage, cultural assets, and diversity by connecting to and linking cultural organizations

- Foster partnerships with and between local and regional cultural organizations and neighboring communities
- Identify and develop viable venues to host cultural events
- Provide venues and opportunities for local artists and historians to gather and engage in an ongoing dialogue

#### Create and support an economically viable arts community

- Create linkages to larger regional arts organizations and develop opportunities to share resources. Provide for incubators or other spaces to allow local artists and others to nurture and promote their talents.
- Incorporate the arts into local business districts, through streetscape elements, wayfinding, and public art
- Provide for incubators and other spaces to allow local artists and others to develop and promote arts, crafts, and other products.

# Local Implementation Checklist: Arts & Culture

## Zoning Ordinance Elements

Zoning ordinances are local laws that regulate land and buildings in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all citizens. It helps define how properties are used, what new buildings look like, and how much development can occur in a community.

Zoning and other ordinances can create a supportive regulatory environment that allows for the flexibility needed by creative and entrepreneurial businesses and cultural activities. Zoning elements that might support arts and cultural activities while preserving historic character include:

- Reduced regulatory controls on home businesses or cottage industries
- Areas zoned for a mix of uses that include residential, commercial and office space
- Form-based zoning, planned unit development, or cluster development that encourages small arts-related businesses in areas of the community, i.e. in areas with opportunities for redevelopment
- Allow higher density in districts where growth is desired. Establish overlay zoning districts that provide design that encourage the preservation of older historic structures and neighborhoods.
- Allow outdoor restaurant seating
- Allow for street musicians/performances and outdoor vendors within the traditional downtowns, in public parks, and during community festivals
- Allow for murals to be painted on the external walls of area businesses

## Supportive Initiatives

In addition to planning and zoning, there are many potential roles for communities that would like to encourage arts and cultural events, activities, facilities, and access. While planning and zoning represent important foundational steps in enhancing local arts and cultural opportunities, a number of actions such as partnerships, tax incentives, and capital improvements can build on plans and ordinances to directly support the arts through funding or business support. See Appendix 2 and 3 for more detailed information.

- Create and utilize a Land Bank Authority (under Act 258 of 2003) to acquire lands for public arts organizations or purposes and for redevelopment
- Create Neighborhood Enterprise Zone(s) (under Act 147 of 1992) to encourage the renovation of older historic housing units. (Only allowable in Cadillac, Charlevoix, Lake City, Manistee, Petoskey and Traverse City)
- Work with downtown organizations, such as downtown development authorities, to become an official “Michigan Main Street” community
- Involve arts and cultural organizations when organizing festivals or other events
- Include street art in public parks and other public spaces. Include local artists and art organizations in the planning stages for this activity
- Encourage small non-profit arts and cultural organizations to obtain assistance from available sources such as Northsky Nonprofit Network, the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, etc.
- Encourage the formation of arts related businesses, through referrals to business assistance organizations such as the local Chamber of Commerce, the Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC), SCORE, etc.
- Start or encourage the formation of an entrepreneurial coaching program, business accelerator program, business mentor program, etc. to provide support for small start-up businesses
- Host or encourage the hosting of social networking and/or the collaboration of entrepreneurs and artists (on-line or virtually)
- Establish or encourage the establishment of a small business incubator, where rent is initially subsidized and business counseling assistance is provided
- Encourage the use of Investment Crowdfunding as a way in which to finance arts related businesses
- Actively engage in placemaking improvements, such as public plazas, green space development, streetscapes, sidewalks, trails, wayfinding, community theaters, farmers’ markets, place branding, events and festivals
- Consider requesting a local millage (or other funding mechanism) to help fund public street art, parks, recreation, arts activities and organizations and the historic preservation of public buildings

## Framework Strategies

As a resource for communities in Northwest Michigan, the *Framework for Our Future* identifies a number of strategies and actions that communities can take locally to address their specific needs. Because each community identifies their own goals, through public input, local discussions, and need analyses, the strategies and actions identified in the Framework are not intended as recommendations for any communities to implement or adopt. Rather, they are provided as a resource list of potential actions that, if desired, can be taken locally and/or used as model language for local master plans, organizational strategic plans, and other policy documents, to address various community needs.

The strategies and actions in the Framework were developed from public input and local, regional, statewide, and national sources. Many are based on public input obtained during the *Framework for Our Future* process in events, focus groups, interviews, online discussions, and community dialogues, and were also drawn from or based on master plan language from existing adopted master plans within and outside the region. Others reflect state or national best practices designed to address specific issues.

