

MARKETING PLAN

DRAFT 2023

I. Background Information:

The City of East Tawas is located along a state trunk line US-23, which runs from Jacksonville, Florida to Mackinaw City, MI. In 2004 the Michigan Department of Transportation designated the non-freeway section as the Sunrise Side Coastal Highway. Since 2009, it has been called the Huron Shores Heritage Route a part of the Pure Michigan Byway program.

The City of East Tawas is a popular tourist destination community. The East Tawas Park and campground offer playgrounds, picnic areas, 178 campsites and approximately 2,000 feet of beach frontage. The DNR State boat launch ramps provide great access to both Lake Huron and Tawas Lake for fishing and recreational activities.

II. History:

The following is a history of the City of East Tawas as drafted by Neil Thornton. Please understand that this history of the City is still in draft format but is being included here due to the historical significance and the unavailability of a published history. We think you will find it very interesting. Neil has a DVD that goes along with this written history and photo references in the written history are actually photos that are on the DVD. Neil has published many books about the area, which are available at the local libraries.

By Neil Thornton

With unbounded faith in the future, Editor C. R. Jackson of the Iosco Gazette took pencil in hand and fashioned this headline:

EAST TAWAS:

The Coming Metropolis Of the North!

It was 1893 and the entire nation was experiencing one of the worst economic recessions of the 19th century. The US would not pull out of that nosedive until the turn of the century, despite the Chicago world's fair. Thanks to the leadership of Mayor Temple mery, East Tawas's fortunes were never brighter, regardless of the fact that the now fabled white pine era had run its course in northern Lower Michigan.

Together with Nelson Holland of Saginaw, Holland and Emery Lumber Company had constructed a new sawmill on the site of today's Tawas Bay Beach Resort east of the state dock, a salt block, expanded docking facilities, a new two-story office building-store and the beautiful Holland Hotel.

The entire project, originating in 1891, was based on rafting white pine logs across Lake Huron from Canada. Unfortunately, that bubble burst only seven years later when Ontario cut off the supply of saw logs. The inland area back of the Tawas was rapidly filling in with small farmers, working 40 to 120 acres of land, but this is getting ahead of the story about East Tawas.

The community known in the early days as east town, owed its origination to a crooked land agent, according to the diary of James O. Whittemore, first editor of the Losco Gazette George P. Smith and Henry Perkins Smith of Tonawanda New York State, principle owners of the firm of Smith, Van Valkenburg and Company, had retained a Bay City land agent by the name of Miller to locate some land for a mill site at Sand Point on Michigan's thumb.

According to the diary of Whittemore, resident manager of Tawas City's Whittemore Lumber Company, "It was a lucky break for us that Miller used the Smith's money to buy the site in his own name and then wanted to bleed them heavily before he would deed it to them."

That circumstance, he said, drove the Smiths to look for another site for their mill. They chose a site on Tawas Bay in Tawas Township, east of the struggling hamlet occupied by the pioneer Whittemore sawmill enterprise. That event took place in 1864 and the Smiths, with substantial capital behind them, soon had their new mill in operation, purchased some additional land from the Whittemores and began setting off lots for a new town site. Incidentally, the Smith family is still associated with East Tawas through third and fourth generation members of the family at Tawas Beach Association

III. How to use the Marketing Plan:

This marketing plan will define deliberate steps to promote and offer information about community assets, attributes, and economic opportunity. This plan will reference existing efforts, plans and put it into one place for consistency and marketing efforts.

This plan will be executed by all partners involved.



Explore East Tawas



Vision Statement:

East Tawas provides economic development opportunities for all while enjoying the laid-back life and embracing a high quality of life.

Mission Statement:

The mission of East Tawas is continuing to improve the quality of life for its residents and being a good partner to its neighbors. East Tawas is dedicated to family, fun and exploration, with plenty of amenities the community has to offer.

IV. East Tawas Assets:

Natural Assets:

- Access to Lake Huron
- Access to the Tawas Rive
- Access to Tawas Lake

Physical Assets:

- Robert C. Bolen Memorial Park
- Tom Dillon Memorial Park
- Dewey Durant Park
- Harbor Park
- East Tawas Day Use: Includes East Tawas Beach access
- East Tawas Campground
- East Tawas Community Center
- East Tawas Library
- East Tawas City Hall
- East Tawas Fire Department

- East Tawas Police Department
- Water and Sewer Infrastructure
- Streets and Sidewalks
- Downtown Public Restrooms
- Downtown Shopping
- Downtown Restaurants
- State Dock and Harbor
- DNR Boat Launches (recreation, fishing etc.)
- Tawas Bay Players Playhouse
- Disc Golf Course
- Basketball Courts, Tennis Courts and Pickleball Courts
- Tawas Area School System (Elementary, Middle School and High School)
- US Post Office

Community Events:

The community events listed below are hosted by the City, Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce, East Tawas Business Association and other local community members and organizations.

