

► Boyne City Michigan Cultural Economic Development Plan

October 4, 2009

Boyne City's Cultural Economic Development Plan (CED Plan) is intended to strengthen the community's capacity to create jobs, attract dollars to the community, and provide opportunities to spend locally and to reinvest.

Boyne Appétit: The Creative Food Experience



Volunteers prepare for the Fall Harvest Festival, Downtown Boyne City, October 2009



Acknowledgements

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Local planning was organized by **Boyne City Main Street**. Cultural Economic Development Planning in Boyne City is guided by the **Boyne City Cultural Economic Development Steering Committee**. Tom Borrup, **Dreeszen & Associates** facilitated planning.

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Boyne City Main Street Board

Jodie Adams, Executive Director, Charlevoix County Humane Society; Co-owner, The Wood Shop
Bob Alger, Boyne City School Superintendent
Kathy Anderson, former business owner
Michael Cain, City Manager, Boyne City
Bob Carlile, retired bank executive
Michelle Cortright, Owner, Harbor House Publishers
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Boyne City Historical Museum, part of city hall complex

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The combination of marketing and event-producing capacities together with signature creative/wild/hand-made foods – the culinary arts – suggest a lead industry cluster around which Boyne City’s identity and economy can be enhanced.

Executive Summary

Boyne City possesses multiple cultural and natural assets that have brought the community a good degree of economic prosperity. None of these assets alone, however, are unique and provide the community a competitive advantage and significant growth possibilities. Only through a creative combination of its assets is a special dynamic position to be found.

Dreeszen & Associates consultant, Tom Borrup, worked with Boyne City Main Street and its Cultural Economic Development Steering Committee between February and September 2009 to identify key strengths, goals and strategies. They named a lovely lakefront setting and other outdoor recreational amenities, a historic walkable downtown with a strong Main Street organization, a friendly and welcoming community combining long-time residents and newcomers, and the capacity to get things accomplished on a civic level including ongoing and annual events that draw from far and wide.

Among other important attributes is a mixed economy of many and varied products and services, founded and operated by local entrepreneurs, some of whom have extended their specialty markets nationally and internationally. In addition, there exists a strong creative community in many forms of art, craft, music, writing, media-making and other forms, as well as a strong cluster of dining establishments, a region with many food producers, and a strong and widely-regarded farmers market. These all add

up to a competitive advantage and a Boyne City Brand.

The *Creative Food Experience* builds on and combines Boyne City's strengths, identity, natural and creative assets. The combination of marketing and event-producing capacities, together with signature creative/wild/hand-made foods – the culinary arts – suggest a lead industry cluster around which Boyne City's identity and economy can be enhanced.



Handcrafted wood signs produced locally at the Wood Shop have made strong visual impact

This plan focuses on this competitive advantage and a series of five goals along with strategies and action steps to highlight and strengthen this identity and cultural economic development strategy. These five goals are to:

- 1) Position Boyne City as the 'go-to' place for unique and creative regional food experiences and 'take-home' food products.
- 2) Maintain and build on the vitality of the Historic Downtown and lake front.
- 3) Create a favorable working environment for traditional and creative artists and performers, as well as craftmakers and food producers in all forms.

- 4) Promote the area's natural environment and outdoor recreation opportunities as a draw for visitors and as quality of life amenities for residents.
- 5) Improve communication, coordination and effectiveness of local development efforts.

Leveraging existing talent, natural assets, and organizational and civic wherewithal will fall on existing and supplemented leadership of Boyne City Main Street. Needed in addition will be initiative and participation of food growers, producers, and restaurateurs, artists, musicians, craftspeople and outdoor enthusiasts. A successful strategic partnership with Boyne Mountain Resort is also pivotal to Boyne City's economic prosperity. It needs to be considered neither a competitor nor a detractor, but an ally and strategic partner.



Honey & beeswax products at Farmers Market

This plan calls for incremental steps. It leverages existing assets and activities, while it specifies and invites new complementary activities that add to the identity of the creative food experience. The efforts of many will combine to bring Boyne City's economy major new year-round horsepower.



Ice Mushroom grows in February on the lakefront

Early Implementation Steps

1. Main Street Board adopts plan.
2. Chamber, City, Arts Collective and Team Boyne-CEC endorse plan and adopt action steps where indicated.
3. Chamber registers "Boyne Appétit" business name and web domain.
4. Chamber convenes and branding committee, determines branding strategy.
5. Main Street and City secure funds to increase Farmer's Market Coordinator contract.
6. Team Boyne-CEC monitors plan quarterly.

Boyne City Michigan Cultural Economic Development Plan

Introduction and Context

Boyne City is one of four innovative Michigan Main Street communities to undertake cultural economic development planning.

Faced with a challenging economy, this plan is designed to strengthen Boyne City's local capacity to create jobs and bring money into the community while at the same time focusing spending on locally-made products and services to retain dollars in Boyne City for re-investment. Boyne City's Cultural Economic Development Plan (CED Plan) identifies, strengthens, and strategically employs its cultural assets for economic development. With help from Main Street and other community leaders this plan mobilizes Boyne City's arts, cultural, and natural resources to strengthen the economy and enhance its quality of life.

Results Planning produced an inventory of Boyne City arts, cultural and natural resources along with an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Planning concluded and implementation commenced with the adoption of this Cultural Economic Development Plan. The CED plan documents strategies and specific action steps that expand Boyne City's economic base by leveraging cultural assets and strengthening partnerships among civic, cultural, business, and economic development organizations.

Culture defined broadly Through this planning methodology cultural resources

are defined broadly, including: history and historic buildings and sites; visual and performing arts producers and presenters; artists and craftspeople; museums, galleries, shops and studios; historic inns and restaurants; libraries, writers, and bookstores; and specialty food producers and retail shops. We include creative workers and businesses such as designers, architects, and news media, as well as traditional and culturally-centered activities, heritage trails, public art, public spaces, arts and entertainment venues, historic places, distinctive neighborhoods, festivals, recreation venues, arts educators, youth organizations, foundations, and other support organizations.

Assets based planning The consulting team of Dreeszen & Associates takes an assets-based approach to community assessment and cultural economic development. They believe that each community has unique origins, a distinct culture, and economic underpinnings that can be reinvigorated even in unfavorable economic conditions. Each place has a deep well of assets that are often overlooked. This approach does not ignore barriers and problems, but builds on strengths as a way to overcome limitations.

Cultural Economy defined *Boyne City's cultural economy consists of creative individuals, nonprofits, small businesses, and industries that draw on creativity to create wealth and jobs through generation of ideas, products and services.* This cultural or creative sector includes four interrelated clusters that create jobs and

wealth and are integral to Boyne City's economy and quality of life.

- *Artists and creative workers* – the creative workforce talent and source of creativity (e.g., designers, architects, writers, craftspeople, singers, etc.)
- *Nonprofit cultural institutions and creative businesses* – that produce or distribute creative goods and services, or make history, art, and the humanities accessible (e.g., theaters, arts centers, cinemas, heritage sites, bookstores, etc.)
- *Commercial businesses* – that are not inherently creative, yet employ creative talent or create iconic goods or services rooted in local history or heritage (e.g., restaurants, farms, publishers and specialty manufacturers)
- *Support systems* – the infrastructure of education, funding, services, and public policies that help sustain creative industries (e.g., Main Street, Chamber of Commerce, and other economic development agencies)



Downtown Boyne City looking east on Water St.

National and International Trends

Consultants researched and ascertained nine national and international trends in creative economic development as part of an earlier evaluation of the Massachusetts Cultural Council's Adams Arts program of cultural economic development¹.

1. Cross-sector/Cross-agency Partnerships

The most compelling trend is cooperation between agencies and sectors and cross-sector partnerships at both the state and local levels, which is shown to leverage additional resources and influence policy.

2. Support for Individual Entrepreneurs

Both direct and indirect support for the entrepreneurial efforts of individual artists and other creative economy innovators has been a priority.

3. Project Lifecycle Stages

Segmenting community projects into major lifecycles of economic development and tailoring program support components to the needs of communities and their entrepreneurs has proven to be an effective strategy.

4. Links To Larger Planning Goals

Linking creative economy initiatives to larger community/economic development goals has helped several states and communities to leverage funding and build a larger base of support.

5. Leverage Through Intermediaries

Partnerships with

¹ Massachusetts Cultural Council, Creative Economy Program Plan Recommendations & Analysis, August 28, 2008, Arts Extension Service, University of Massachusetts Amherst

intermediaries – nonprofits that are experienced in attracting and managing public and private support from a variety of fields and sectors – offer a way to “scale up” projects, to draw upon more funding sources, and to function more creatively than government agencies.