### Strategies are grouped around four major themes that reflect needs and potential actions for each community issue.

**Education, Data & Outreach.** Often, taking action on a community need requires a solid understanding of the need, as well as public consensus on the appropriate course of action. *Education, Data, & Outreach* strategies address data gaps, outreach needs, and educational opportunities that can help to improve community understanding and awareness around a particular issue.

**Planning & Policy.** Many community issues can be addressed in part by local policy, such as master plans and zoning ordinances. *Planning & Policy* strategies identify broad policy goals and specific changes to master plans or zoning ordinances that can impact a particular issue.

**Financing & Incentives.** Communities can use funding and incentive tools to encourage private, public, and nonprofit initiatives and activities that meet local goals. *Financing & Incentives* strategies identify opportunities that can enhance organizational capacities, as well as incentives that may help communities work with the private sector and others to meet local goals.

**Development & Implementation.** Goals for each community issue center around programs, development or initiatives that directly and tangibly impact community needs. *Development & Implementation* goals include

specific strategies designed for on-the-ground activities and bricks-and-mortar implementation.

Each strategy includes additional information intended to aid in implementation, including:

#### Why?

Each strategy is designed to address a certain issue. Information is provided to detail specific community needs that might be met through implementation of the strategy.

#### Actions

To implement each strategy, communities can consider taking action in a number of ways. This section identifies some specific actions that communities might consider to reach local goals.

#### Tools & Resources

A number of existing tools or resources are available to partners that are interested in taking action on a particular strategy. This section identifies, and provides links to, tools and resources such as:

- Research or background studies that can help communities identify specific community needs in order to develop appropriate policy or initiatives
- The Framework for Our Future Action Guide, which provides details and implementation guidance for planning and zoning actions identified in the Framework
- Guidebooks and workbooks that provide step-by-step information on actions and the implementation process
- Examples of where the action has been implemented regionally
- Local, regional, state, or national reference documents that can provide additional guidance

Links to all resources are available online at [www.nwm.org/rpi](http://www.nwm.org/rpi).

#### Measures

Communities can track progress toward these goals and actions by benchmarking data identified in this section. While some measurement data will be locally generated and tracked, many indicators can be accessed on the regional data portal [www.benchmarksnorthwest.org](http://www.benchmarksnorthwest.org).

# Arts & Culture: Data, Education & Outreach Strategies

*Improve knowledge, understanding and use of existing arts and cultural facilities, organization and opportunities among residents and visitors*

<b>Strategy 1</b>	<b>Increase awareness among residents and visitors of the existing arts and cultural facilities, organizations and opportunities within the Northwest Region</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	Increased awareness of arts and cultural facilities contributes to greater usage of these facilities and organizations, which in turn increases local support - financial and other.	
<b>Actions</b>	Work with State and local agencies to collect, access and disseminate data about the positive impact that arts and cultural activities have on the local economy.	Partner with local arts and culture organizations and other stakeholders on producing promotional materials, web sites, etc. regarding arts and cultural facilities, groups and activities.
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>American for the Arts</i> <a href="http://www.americansforthearts.org/research">www.americansforthearts.org/research</a>	<i>Michigan Council for Arts &amp; Cultural Affairs</i>
	<i>The Michigan Cultural Data Project</i>	<i>Northsky Nonprofit Network</i>
<b>Measures</b>	Determine if more data is available	Track the amount of joint marketing taking place
<b>Strategy 2</b>	<b>Improve communications within the local arts and culture community and among other organizations, agencies, businesses and the public</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	Arts and cultural stakeholders lack a structure within which they can share concerns and priorities while identifying new initiatives and partnerships. Improved communications between arts stakeholders and other parts of the community will increase support and coordination of arts and culture activities and efforts, leading to stronger organizations and better awareness of cultural opportunities and needs.	
<b>Actions</b>	Form a communications network of similar arts and cultural organizations and businesses through tools such as social media.	Inform local units of government, tourism related organizations, businesses, and the public of the activities and plans formulated by the local arts and culture community. Encourage them to get involved.
	Encourage members of the local arts community to serve on local organization's board, run for office, etc., where appropriate.	
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>Michigan Council for Arts &amp; Cultural Affairs</i>	<i>Northsky Nonprofit Network</i>
	Local units of government	Chambers of Commerce
<b>Measures</b>	Determine if communication's networks have been formed	Track increased involvement by local units of government and other organizations
	Track increased involvement by arts and culture organizations in local government	

# Arts & Culture: Planning & Policy Strategies

Encourage the preservation, maintenance and growth of arts and cultural assets, facilities and activities through local policies, plans & initiatives