- Perchville USA: Held annually the first weekend in February.
- Tuesday Night Live: live music downtown on Newman Street during June, July and August.
- Memorial Day Parade
- Concerts in the Park: Our local community band holds concerts on Monday evenings, June through August.
- Fourth of July parade and fireworks
- Summerfest: The second weekend of July. Includes a street dance, car cruise, car show, and a 5k run.
- Tawas Uncorked & Untapped Beer and Wine festival
- Downtown Sidewalk sales
- Blues by the Bay
- Triathlons
- Art Stroll
- Softball Tournaments
- Halloween Parade and Trick or Treating: Downtown Halloween Parade and trick or treating event.
- Christmas Parade, tree lighting and downtown shopping night.

V. Key Stakeholders:

Local

- The City of East Tawas

- East Tawas Business Association
- Tax Increment Finance Authority
- Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce

Regional

- Tawas Visitors Bureau (through the Chamber of Commerce): The City of East Tawas works with the Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce regarding City events and promoting them. Most City events are put together by outside organizations. Each organization gets approval from the City for street closures, Police escorts etc. The Tawas Chamber then helps with promote through their online sites, Tourist booklet, E-News blasts etc.

Branding Elements:



VI. Key Messaging:

- The City of East Tawas (City) is located along state trunkline US-23, which runs from Jacksonville, Florida to Mackinaw City, Michigan
- The City's parks and campground offer playgrounds, picnic areas, 178 campsites and approximately 2,000 feet of beach frontage.
- Travel away from the water and check out our lively downtown East Tawas, which offers a variety of options for shopping and dining.
- Newman Street hosts many street festivals such as Tuesday Night Live, Summerfest, an annual car show and street dance, a chili cookoff during Perchville USA and multiple other activities through the year!

VII. Marketing Tools

Local

Social Media Channels

- Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/cityofeasttawas>
- City of East Tawas Website

Featured on radio segments

- Local radio segments
- Event Calendar (can submit events to local WKJC website)

Signs

- Billboards located along US-23 at the intersection of Newman and US-23.
- Wayfinding signs

Newsletters

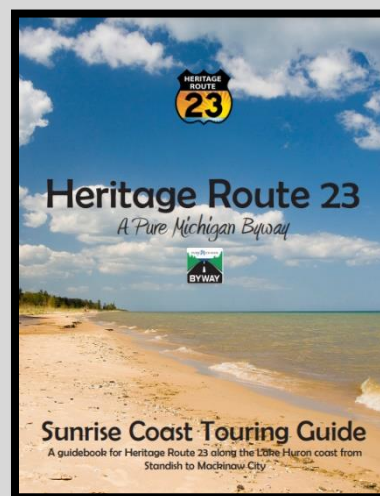
- Municipal newsletter
- Tawas Area Chamber News Blast
- Local Newspaper- Iosco County News Herald

Brochures

- Tawas Chamber
- Visitors Bureau
- Hotel Brochures

Regional

- State Partners
- US Heritage Route 23
- Any other regional efforts
- TOD- program MDOT



VIII. Actionable Steps

Messaging: Bringing knowledge and expectations to developers.		
Goal: Market available spaces, and economic development opportunities to local and regional partners		
Actions Steps:	Responsible parties	Completed:
Promote allowable uses	City of East Tawas Zoning Administrator, East Tawas Business Association and Tax Increment Finance Authority.	Business welcome packet created.
Business Welcome Packets		Site plan review process streamlined.
Business and site plan review streamlined processes.		

Messaging: Outreach to the community for local events and City information.		
Goal: Use social media channels to advertise City events.		
Actions Steps:	Responsible parties	Completed:
Use websites, Facebook pages, Radio stations etc. to promote events in East Tawas.	East Tawas City Hall, Tawas Area Chamber of Commerce, and the East Tawas Business Association.	East Tawas City Hall maintains a Facebook page and Website. Events are added to these.