6. History And Identity of Place

Attention to community aesthetics, as well as a place’s history and sense of identity “Place Brand”, are emerging as increasingly important to the success of local development.

7. Technical Assistance Diagnostic and technical assistance tools have helped both communities and individual entrepreneurs to assess and build on their assets and to develop broad-based creative economy plans that take advantage of broader partnerships.

8. Art as business *and* as Partner to Business When positioning artists and arts organizations as businesses highlight their capacity to work as partners with local business. Skill and resource development efforts for artists have benefited from the expertise of other partners and professional sectors.

9. Impact and Evaluation Studies Support of evaluation and impact studies, as well as continued participation in dialogue about evolving measurement standards continues to be an important activity.



Boyne City Public Library

Boyne City Cultural Economic Development: Assets, Challenges and Objectives

History and Heritage

A fast growing community during the late 19th Century, Boyne City is located at the eastern end of Lake Charlevoix in the Northwestern part of lower Michigan. For much of its history Boyne City was heavily industrialized manufacturing wood, leather and chemical products. It was served for a century by the Boyne City Railroad which ceased operations in 1978. At first, shipping connections to Lake Michigan, and the later rail connections to Mackinaw City and Grand Rapids provided a market for a lumber mill, tannery, brickyard, and other manufacturing based in natural materials and skills indigenous to the region. These brought prosperity to the area into the first half of the 20th Century. Later, auto parts and other light manufacturing developed. A shift began after the middle of the 20th Century. Industries located on the Lake Charlevoix waterfront declined, Boyne Mountain Ski Area was founded in 1949, and general prosperity in Michigan brought automobilers to the area for recreation and seasonal homes. With the loss of manufacturing work, Boyne City lost considerable year-round population between 1960 and 2000. Census estimates for 2007 show further decline from 3,503 in 2000 to 3,184. A smaller but more mixed economy has developed during the past two decades with recreation and tourism outpacing manufacturing, and a steady growth in service and creative sectors.



Lake Charlevoix lakefront at downtown Boyne City was a thriving center of manufacturing in 1910.

Location

Boyne City is situated at the southeastern tip of Lake Charlevoix, a beautiful 20-mile-long lake extending like a finger from Lake Michigan in the northwest part of the State. About 60 miles north of Traverse City, and 70 miles south of Mackinaw City, Boyne City and its historic downtown is five miles off US Highway 131, making it a purposeful destination rather than a place found along the highway. Boyne Mountain and Boyne Mountain Resort are located at the intersection of US 131 and M 75. A major ski, golf, and waterpark resort with year-round activities and surrounded by extensive vacation home development, Boyne Mountain draws a steady stream of tourists to the area, some of whom find their way to Boyne City.

Cultural Assets and Challenges



Boyne City, in the northwest corner of Michigan, (center of map), estimated 2007 population, 3,184.

The CED Steering Committee, with input from participants in a public meeting, along with a survey of Boyne City residents and other focus group meetings, identified the following as the community's key cultural assets. Three broad areas were ranked equally by participants in the February 12, 2009 planning meeting:

*"The view of the bay is half the pay."
Interviewee*

1. Natural environment including the lakes, waterfront, and parklands. The Lake Charlevoix waterfront is Boyne City's most prized asset. The Boyne River, Young State Park, Avalanche Mountain, nearby Boyne Mountain and Old City Park are important to the beauty, civic, social, and recreational activities of the community.

*"If there's a problem, people come together."
Interviewee*

2. Effective community fabric that produces an active civic and social environment, and gets things done. This includes multiple events coordinated by volunteers and a network of civic organizations resulting in various annual festivals, a farmers market, and weekly

seasonal events. People in the community "step up" and have a positive attitude about contributing to the community.

*"Hearing someone call your name in the grocery store – it feels like Mayberry."
Interviewee*

3. The small town feel and sense of pride in the community. This includes a friendly ambience, spirit of cooperation, and progressive attitude where people and ideas matter. The community's make up of locally-owned businesses and welcoming nature are important.

Consultant's additional observation:

A palpable sense of community spirit, good humor, and capacity to work together – even to disagree – was evidenced at the community meeting.

Limiting Factors

The CED Steering Committee and interviewees identified several factors that limit cultural economic development:

Tourism and vacation homeowner dependency – While the influx of investment in second homes and heavy summer tourism have provided great benefit to Boyne City during the past couple decades, the local economy and tax base have become overly dependent on visitors and part-time residents.

Capacity – Caring volunteers are over-taxed with many community events and causes. Multiple opportunities for involvement in civic bodies, as well as many varied volunteer organizations, consume the talents and hard work of a relatively small population.



Boyne Mountain Resort and Lodge



Walkways and public spaces along the Boyne River at the "rear" of downtown commercial buildings

Identity vis á vis Boyne

Mountain/Boyne USA – Sixty years ago, entrepreneur Everett Kircher, developed Boyne Mountain into a vast resort and real estate empire. Boyne USA now owns multiple resorts and vacation home developments across the U.S., claiming to be the country's third largest resort network. While a major employer in the area, some town residents feel a sense of distance and resentment towards this highly successful enterprise. Many visitors never leave the self-contained resort once they arrive. As a result some local businesses feel very much in the shadow of Boyne Mountain – even in competition with it.

Communication – Boyne City's long-time local newspaper closed at the beginning of 2009 leaving a gap in local information and sense of civic purpose. Two new papers began by mid year but cannot be taken for granted. Lack of a vehicle for consistent sharing of accurate information on civic and economic affairs among local business and organizations are important the community's capacity to move forward in a unified way.

Generational Shift – Older industries, now closed, and by-gone ways of doing business, have left some residents behind and created a "cultural" divide. Some relative newcomers have moved into leadership. Successful youth go off to college, with few returning. Not uncommon, this out-migration of youth, along with the integration of newcomers, poses a difficulty for small towns and rural areas everywhere.

Planning Objectives

This Cultural Economic Development Plan builds on priorities, ideas, and strategies from a variety of community and small group meetings as well as many individual interviews conducted in the Boyne City area from February to July of 2009. This is a plan that Boyne City Main Street and other community leaders expect to implement and build upon.

Main Street and other Boyne City community leaders through the CED Steering Committee considered assessment findings and developed strategies for this plan.



Former industrial lakefront near downtown Boyne City

While Boyne City and the surrounding area possess a number of strong assets to support a Cultural Economic Development (CED) strategy, effective CED identifies and builds on competitive advantages that will propel the economy. It will do so through the combination of the most unique and promising assets while it supports and synergizes with many other assets.

This successful strategy will be led by a signature clusters of enterprises, activities and products that become synonymous with the identity of the community – the Boyne Brand.

Expected Outcomes from CED Plan:

The CED Steering Committee developed a list of desired outcomes that it also used as criteria to assess the best CED strategies:

- 1) Generate new jobs and new income, support existing, and spark the creation of new cultural-related businesses.
- 2) Reinforce what people value about Boyne City, improve the quality of life and increase year-round residency.
- 3) Foster a healthy intergenerational environment, attract retirees, youth, and people of all ages.
- 4) Strengthen the civic fabric of the community, support education, cultural and social life.
- 5) Build on the unique qualities of the community, promote its creative, historic, and natural assets.
- 6) Grow environmentally friendly enterprises, activities, and practices, build bridges to the ecological/green future.

Planning methods

Community Selection The Michigan Main Street Program invited four well-established Michigan Main Street Communities to apply for participation in a pilot Cultural Economic Development initiative. Boyne City Main Street was one of four successful communities that also include: Calumet, Marshall and Niles.

Planning Team After a national competition, Dreeszen & Associates, Northampton, Massachusetts, was awarded the contract to facilitate planning. The consulting team of Dr. Craig Dreeszen, Tom Borrup, Erik Takeshita, and Maren Brown conducted assessments, facilitated planning, and helped write plans and reports. Researchers Heidi Wagner, Kia Momtazi, and Jesselyn Dreeszen Bowman collected and analyzed cultural and economic resources.

Assessments Consultants started the assessment in advance of the first site visit by communicating with the Boyne City Main Street/DDA staff and reviewing community histories, economic data, databases, directories, mailing lists, and web sites likely to identify cultural resources. Main Street Manager Hugh Conklin recruited a steering committee of business, cultural, and civic leaders to oversee and help develop key strategies of the plan.

Site visits Tom Borrup made site visits in February, May and September 2009. He met with the Main Street manager and CED Steering Committee, and facilitated the initial public meeting (February 12 with 30 people); met with members of Main Street board of directors; and interviewed the municipal leaders, artists, business owners, and regional economic development professionals. Borrup toured and photographed cultural resources.