<b>Strategy 1</b>	<b>Improve the coordination of planning activities among local arts and cultural organizations, local units of government and community.</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	Arts and culture are rarely integrated into broader community plans. Improved coordination between arts groups and community organizations like local units of government and downtown development authorities will reduce duplication of efforts among arts organizations while ensuring that arts become an integral part of the local plans and initiatives.	
<b>Actions</b>	Identify and map key assets to assist in arts and cultural planning, such as historical resources, arts and cultural non-profit organizations and businesses, local ethnic and cultural heritages, etc.	Include the topic of arts and culture in the local units, master plans, recreation plans, and other local plans.
		Include the topic of arts and culture in the planning documents of community organizations such as Chambers of Commerce and downtown development authorities.
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>Networks Northwest</i>	<i>Northsky Nonprofit Network</i>
	Local units of government	Local Downtown Development Authorities and Chambers of Commerce
<b>Measures</b>	Determine if arts and culture asset maps are available and continually updated.	Track the degree to which the topic of arts and culture is included in planning documents
<b>Strategy 2</b>	<b>Enact local policies that support, strengthen, and encourage growth in the arts and culture sector.</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	Insures the survival of existing entities and helps to encourage the growth of additional ones	
<b>Actions</b>	Make use of State programs and tools in order to maintain, strengthen and help grow the arts and culture sector.	Consider establishing local historic districts
	Consider zoning changes to allow home-based businesses or cottage industries by-right	Consider zoning changes that allow mixed-use development by-right
	Consider form-based zoning approaches to accommodate reuse of historic structures and historically sensitive redevelopment	
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>Networks Northwest</i>	<i>Michigan Council for Arts &amp; Cultural Affairs</i>
	<i>Michigan Economic Development Corporation</i>	<i>A Framework for Our Future Action Guide</i>
<b>Measures</b>	Track changes made to local ordinances, regulations and policies.	Track the number of arts related businesses in the region.

# Arts & Culture: Financing & Incentives Strategies

*Expand capacity and ensure long-term financial sustainability of arts and cultural organizations, businesses and assets*

<b>Strategy 1</b>	<b>Connect the arts and culture community with technical assistance.</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	Smaller arts and cultural nonprofits may lack the staff capacity or expertise to expand their scope or sustain their activities. Connecting them with assistance can help to insure the long term sustainability of arts and culture organizations and businesses.	
<b>Actions</b>	Use the expanded arts and culture communications network to disseminate information regarding available resources and assistance.	Use the expanded arts and culture communications network to encourage groups, organizations and businesses to mentor one another.
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>Networks Northwest</i>	<i>Small Business Development Center</i>
	<i>Northsky Nonprofit Network</i> <a href="http://www.northskynonprofitnetwork.org/resource-center">www.northskynonprofitnetwork.org/resource-center</a>	Local arts and culture organizations
<b>Measures</b>	Track the number of arts related businesses and non-profits in the region.	Determine if arts and culture organizations are mentoring one another
<b>Strategy 2</b>	<b>Encourage coordination, cooperation and potential consolidation between local arts and cultural non-profits.</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	Partnerships between organizations can help small organizations expand their capacities and increase their long-term financial sustainability.	
<b>Actions</b>	Encourage the formation of groups similar to the Northwest Michigan Art's Coalition for better communications and cooperation.	Explore the potential of forming an umbrella arts and culture organization (i.e. arts council) to assist with coordination and cooperation.
	Encourage the sharing of resources, facilities, expertise, volunteers, staff, etc. between arts and culture organizations.	Investigate the potential of consolidating similar arts and culture organizations, where appropriate and desirable.
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	Local arts and culture organizations	<i>Northsky Nonprofit Network</i> <a href="http://www.northskynonprofitnetwork.org/resource-center">www.northskynonprofitnetwork.org/resource-center</a>
<b>Measures</b>	Determine if arts and culture organizations are sharing resources with one another.	

# Arts & Culture: Financing & Incentives Strategies

(continued)

<b>Strategy 3</b>	<b>Encourage the support of the arts and culture community from businesses, local government, the public, and state and federal programs and incentives</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	A variety of partners can play a role in ensuring access to community arts and cultural opportunities. Additional support from these partners will help to insure the long-term success of arts and cultural entities.	
<b>Actions</b>	Consider the use of brownfield, downtown development authority, corridor improvement authority and other avenues of tax increment financing to incentivize infrastructure and improvements for housing development	
	Explore the potential of requesting a local millage to help fund arts, cultural and recreational activities and facilities.	Make use of federal and State programs and incentives in order to maintain, strengthen and help grow the arts and culture sector
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>Northsky Nonprofit Network</i>	<i>Michigan Council for Arts &amp; Cultural Affairs</i>
	Local arts and culture organizations	Michigan Main Street Program
<b>Measures</b>	Track the usage of State incentives and programs.	

