US-12 Pure Michigan Byway

Committee Meeting
Monday, October 26, 2026 / 1:00PM
McCourtie Park / 10426 S. Jackson Rd., Cement City, MI 49233

Region 2 PLANNING COMMISSION
Serving Hillsdale, Jackson & Lenawee Counties

1. Call to Order / Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of Agenda – **ACTION**
4. Approval of August 24, 2026 Meeting Minutes (see enclosure) – **ACITON**
5. Executive Management Update (Mike Trudeau, Brett Gatz)
6. Committee Member Reports – **DISCUSSION**
    a. State Partners
    b. Hillsdale County Partners
    c. Lenawee County Partners
    d. Jackson County Partners
7. Old Business
    a. Development of New US-12 Corridor Management Plan (Brett Gatz, Clayton Sigmann) – **DISCUSSION**
    b. US-12 Resource Inventory (Brett Gatz, Clayton Sigmann) – **DISCUSSION**
    c. Membership Analysis (Brett Gatz, Clayton Sigmann) – **DISCUSSION**
8. New Business
    a. US-12 Garage Sale Enhancements – **DISCUSSION**
    b. US-12 Heritage Trail Logo – **DISCUSSION**
    c. Pure Michigan Byway Annual Evaluation (see enclosure) – **DISCUSSION**
9. Other Business / Next Steps
10. Public Comment
11. Adjournment

National Forest Scenic Byway

America's Byways®

Pure Michigan Byway

Region 2 PLANNING COMMISSION
Serving Hillsdale, Jackson & Lenawee Counties

MINUTES

US-12 PURE MICHIGAN BYWAY COMMITTEE
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Monday, August 24, 2026

Members Present: Aaron Dimick, Village of Brooklyn
Joe Fowler, MIS
Cindy Hubbell, Irish Hills Chamber of Commerce
Tim Robinson, Lenawee Now
Mike Trudeau, Trudeau-Associates (Chair)

Others Present: Evan Blake, Region 2 Planning Commission
Brett Gatz, Region 2 Planning Commission
Clayton Sigmann, MDOT Pure Michigan Byways Program

ITEM 1 CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Trudeau called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Introductions were done by the committee.

ITEM 2 PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received.

ITEM 3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Mr. Robinson, supported by Mr. Dimick, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 4 APPROVAL OF JUNE 22, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Robinson, supported by Mr. Dimick, to approve the meeting minutes of June 22, 2026 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 5 EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Mr. Dimick said he will be representing the Village of Brooklyn at all meetings going forward, so Matt Swartzlander will no longer be attending. Since Mr. Swartzlander served as Vice-Chair of the committee, a vote was taken on electing a new Vice-Chair. A motion was made by Mr. Sigmann, supported by Mr. Robinson, to have Aaron Dimick serve as Vice-Chair. The motion carried unanimously.

ITEM 6 COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

No reports were given from any committee members.

ITEM 7a **DEVELOPMENT OF NEW US-12 CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Mr. Gatz said that R2PC will start working of the new corridor management plan in October, since they will receive the funding to start developing it on October 1.

ITEM 7b **US-12 RESOURCE INVENTORY**

Mr. Sigmann talked about ways the committee can collect inventory for the new Corridor Management Plan.

ITEM 7c **MEMBERSHIP ANALYSIS**

Mr. Sigmann said he will contact municipalities along US-12 who are not currently attending meetings to see if someone in their office is willing to attend.

ITEM 8 **US-12 GARAGE SALE**

Mr. Sigmann informed the committee that the US-12 Garage Sale took place earlier in August. Next year the committee will plan to help advertise the event.

ITEM 9 **OTHER BUSINESS / NEXT STEPS**

Mr. Gatz said that the committee will meet again in October once the new fiscal year starts.

ITEM 10 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments were received.