Cultural and Economic Resource Inventory Dreeszen & Associates designed and built a database (using Dabble.com). Researchers downloaded records from IRS 990 reports

(Guidestar.com) for all registered cultural and recreation economic non-profit organizations, service clubs, and foundations. They reviewed online and print promotions to identify additional resources. Main Street manager helped identify which of these resources were most significant, and these were documented with comprehensive information.

Marketing Analysis Planners gathered and analyzed marketing materials, approaches, and Web presence for each of the four communities. Maren Brown talked with the Main Street manager and set up conference calls with business, economic development, and tourism leaders in each community. She documented findings and recommendations in a report included with this report.

CED Survey The planners designed, distributed, analyzed, and reported a cultural economic development survey with advice from SHPO, MMS, and four local Main Street Managers. The local manager distributed invitations to the survey with the help of local economic development partners. The Survey response in Boyne City was very high.

Cultural Economic Data Analysis The planning team researchers downloaded and analyzed county business pattern data for the statistical areas surrounding each of the four MMS communities. They extracted creative economic sector employers and employees using standard definitions of the sector. Planners identified trends in creative sector employment, compared these with the entire workforce, and identified clusters of creative businesses with potential for further cultural economic development.

Local Leadership Development Consultants encouraged each participating community to convene their steering committees between the consultants' first and second visits. Consultants developed an agenda and provided assessment data. Three communities convened their local

leadership (Niles, Calumet, and Boyne City). Tom Borrup participated in a Boyne City Steering Committee meeting by telephone on July 30 and an additional focus group meeting August 17. This brought committee members up to speed and helped them better prepare for planning retreats and development of specific strategies and actions.

Plan Development The Steering Committee met in a May 18 planning retreat to review assessment findings and generate CED strategies. Dreeszen & Associates refined retreat results into a first draft CED plan. The Steering committee reviewed and edited the first draft plan during July. Dreeszen & Associates revised the draft and submitted it for review by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, and Office of Cultural Economic Development. The planners revised the plan, which the state partners, local Main Street Manager, and Steering Committee reviewed. This Cultural Economic Development Plan has been developed consistently with the Main Street Four-Point Approach of Design, Economic Restructuring, Promotion, and Organization.

Plan Approval The Boyne City Cultural Economic Development Steering Committee meets in late September to formally approve the plan and recommend its adoption by the Main Street Board, City Planning Commission, and City Council.

Implementation The Boyne City Cultural Economic Development plan outlines strategies and key responsibilities for implementation.



Members of the CED Steering Committee at the Library Community Room in September 2009



Small group activity at February public meeting as community assets were prioritized

Long-term Cultural Economic Development Goals

Boyne City Long-Range Cultural Economic Development Goals

- 1) Position Boyne City as the 'go-to' place for unique and creative regional food experiences and 'take-home' food products.
- 2) Create a favorable working environment for traditional and creative artists and performers, as well as craftmakers and food producers in all forms.
- 3) Maintain and build on the vitality of the Historic Downtown and lake front.
- 4) Promote the area's natural environment and outdoor recreation opportunities as a draw for visitors and as quality of life.
- 5) Improve communication, coordination and effectiveness of local development efforts.



One of the many local food vendors at the Boyne City Farmer's Market



The National Morel Mushroom Festival, that includes picking contests, cooking demonstrations, and dining options, will be in its 50th year in 2010

Strategies and Actions for Boyne City Cultural Economic Development

Boyne City's Competitive Advantage

Many people love Boyne City because of its culinary offerings that are at the same time a source of local pride. Creative restaurants, wild as well as home grown, prepared and packaged foods, in addition to the National Morel Mushroom Festival, have been part of ***the community's signature*** for a long time. Farmers and food preparers, using both traditional and creative approaches, are sprinkled across the community and surrounding landscape. Many participate in a growing farmers' market. The larger region is teeming with specialty regional food producers and accessible outdoor spaces where people enjoy the natural environment.

The combination of marketing and event-producing capacities together with signature creative/wild/hand-made foods – the culinary arts – suggest a lead industry cluster around which Boyne City's identity and economy can be enhanced.

Boyne City is an entrepreneurial community that has sprouted many successful businesses. Numerous Boyne-based enterprises in the manufacturing, service, tourism, and food service sectors have found and built specialized markets regionally, nationally, and internationally. These range from wooden boats and classic car restorations, to southwestern cuisine, pizza, and four-season recreation.

Among the unusual assets or strengths present in the area is niche marketing and business development expertise. One of the most fully developed local assets is Boyne Mountain Resort. Boyne USA, the third largest resort network in North America, represents a massive marketing and promotional machine relative to local natural assets as well as visitor opportunities and accommodation. Another key local strength is Boyne City's event-producing capacity evidenced by multiple annual events that draw people from near and far.



Country Now and Then/Up the Lazy River
Proprietors, Ray and Karen Guzniczak

Goal 1. Position Boyne City as the 'go-to' place for unique and creative regional food experiences and take-home products

Unique and creative regional dining experiences, culinary activities and 'take-home' foods become one with the identity of Boyne City

Rationale: Tourists drawn by the natural beauty, arts, a creative environment, year-round recreational activities, special events, and the historic setting are essential ingredients in this strategy, as are the ubiquitous entrepreneurial, and event-producing capacities in Boyne City. The central product is the food experience: the picking, preparation, consumption, and take/ship home products. A successful farmers market in the midst of a region rich in agriculture and specialty food production serves as an anchor and a testing ground for products and consumer tastes. Positioning and promoting Boyne City as the 'go-to' place for both the experience and the products responds to evolving interests of tourists who increasingly seek more than just watching or consuming but prefer some active participation or experience.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Attract new and repeat visitors and enhance their experience through foods and a more complete creative/cultural experience. This is partly in place and can be built upon in several ways:

- a) Promote local "celebrity" chefs through cooking demonstrations at events and at restaurants on an ongoing basis. (*Farmer's Market and Chamber*)
- b) Ramp up the amount of local art and music available at or associated with eating establishments; make it part of the culinary experience. (*Boyne Arts Collective, restaurants, Farmer's Market*)
- c) Coordinate marketing of local culinary options with Boyne USA and other regional vendors and tourism sites. (*Main Street and Chamber*)



Long-time regional food producer, Friske Farms at Boyne City Farmer's Market

- d) Produce a "spoof" food-related movie or TV cooking show using local media production talent and including many local people and locations (like *Back to Graduation*,

and *Dance Boyne Dance*). (*BCHS Visual Imaging, Boyne Arts Collective*)

- e) Expand promotion of locally-made products at the burgeoning farmers' market, providing more participating experiences. (*Farmer's Market, Main Street*)
- f) Organize a food or culinary arts. tour to take visitors from farms to kitchens to participate in the harvest, preparation, and enjoyment of unique regional dishes or products. (*Farmer's Market, BCHS Culinary Arts Program*)
- g) Produce a Creative Experience Cookbook and/or series of recipes by local chefs sent by email to visitors throughout the year as visitor promotion. (*Farmer's Market, Writer's Group, Garden Club*)
- h) Explore a joint investment by multiple businesses in a billboard on US 131 featuring Boyne City dining and food opportunities. (*Main Street and Chamber*)
- i) Conduct quarterly meeting with restaurants to discuss buying local, coordinating events and promotions. (*Farmer's Market and restaurants*)

2. Leverage Boyne City's marketing and event-producing muscles to provide an Expo or wholesale showplace for both local and existing regional product lines in cooperation with Boyne Mountain Resort. Creating a showplace for regional foods leverages Boyne City's strengths as well as the significant food product development that has already taken place regionally. Specialty foods are produced from Traverse City to Petoskey, and beyond. Michigan wines have developed a considerable national reputation.



Local food producer and vendor, Johnecheck Farms at Boyne City Farmers Market

Working with a high-capacity accommodation, such as Boyne Mountain, Boyne City can leverage its expertise in marketing and event production to:

- a) Maximize the opportunity of the 50th Annual Morel Mushroom Festival as an opportunity to ramp up the significance of wild edibles and Boyne City's position with relation to specialty regional foods. (*Chamber, Main Street, Lion's Club, Mushroom Committee*)
- b) Create a trial run of a Northern Michigan Food Expo at Mushroom Festival. (*Farmer's Market*)
- c) Explore the relocation of the Annual Chef's Challenge from Shanty Creek Resort to Boyne Mountain, with related activities in downtown Boyne City. (*Challenge Mountain, Boyne Mtn., Chamber*)

- d) Attract chefs and specialty food buyers from across Michigan and the Upper Midwest, to a Northern Michigan Food Expo to sample the range of foods that are grown, found in the wild, and produced in Northern Michigan including Boyne City area growers, producers and restaurants. (*Farmer's Market, Chamber, NLEA, Boyne Mtn.*)
- e) Expand annual Harvest Festival to include more experiential activities connected to the agricultural landscape and food preparation (i.e. pumpkin carving, berry picking, apple cider pressing). (*Chamber, Main Street*)
- f) Provide and promote experiences of picking mushrooms, berries, corn, etc.; create more visitor experiences of preparing and/or witnessing the 'making-of' to add value; produce brochure/website to guide visitors. (*Farmer's Market, NLEA, Chamber*)

3. Support the growth of the Boyne City Farmer's Market as an intermediary to bridge growers, producers, consumers, and wholesale buyers.

