

HERITAGE ROUTE PLANNING

US 12 Heritage Trail

SWMPC Staff continued outreach to enlist new council members and partners along the US 12 corridor. Data from the heritage route communities was incorporated into the Southwest Michigan Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and the nine county map associated with the plan was produced and distributed in Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Branch Counties. Activities promoting the addition of US 12 to the US Bike Route system were provided.

Changes to the US 12 brochure included new sites, narratives and design. Along with other marketing materials including rack cards and posters, all were distributed to communities along the route. Press releases were distributed to over forty news outlets across the Midwest. Interviews with various media including radio and newspapers were conducted.



US 12 Garage Sale preparations included contacting communities along the route and distributing promotional pieces to various distribution outlets. Interactive elements to the US 12 Heritage Trail website were enhanced to encourage interaction between visitors and community members hosting garage sales. Vendors entered key information about their sales into an online form, which was uploaded to an interactive online map and a printable list of addresses for the event. Over 435 people entered sale information onto the site, which helped grow interest in the sale.

Regular updating of the calendar, creation of banner ads for large events, and prompt response to email requests for information supported the success of the US 12 Heritage Trail website, which saw an increase in traffic with many new visitors and lengthening time spent on the site. Relevant community and event information was posted on the Facebook page on an as needed basis.



Heritage Routes Administered by SWMPC

- **US-12 Historic Heritage Route**
A 212 mile network of interdependent communities whose concerted actions reflect their commitment to protect and conserve the unique and inherent natural, historic and cultural resources that are the foundation upon which they will build and maintain a diverse, prosperous and sustainable economy.
- **I-69 Recreational Heritage Route**
A two-county, eighty-mile storybook telling stories

For more info visit: www.us12heritagetrail.org

Scenic Byways

At a Heritage Route workshop hosted by MDOT, steps were begun to address a Scenic Byway statewide strategic planning process. Documents regarding the value of byway travelers were prepared for distribution. SWMPC staff participated in a joint meeting with Travel Michigan, MDOT, and US 23 project manager. Discussions included timeline for more inclusion of Michigan Scenic Byways on the Travel Michigan website and additional downloadable marketing materials that could be used by the Michigan.org visitor.

Staff also reviewed and made edits to Scenic Byways Application for Village of Clinton.

Representing SW MI: Quad State Directors
Strengthening Disaster Recovery, Milwaukee WI

Local Employment Dynamics Conference, D.C.
Southwest Michigan First Regional Partners