# Arts & Culture: Development & Implementation

*Maintain, improve and enhance arts and cultural facilities, programs, and opportunities for all users*

<b>Strategy 1</b>	<b>Provide education and mentoring to local arts and cultural organizations.</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	Developers staff capacities and expertise can encourage greater financial sustainability for small non-profits.	
<b>Actions</b>	Partner with organizations such as Michigan Arts and Cultural Association to bring relevant knowledge and expertise to local arts and culture non-profits.	Partner with organizations (i.e. SBDC), consultants and others to bring relevant knowledge and expertise to local arts and culture private businesses.
	Encourage successful arts and cultural non-profits and businesses to mentor others regarding their experiences and challenges.	
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>Michigan Council for Arts &amp; Cultural Affairs</i>	<i>Northsky Nonprofit Network</i>
	<i>Small Business Development Center</i>	Local arts and culture organizations
<b>Measures</b>	Track the number of educational forums for local arts and culture organizations	Track the usage of the SBDC by arts related businesses.
	Determine if arts and culture organizations are mentoring one another	
<b>Strategy 2</b>	<b>Engage community partners in offering, improving, and enhancing arts and cultural facilities, programs and opportunities</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	The improvement and enhancement of arts and culture opportunities will help to strengthen the local economy, increase tourism and add to the area's sense of place.	
<b>Actions</b>	Enhance partnerships between the arts and culture community, local units of government, business, schools, etc. to plan ways in which to maintain and expand arts and cultural opportunities.	Identify ways in which to bring more arts and cultural activities, programs and facilities to underserved groups (i.e. low income, minorities, handicapped, etc.)
	Expand the potential of holding joint or sequential activities, festivals, events, etc. among several arts and cultural organizations and other groups, as appropriate.	
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>Northsky Nonprofit Network</i>	<i>Networks Northwest</i>
	Local arts and culture organizations	Local tribes
	Social service organizations	Local Downtown Development Authorities
	Local Chambers of Commerce	
<b>Measures</b>	Track the number of partnerships among organizations	Track participation in arts and cultural activities by underserved groups
	Track numbers of joint or sequential activities between arts and culture organizations and other groups	

## Arts & Culture: Development & Implementation

*(Continued)*

<b>Strategy 3</b>	<b>Ensure the long-term maintenance of facilities and programs</b>	
<b>Why?</b>	Long term planning will help to insure the continued survival of arts and culture facilities and programs.	
<b>Actions</b>	Include strategies for the long-term maintenance of public and non-profit arts and cultural facilities and programs within local planning documents.	Explore the potential of requesting a local millage to help fund arts, cultural and recreational activities and facilities.
	Consider establishing endowment funds to support arts and cultural organizations.	
<b>Tools &amp; Resources</b>	<i>Networks Northwest</i> <a href="http://www.nwm.org/planning/">www.nwm.org/planning/</a>	Local units of government
<b>Measures</b>	Determine if long term planning for arts and culture organizations is included in local planning documents.	

# References

1. 2011 County Business Patterns, U.S. Census Bureau, \*Total of Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Accommodations and Food Services and Retail Trade, \*\*Number of paid employees for the pay period including March 12th

# Revisions

The **September 2016 Addition** has been edited for formatting issues, data corrections and updates, image additions, pagination, and grammatical errors. The substantive content of *A Framework for Arts & Culture in Northwest Michigan* is as approved by the Networks Northwest Board on December 8, 2014.



In 2014, the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) adopted a new name to more clearly identify itself and the services it offers to businesses and organizations in northwest Lower Michigan. As such, NWMCOG became Networks Northwest. The Networks Northwest name represents the collaborative nature of the work that goes on within the organization and among the many businesses, organizations, and units of government which it serves.

The name change coincided with Governor Snyder's Regional Prosperity Initiative, which puts a new emphasis on centering many state programs and services around common geographic regions. In response to that initiative and to streamline operations, NWMCOG's two governing boards voted to start meeting together and operating as a single board. That board now operates under the Networks Northwest name.

Network Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, Prisoner Reentry Program, Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, Global Trade Alliance of Northern Michigan, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs.

Network Northwest member counties (Michigan's Prosperity Region #2) are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.



**FRAMEWORK  
FOR OUR FUTURE**

A REGIONAL PROSPERITY PLAN  
FOR NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN



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