- a) Continue to build and promote presence in Boyne City. (*Main Street, Chamber*)
- b) Expand Market coordinator contract. (*Main Street, City of Boyne City*)
- c) Strengthen network and relationships with growers and producers (*Farmer's Market*).
- d) Work to connect restaurants and institutional buyers with producers. (*Farmer's Market*)
- e) Explore year-round/indoor market. (*Farmer's Market, Main Street*)
- f) Coordinate more events, music and activities to create a more social environment at Farmer's Market. (*Farmer's Market, Boyne Arts Collective*)

- g) Attract more ready-to-eat foods at Farmer's Market. (*Farmer's Market, restaurants*)



Canned and baked goods at Boyne City Farmer's Market

4. Develop additional local food product lines – assisting area growers, bakers, canners, and others to enhance their business by creating and packaging “take-home” products for year-round export.

Developing additional product lines requires the talents of artists, economic development professionals, and those experienced in niche marketing to join forces with food producers and preparers as well as the hospitality industry. Products to take home, as well as order for shipment, give the Boyne Brand greater sustainability and extend the economic activity beyond tourism and throughout the year. Some approaches may include:

- a) Register “Boyne Appétit” web domain and business names. (*Chamber*)
- b) Tap expertise in local market buyers (such as Lake Street Market, Boyne Mtn. Resort) to determine most-likely-to-succeed

- products. (*Farmer's Market, NLEA, Chamber*)
- c) Activate the school's culinary arts program and facility for community training and/or as an incubator kitchen for entrepreneurial food producers. (*BCHS Culinary Arts Program, NLEA*)
 - d) Tap resources of NLEA and its value-added agriculture program to provide training and resources to small and start-up food producers. (*Farmer's Market, Chamber*).
 - e) Develop Web-based marketing and sales around the Boyne Brand, **Boyne Appétit!** (*Chamber*)
 - f) Establish a business mentor program to partner experienced entrepreneurs with start-ups and tap NLEA resources. (*Farmer's Market, Chamber, Team Boyne/CEC*)
 - g) Explore development of a cooperative incubator/processing facility for local grower/producers to expand value-added agricultural products. (*NLEA, Farmer's Market, Chamber*)



Lake Street Market offers regional and specialty foods from around the globe to eat in or take home

Goal 2. Create a favorable working environment for traditional and creative artists

Artists, performers, craftmakers, designers, and food producers in all forms generate economic activity from local natural resources

Rationale: Boyne City artists, craftspeople, and other specialty manufacturers reach markets far and wide. Extending the Boyne Brand with its identity affixed to every product can have a cumulative effect on the community's caché. Some events or product lines (such as the Northern Michigan Food Expo described in Goal 1) may achieve critical mass through the inclusion of other Lake Charlevoix area artists, cultural activities, and food products. Promoting creativity as central to the Boyne brand may include products such as Van Dam boats, signs by The Woodshop, fine arts, locally-made films, web designs, culinary arts, classic car instruments, etc. Establishment of the SOBO District on Lake St. as an identity for the creative energy in Boyne City attracted attention in short order. Such efforts add to the community's identity.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Expand collaborative promotions for Boyne City cultural assets.
 - a) Adopt "Boyne Created" (or similar) as an additional brand to Boyne

Appétit, as part of a marketing program for artists, craftspeople, and performing arts events in Boyne City. (*Chamber, Team Boyne*)

- b) Develop a visual brand that can be affixed to various kinds of products and event promotions. (*Chamber*)



Boyne Arts Collective member creates art in storefront window

- c) Expand presence of locally-made creative work in farmers market and festivals – utilize every opportunity to highlight local creativity and ingenuity in all festivals and downtown events. (*Main Street, Farmer's Market, Chamber*)
- d) Attract additional galleries to SOBO District/Downtown Boyne City. (*Main Street, Chamber*)
- e) Build connections to writing and music summer camps and festivals; plan in-town activities where possible such as music showcase and presentations or readings: both the potential visitor activity as well as the association with creativity add to Boyne City's identity. (*Chamber, Main Street*)
- f) Collaborate with Boyne Mtn. Resort to highlight opportunities and the creative and cultural resources

and activities in Boyne City.
(Chamber)

2. Repeat and build on successful Boyne Business Expo and Taste of Boyne.
 - a) Expand Taste of Boyne as a downtown restaurant event and with a creative spin to distinguish it from the Northern Michigan Food Expo. (Chamber, Main Street).
 - b) Highlight creative businesses; include filmmaking, music, performing arts center, web designers, all handmade and creative products, as well as outdoor activities in Boyne Business Expo. (Chamber, Boyne Arts Collective)



Historic Wolverine Dilworth Inn awaits a new owner

3. Support efforts of Boyne Arts Collective and downtown arts activities towards eventual re-development of a downtown building as a multi-purpose arts center to include street-level retail as well as other space for classes, events and small-scale performances.
 - a) Provide business training for Boyne Arts Collective gallery and other galleries and arts enterprises; assist in recruiting additional members. (NLEA, Main Street)
 - b) Encourage and assist BAC to expand and maintain its network of

artists and groups across disciplines to coordinate efforts and partner on events when appropriate. (Main Street, Chamber)

- c) Explore long-term development opportunities and funding for art center in a local building such as Odd Fellows Hall, the train station, the Dillworth Hotel, or other downtown site, possibly together with development of a new City Hall and Historical Museum. (Main Street, Chamber, Boyne Arts Collective, City)



Fresh Water Studio on Lake St. represents a dozen area artists and is part of the SOBO (South Boyne) district, a burgeoning arts area.

4. Plan a regional summer arts festival with a possible coordinated tour to other events around Lake Charlevoix.
 - a) Inventory seasonal arts and music-related events around Lake Charlevoix. (Boyne Arts Collective, Chamber)
 - b) Meet with other promoters to seek cooperation in scheduling, sourcing of artists and other services, and promotions. (BAC, Chamber)
 - c) Implement joint promotions, services, and/or event. (BAC, Chamber, Main Street)

Goal 3. Maintain and build on the vitality of the Historic Downtown and lakefront

A Charming place to live, work and visit that offers basic services and amenities helps to attract and retain entrepreneurs and creative workers

Rationale: Boyne City’s most prominent assets include an exquisite lakefront setting, historic downtown and remarkable recreation opportunities both in town and in surrounding areas. Tourism, second home ownership, and an eclectic mix of small industries anchor its economy. There is both long-standing and growing presence of artists, musicians, and craftspeople who earn or supplement their living through creative work. Together they add up to an attractive place to live, shop, operate a business and invest in civic activity.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Focus efforts to refine distinctive events and activities that connect the lakefront with downtown to reinforce these two major assets.
 - a) Move or expand Morel Festival to incorporate downtown streets. *(Main Street, Mushroom Committee)*
 - b) Continue summer outdoor movie events with series of films on food themes related to events or products in town (i.e. Fried Green

Tomatoes with street vendors preparing similar products). *(Chamber, Main Street, BCHS Visual Imaging)*

- c) Expand local and area events to include greater emphasis on cultural foods (i.e. Irish Festival, Polish Festival, etc.). *(Main Street, Chamber, Farmer’s Market)*



Harbor House Publishers, a creative business, Downtown Boyne City

2. Preserve and enhance lakefront property in the public domain.
 - a) Support long-term efforts to relocate City Hall and maintenance facilities favoring a prominent downtown location for City Hall and Museum. *(Main Street)*
 - b) Revisit 2006 Waterfront master-plan and continue moving towards best uses of lakefront property with amenities such as a band shell or earthen amphitheater. *(City)*

3. Expand upper floor residential development and in-fill housing downtown where possible.
 - a) Use MSHDA housing incentive programs, historic tax credits, and other tools to retrofit existing space and build infill units at appropriate market opportunities. *(Main Street, City)*
 - b) Develop downtown parking strategies to accommodate overnight residential parking needs as well as those of workers and visitors. *(Main Street, City)*



Historic Odd Fellows Hall, given a face lift in 2009, presents an opportunity for redevelopment of social, cultural, retail or residential spaces