ITEM 11 **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Dimick, supported by Mr. Robinson, to adjourn the meeting at 2:00 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Brett Gatz, Recording Secretary
Region 2 Planning Commission

2026 Pure Michigan Byways Annual Performance Evaluation

Byway Name: Sunrise Coast

Form Completed By: Brett Gatz

Date Form Completed: 10/26/26

Evaluation of Previous Year:

Y Management Plan Completed/Update (Y/N)
2026 Year of Management Plan Completion/Update
$1,250 Funding Secured in Past Year
National Sources:
State Sources: $1,250
Local Sources:
$ 0 In-kind Contributions Secured in Past Year
# 11 New Byway Committee Members
# 0 New Byway Partners
# 30 Total Byway Volunteer Hours (estimate)
#90,000 Total Byway Website Hits (for FY 25)
N/A Total View of Videos on YouTube

Accomplishment: Something tangible that has been produced, achieved.
Example: 5000 copies of brochure printed and distributed at 15 local businesses, hotels, and welcome centers.

Evaluation: To determine the worth, value or condition of use through careful appraisal and study.

Outcome: Something that follows as a result or consequence of an activity.
Example: Because of instruction at a fundraising workshop, a participant was able to recruit a sponsor for a local special event.

Performance: The execution of an action, the fulfillment of a claim or promise.
Source: Webster's Dictionary

*Total over the lifetime of the videos being uploaded to YouTube, there is no way to filter by year

2026 Pure Michigan Byways Annual Performance Evaluation

Top Three Byway Accomplishments & Outcomes:
(Example: new attractions, new marketing, special events, restoration or conservation activity, workshops)

Accomplishment	Brief Description	Stakeholders/ Partners	Outcome
1. US-12 Garge Sale	US-12 Garage Sale was held as an annual event.	MDOT, R2PC, Mgmt Council	US-12 Garage Sale
2. Reassembled US-12 Committee	A committee for the US-12 Byway in Hillsdale and Lenawee Counties was put together.	R2PC; local retailer	A committee for the US-12 Byway was established.
3. Began CMP Update	The development of a new CMP was started.	R2PC, Mgmt Council	A new CMP will be made for the US-12 Byway.

Testimonial/Quote about Byway:
(100 words or less – or attach as separate sheet)

1. “”

From: _____ County, MI_____
Person’s Name Affiliation Town/County/State

Date:

1. “”

From: _____, MI_____

2026 Pure Michigan Byways Annual Performance Evaluation

Person's Name Affiliation Town/County/State

Date: 12-18-25

Demonstration of Byway Principles:
(Use two to three sentences to describe how the local byway committee demonstrated the principles of the Pure Michigan Byways Program and detail the methods used)

- **Inspiring Destination Stewardship:**
  The US-12 Byway saw increased traffic during the US-12 Garage Sale which provided an opportunity to showcase our destination communities and their historic legacy.

- **Investing in Byway Sustainability:**

  Through reactivation of the US-12 Byway Committee, a forum is established that will allow the communities to discuss the corridor and ensure it may be enjoyed for generations to come.

- **Involving Byway Partners and Participants:**

  The Sunrise Coast program keeps in constant contact with partners and participants. They are intimately involved in all aspects of the program. Participants assist in keeping the website updated in their local communities. Partners are also involved in distributing materials.

- **Interpreting Byway Stories:**

  Reactivating the committee we've reengaged historic organizations along the corridor.This will provide the opportunity to tell the byway's story and offer it to the visitors.

2026 Pure Michigan Byways Annual Performance Evaluation

Current SWOT Analysis of Designated Byway

STRENGTHS

- One central point for groups to work together to draw tourism into the area. Each different business, group, or public entity can all benefit equally and have the ability to add to what is already here when it comes to drawing tourism.
- Great people, less crowded, phenomenal views.
- Outstanding website!
- Large number of contributors of time to the program – updating the website, helping in promotion.
- Successful regional partnerships and ability to integrate these groups into the Byways program.
- Pooling of resources to achieve success.
- Partnerships between public entities, nonprofits, and private business – all working toward the same goal.
- Oversight of the program from the regional level.
- Sunrise Coast website is easy to use, includes all the communities, and unifies information about the region. It also helps to connect each community to a regional effort.
- Winner of Trailblazer Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (one of four projects in the country to win that year).
- Winner of Governor's Tourism Award.