Garden Club members decorate Water Street for the Harvest Festival

4. Secure placement of Historic Downtown Boyne City signs on highway entries, especially visible to Boyne Mountain visitors.
 - a) Improve state highway signage indicating Boyne City at intersections of US Highway 131 and M-75 as well as at the M-75 entrance to Boyne Mountain Resort. *(City, Chamber)*
 - b) Place prominent, hand-crafted Historic Boyne City signs at key entrances on M-75. *(Chamber, City)*

Goal 4. Promote the area's natural environment and outdoor recreation opportunities

Attracting visitors and improving quality of life for year-round residents brings economic activity and investment

Rationale: The area's natural beauty and picturesque historic setting have generated tourism, recreational activities, and second home ownership that have been the staple of the local economy since its major "dirty" industries closed or relocated three decades earlier. These natural assets remain central but have some growth potential, especially when combined with food, creative, and other cultural activities such as those described in previous goals.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Devise marketing partnership with Boyne Mountain Resort to attract additional visitors and investors.
 - a) Build on existing relationships around the Morel Mushroom Festival. (*Chamber*)
 - b) Find win-win scenarios in the Northern Michigan Food Expo and related activities that draw guests to Boyne Mountain Resort as well as diners and shoppers to Boyne City. (*Chamber, Farmer's Market, Boyne Mtn.*)

2. Develop environmental education tours and activities with Raven Hill Discovery Center and local schools to enrich the outdoor experience.
 - a) Develop wild food curriculum and activities for people of all ages. (*Farmer's Market, Raven Hill, BHS Culinary Arts Prgm.*)
 - b) Seek Raven Hill participation in farmers market and other events to create more outdoor experiences for visitors. (*Farmer's Market*)



City-owned Avalanche Preserve provides multiple opportunities during all seasons; recent planning seeks best uses.

3. Promote all-season outdoor recreation, dining options, home-grown cultural activities, excellent schools, and other quality of life factors for business and employee recruitment and retention.
 - a) Re-tool promotions to integrate the outdoors with creativity, culture, food and good local services. (*Chamber*)
 - b) Develop additional web and social networking tools to promote a creative northern community that has so much to offer. (*Chamber, Boyne Mtn.*)

4. Promote Boyne River kayaking event as part of the Morel Festival or Harvest Festival with a wild food-gathering competition.

- a) Explore options for new activities on the River that stand alone or integrate with existing events. *(Chamber, Main Street)*

5. Coordinate and promote mountain biking events and all-season trail promotion.

- a) Increased interest in mountain biking holds possibilities for Boyne City to grow additional events on a theme that combines the excellent terrain with creativity and food. *(Chamber, Boyne Mtn.)*



Recent Streetscape work has created a pedestrian-friendly environment.

6. Increased retired population will spend more time in Boyne City with friendly walking conditions and activities that provide exercise and connection to local amenities, services, and businesses.

- a) Devise age-appropriate activities in outdoor spaces,

including in-town walking tours. *(Main Street, City, Senior Center)*



Downtown cycle shop enables visitors and local residents to engage in recreational opportunities.



Bike business near Lake front.

Goal 5. Improve communication, coordination and effectiveness of local development efforts

A community with the capacity to get things done and collaborate for the common good will succeed when others falter. Boyne City leadership have demonstrated they can get things done

Rationale: Boyne City has a strong tradition of volunteerism and leaders who step up to get things done. A stream-lined municipal government plans effectively and manages development projects. Construction, retail and business management, publishing, and marketing are among the community's predominant skill sets. Internet-based skills are also prevalent among people who have learned to connect globally and extend their business operations nationally and internationally. These skills can be brought to bear on strengthening local communication and fostering even more collaboration among business and civic interests.

Strategies and Actions:

1. Imbed ongoing coordination of CED work within Main Street, and Team Boyne-CEC.
 - a) Assign tasks appropriate within the Main Street committee structure. *(Main Street)*

- b) Make quarterly reports on CED progress across Main Street committees and by the director and other partners.
 - c) Assign appropriate oversight and tasks in Team Boyne workplan. *(Team Boyne-CEC)*
2. Explore financial support for key CED projects through private and public investment, including Economic Development Corporation of Boyne City.
 - a) Examine successful projects among other Main Street programs to identify possible outside funders. *(Main Street)*
 - b) Articulate benefits, challenges, and barriers to key CED initiatives. *(Main Street, Team Boyne, Chamber)*
 - c) Explore grant opportunities from public and private philanthropies. *(Main Street, Team Boyne)*
 - d) Examine cooperative management and resource-sharing opportunities such as joint promotional investments in billboards and websites. *(Chamber)*



Winter street event attracts local families

3. Build on Boyne Arts Collective network as a coordinating committee between arts and cultural organizations and

businesses. Engage the community's many creative and cultural assets in ongoing economic development work.

- a) Convene leadership of nonprofit and for-profit arts and culture enterprises to explore joint events and marketing opportunities. *(Boyne Arts Collective)*
- b) Build on Stroll the Streets, and other events to include performing arts and other business activities – book signings, bike demonstrations, new menu items, wine/beer tastings, etc. *(Main Street, Chamber)*

4. Improve communications to coordinate efforts among multiple players

- a) Re-double communication efforts through an enhanced Main Street newsletter, website, email blasts or other vehicles. *(Chamber, Main Street)*
- b) Continue annual Chamber breakfasts to brief community. *(Chamber)*
- c) Work with Boyne City newspapers to supply consistent information on coordinated CED efforts. *(Team Boyne, Main Street, Chamber)*

Created in Boyne

Boyne City Creative

Boyne City Created

Secret Recipes



Water Street Café, one of Boyne City's fine dining experiences.



Red Mesa Grill, one of downtown Boyne City's dining destinations.

Additional Slogan Ideas

Boyne Appétit!

Boyne: It's A Natural

Boyne: Locally Grown

Boyne: Great Town Great Food

Get Outdoors in Boyne

Clean Pure Simple Boyne

Boyne City Homemade

Boyne City Visual Audit

Observations of Consultant, Tom Borrup – February and May, 2009

Downtown & Lakefront

Boyne City's aesthetic environment is one of its greatest assets. The lakefront, its most prominent and valued feature, has been transformed during the past four decades from a dirty industrial site to a well-used and charming recreational and residential area. Together with the compact historic downtown, and its many retail and service establishments, Boyne City provides a lovely place to live and visit.



Boyne City Lakefront and Marina, 2009



Boyne City Lakefront 1910

A small amount of upper floor residential space exists downtown, as well as many close-in neighborhoods, creating a very walkable community. Signaled traffic stops and good sidewalks and crosswalks make it a reasonably safe environment.



View east on Water Street

Creative development along the Boyne River for two blocks behind buildings on Water Street also provides excellent aesthetics and useable public space. Terraces and walkways serve as good amenities for several businesses that feature decks and/or views of the river and Old City Park on the other side. Winter and summer they remain positive visual assets. The community has made good use of rock walls, decks, stairs and rails, as well as murals on the back of buildings, to enhance the area's usefulness and aesthetic appeal.



Boyne River with back of Water Street commercial buildings

Other downtown areas have also employed murals well to offset blank walls and add color. Some also highlight the community's themes of multiple annual events and the signature morel mushroom festival.



View of Lake Street looking south. Morel mushroom mural to left.

While empty storefronts are more numerous than Main Street leaders would like, the great majority of buildings have restored fronts and add to the historic character.



Restored building on Main Street

Fortunately, landmark assets such as the Boyne Theatre marquee and Odd Fellows Hall, although not in optimal use, have been maintained in good condition.



Boyne Theatre partly used by restaurant to its left.

Challenges remain but plans are in place for continued lakefront public land development and downtown façade improvement.



Roses covered for winter reflect sense of humor.

A successful and talented local wooden sign maker has positively impacted the community. Innumerable businesses and public facilities have commissioned wooden signs that contribute to the visual and historic character.



Signs by The Woodshop hang over Water Street businesses.

Approaches/Entrances

Boyne City's biggest visual challenges lie in its primary approaches. North/south US Highway 131 provides the primary approach via Michigan Highway 75. Boyne City is located on M 75 about five miles west of US 131. Travelers from the south encounter the US 131/M 75 intersection at Boyne Falls. However, there is little indication there of Boyne City's whereabouts.



State Highway 75 leaves US 131 at Boyne Falls near Boyne Mtn. Resort and rejoins 131 north at Walloon Lake.

Boyne Falls is comprised mostly of services such as gas and convenience stores, motels, and a prominent bar/restaurant. The intersection is not especially appealing.

Primary access to the Boyne Mountain Resort is off US 131 just south of M 75. Alternatively access is gained from M 75 less than a mile west of US 131, towards Boyne City. For traffic using either access road to the Mountain, there is no directional signage for Boyne City. Boyne Mountain Resort boasts tens of thousands of annual visitors and historically has made little to no effort to direct visitors to patronize nearby businesses. Lack of road signage at key traffic points is not helpful to Boyne City.



View from car exiting Boyne Mtn Resort onto M 75 shows no indication of direction to Boyne City.

Most of M 75 between Boyne Falls and Boyne City is not visually appealing, dotted with abandoned farm buildings, industrial sites, and single family homes in various conditions. As one gets closer, fast

food franchises, gas stations, industrial buildings, and Boyne City High School and Middle School appear on either side of the road. Until one enters the city limits, there is no signage for Boyne City.



Approach from Walloon Lake on M 75 at city limit.

Access from the north off US 131 can also be achieved via M 75, which makes a half circle to connect back to US 131 at Walloon Lake a few miles north of Boyne Falls. Similarly via this route, state highway directional signage is lacking. It appears only after reaching city limits. On this approach, there is a local service club welcome sign.



Approach on M 75 from Walloon Lake.

Other approaches are less traveled, looping around Lake Charlevoix either through neighboring East Jordan, to the south, or Charlevoix at the opposite end of the lake, about 20 miles northwest. Travelers on these routes are more likely local or making a scenic drive by intention. Essentially Boyne City is a well-kept secret, a destination of choice or rare chance.

Public Spaces

As described in this report, one of Boyne City's core competencies is its capacity to organize and promote events. This includes uses of public spaces including streets, sidewalks, parks, and lakefront. From twice-weekly farmers' markets, weekly stroll-the-streets events, annual July 4th celebration, Boyne Thunder boat race, Morel Mushroom Festival, occasional movies in the park, and other events, Boyne City residents and visitors enjoy well-used public spaces.



Vendor at lakefront park during Morel Mushroom Festival.

Active discussion and adjustments to event locations attempt to maximize use

of these spaces, and there is still improvement to be found. Consultant observations of the Morel Mushroom Festival suggested that more activities in the downtown and on the streets themselves would expand visitor interaction with local business.

Consultant Recommendations

- Improve highway signage through working with the state highway department and other local units of government and possibly purchasing billboard space.
- Continue to adjust space use to maximize community, visitor, and local business participation in events.



Public space for events sometimes includes downtown streets.

- Explore a public art program to further enliven the downtown and park spaces. In addition to murals, functional sidewalk furnishings and other permanent or temporary art works could enhance public spaces. Trash cans designed or painted to resemble a mushroom or other food items, for instance, could help with community branding.



Potential vegetable sculpture



Potential Mushroom Sculpture

Appendix

US Census County Business Patterns Data for Charlevoix County Michigan

Data on employment, payrolls, and number of establishments from the US Census indicates that the total numbers of employees and business establishments in Charlevoix County declined between 2004 and 2007.

By extracting information from creative businesses, using standard definitions of creative enterprises², we find that creative-sector payroll, creative-sector employment, and creative establishments' workforce increased during that same time.

Charlevoix County Statistical Area

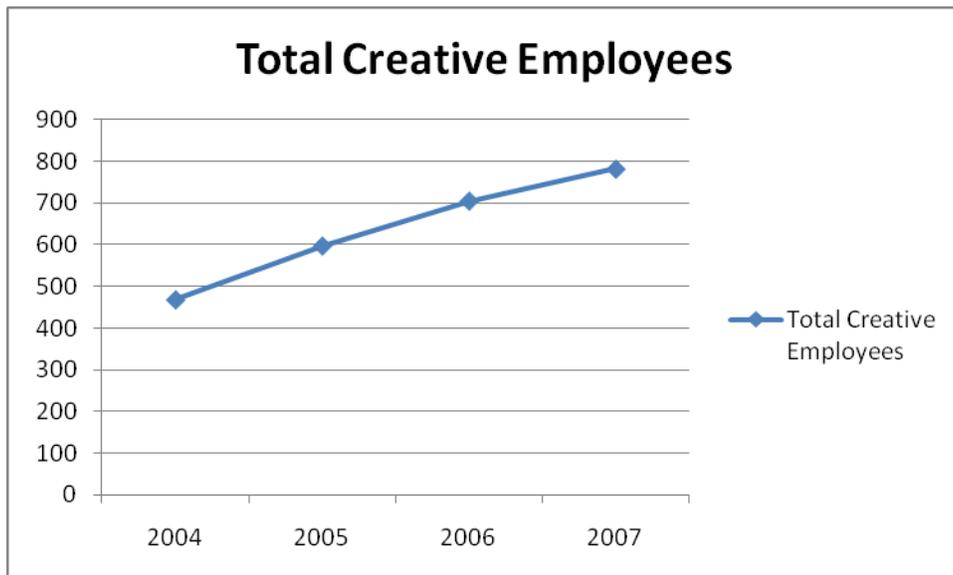
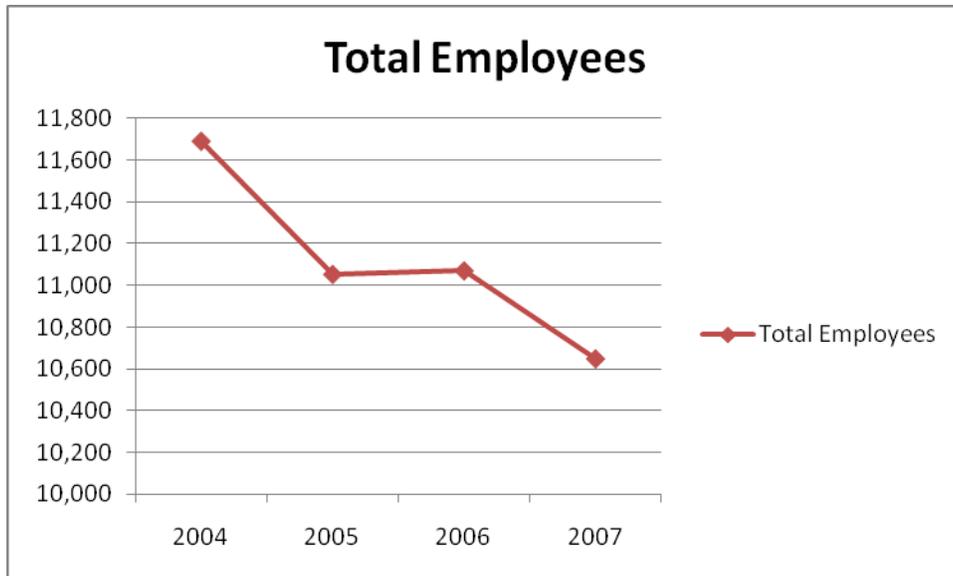
Percentage of Change from 2004-2007