WEAKNESSESS

- Appearance of small towns, lack of signs indicating time to destination (not just miles), lack of customer service training.
- Lack of a full-time staff member.
- Lack of marketing budget. Need to constantly engage in fundraising for marketing.
- Lack of budget to plan route-long events (i.e. Lake Huron Discovery Tour)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Continuing to expand the different groups it can affect in a positive way. It may help draw people to all of southern Michigan and will lead them to go beyond the US 23 corridor itself, which it may be doing already.
- Appearances – opportunity to make area more welcoming,
- Finding our niche – why people should take US23 instead of other routes.

- Partnering with other routes.
- The better we can market the Route, the more people will choose to visit. Continued improvements and upkeep of the website is critical in this regard.
- Marketing opportunities – Pure Michigan, MLive, travel magazines.
- Design guidelines and new signage to tie the route together.
- The creation of logo gear to provide an income to the program and to help to market the program.
- Increased attention from legislators.
- The concept of a “route” speaks to the history of US-23. This route is a way to have each community organize around a general theme of a route along the Sunrise Coast (and beyond) but keep the unique qualities each community offers.
- We have a structure--the Sunrise Coast Byway, a website, parts of a multi-use trail, the physical towns, businesses, and groups. This linking together creates an opportunity to develop a sustainable northeast shore region while keep the wild and natural aspect that makes this area unique.
- Think, plan, develop, sustain regionally and act locally. Make sure there are main development structures existing or created that will link the communities regionally. Allow and encourage each community to find the unique qualities that draw people to visit or live there.

THREATS

- Having something so large and positive that the wrong groups could try to lead the current teams in a direction this was not originally meant to go.
- Tourist dollars being pulled to other areas of the state.
- Difficulty of funding for the program. Communities in this area do not have many resources.
- Website vendor is no longer going to host website, so a new website is needed.

2026 Pure Michigan Byways Annual Performance Evaluation

Total Byway Committee Membership: 11

Committee Chair(s): Mike Trudeau, Chair; Aaron Dimick, Vice Chair

Active Committee Members:

NAME	REPRESENTING	EMAIL
1. Jeff Gray	City of Jonesville	jgray@jonesville.org
2. Aaron Dimick	Village of Brooklyn	aarond@villageofbrooklyn.com
3. Cindy Hubbell	Irish Hills Regional Chamber of Commerce	cindy@irishhills.com
4. Justin Gifford	Visit Lenawee	justin@visitlenawee.com
5. Sally Clark	Hillsdale Economic Development Partnership	sclark@hillsdaleedp.org
6. Tim Robinson	Lenawee Now	tim@lenaweenow.org
7. Ryan Tarrant	Experience Jackson	ryan@jacksonchamber.org
8. Kelby Wallace	MDOT – Jackson TSC	wallacek@michigan.gov
9. Joe Fowler	Michigan International Speedway	jfowler@nascar.com
10. Mike Trudeau, Chair	Trudeau-Associates	michael.trudeau@trudeau-associates.com
11. Trinity Bird	Sauk Theatre	trinitylbird@gmail.com

AUTHORIZATION FROM DESIGNATED BYWAY COMMITTEE

Board President/Chairman: Mike Trudeau

Signature **Date**

2026 Pure Michigan Byways Annual Performance Evaluation

RPA Byway Coordinator: Brett Gatz

Signature **Date**

Pure Michigan Byways Program Manager: Clayton Sigmann

Signature **Date**

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

_____ Date reviewed by Pure Michigan Byways Program Manager

_____ Comments attached/provided?