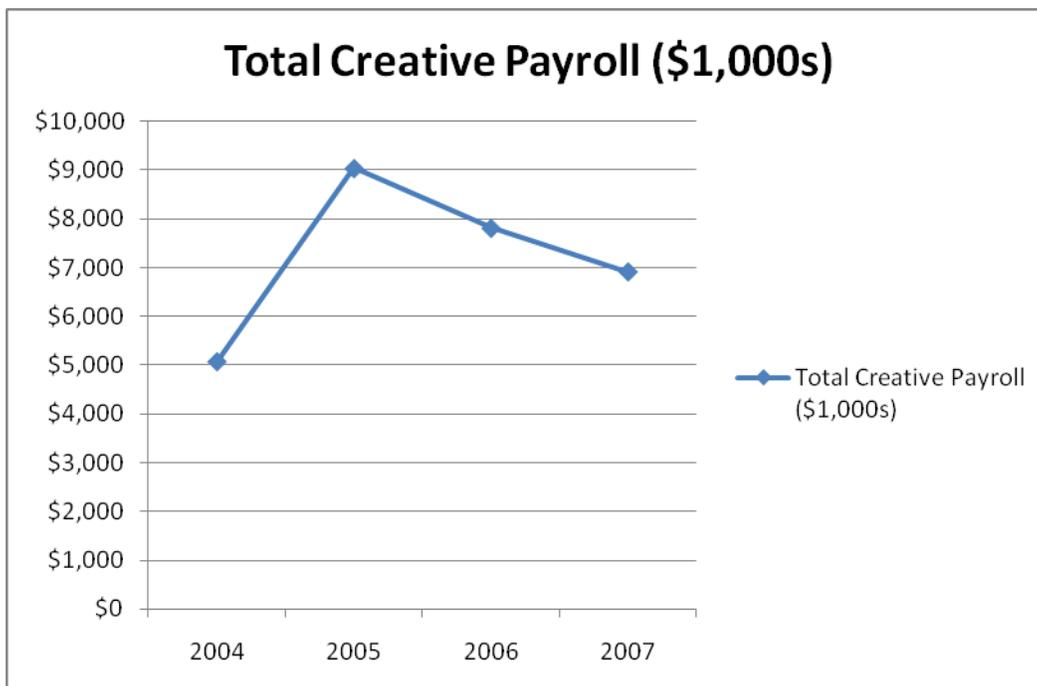
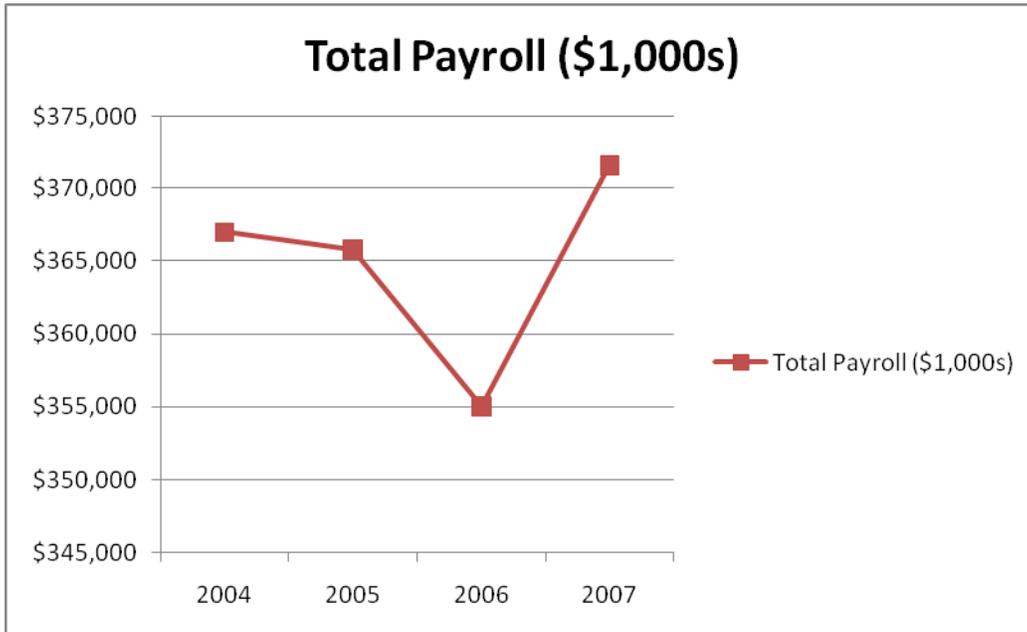
| | All | Creative |
|----------------|--------|----------|
| Employees | -8.93% | 67.45% |
| Payroll | 1.25% | 36.49% |
| Establishments | -2.89% | 7.02% |

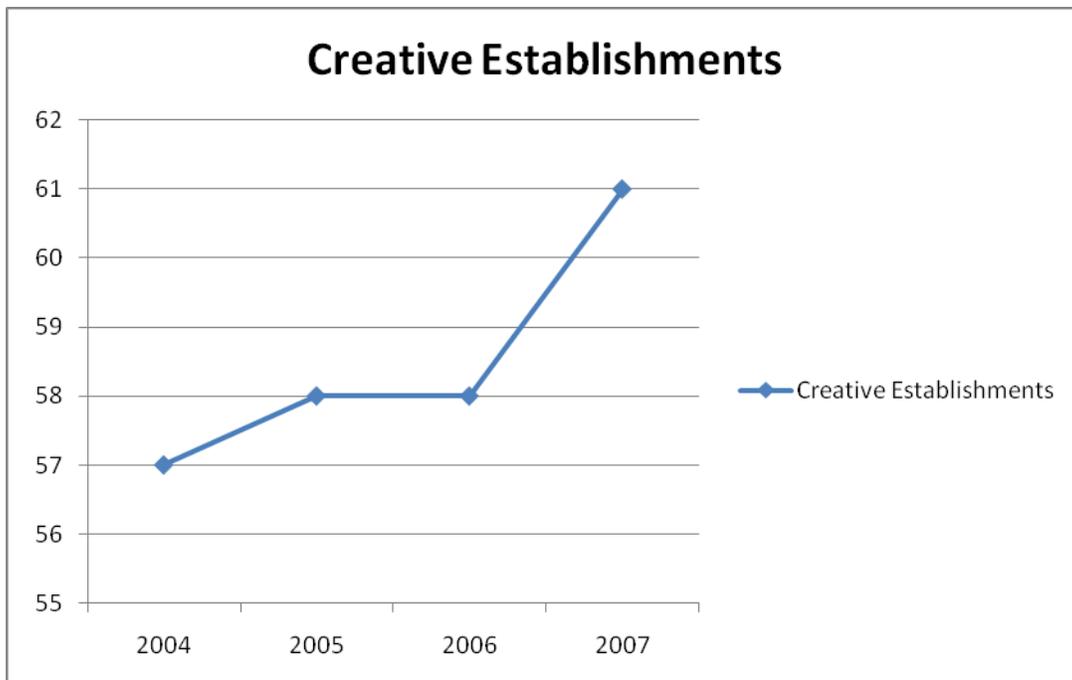
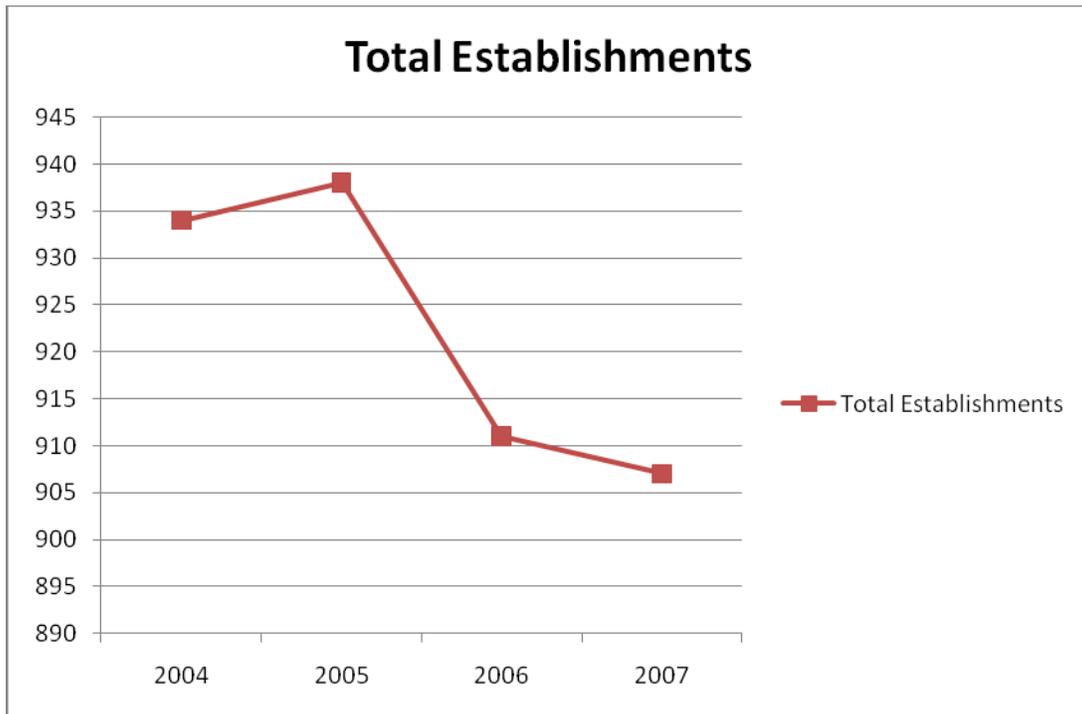
The numbers for all Charlevoix County show an overall decrease in both employees and establishments and an overall rise in payroll that is less than inflation. The increases in creative workers and payroll during this time are quite high in comparison. However, they represent modest growth when looking at actual numbers—growing .5% in payroll and from 4% to over 7% of the area's workforce in total employees. See graphs that follow.

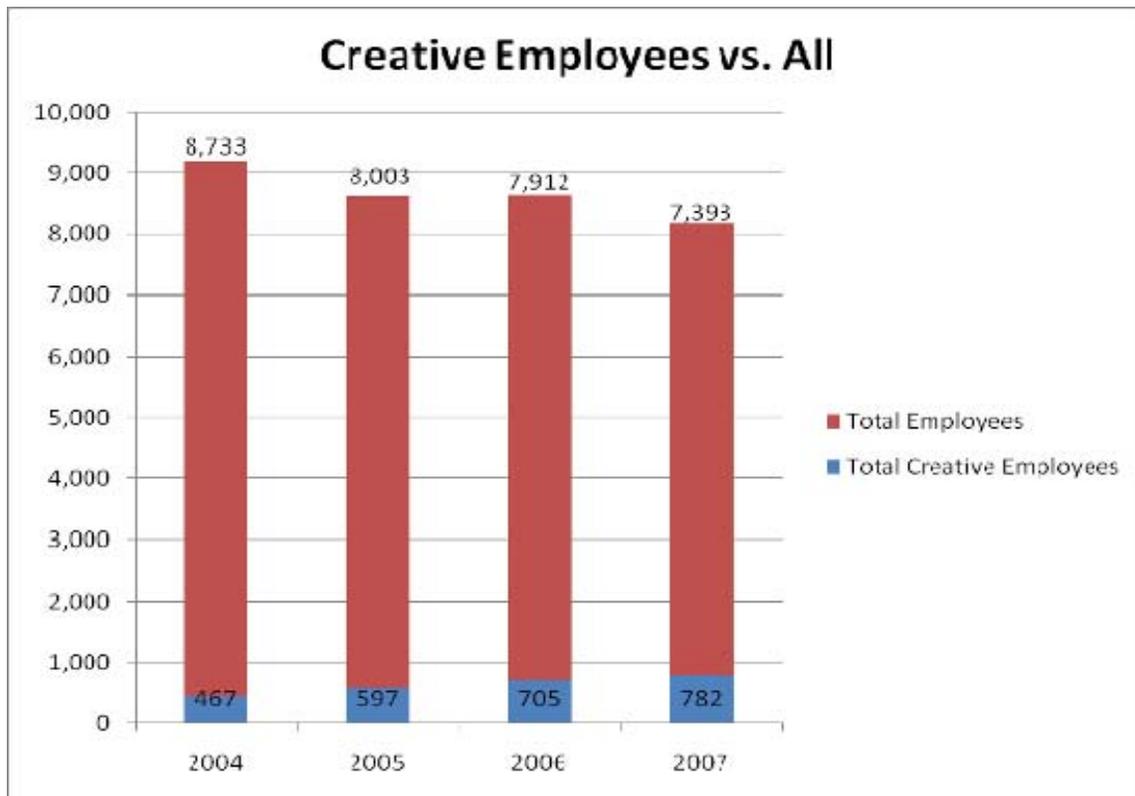
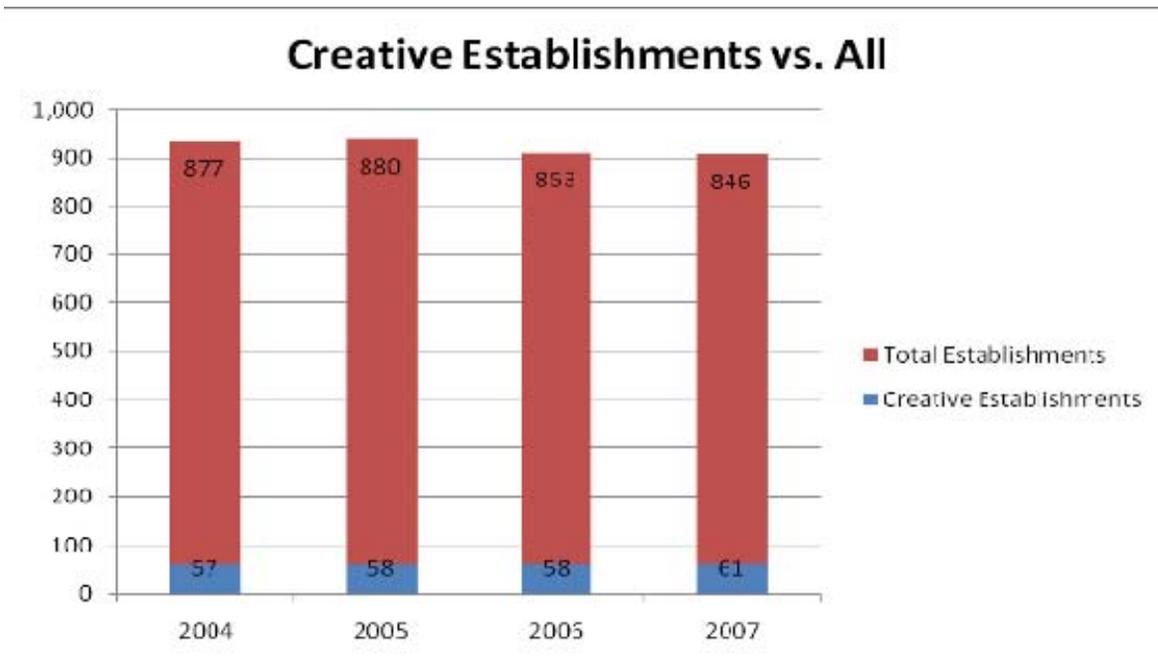
Growth in creative sector businesses is in line with national trends – counter to general declines in other sectors. The number of creative sector workers who report as self-employed remain consistently higher than self-employment in other sectors.

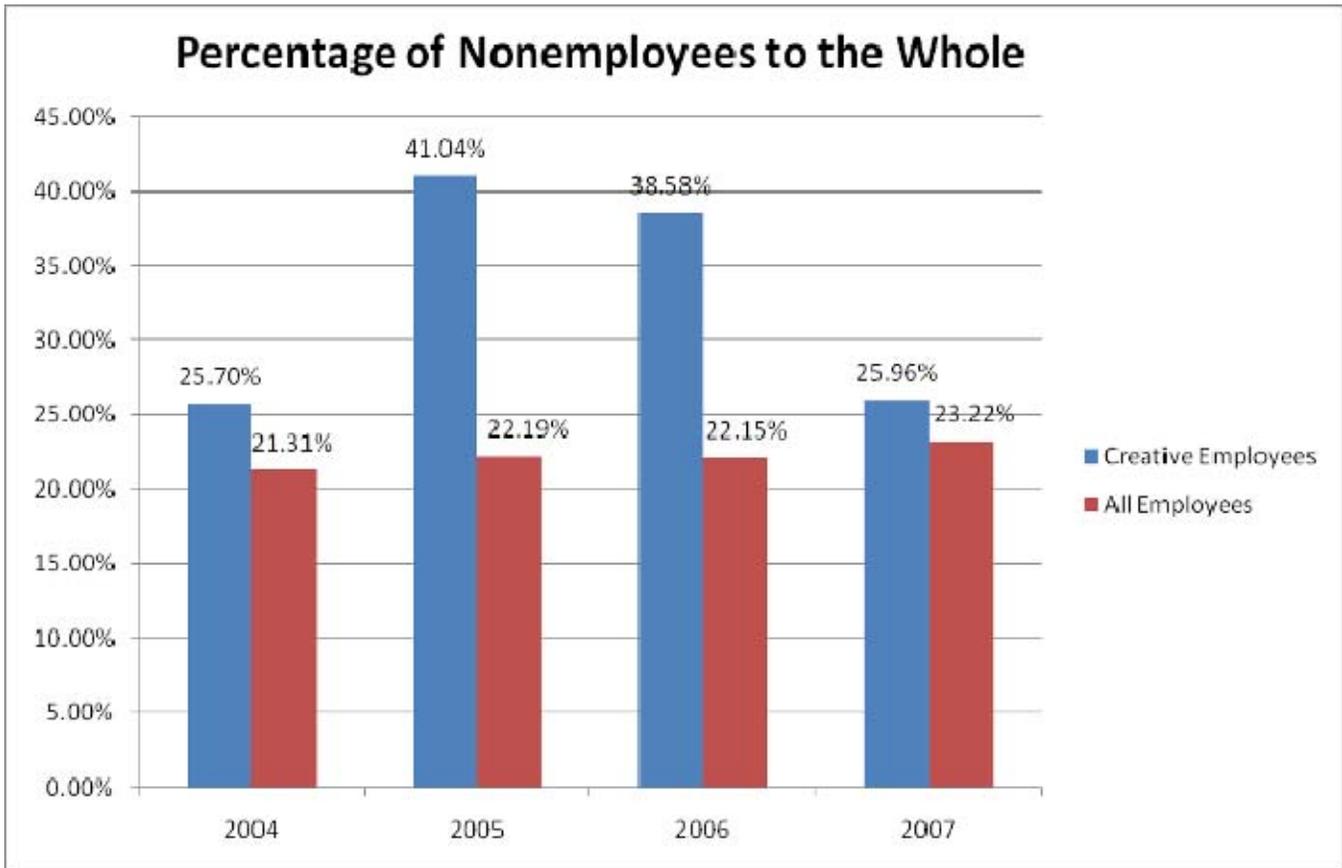
² Creative Economy NAICS Codes (Core and Peripheral) and overall definition of the Creative Economy are based on the New England Foundation for the Arts publication, *The Creative Economy: A New Definition - November 2007*, which can be found online: <http://www.nefa.org/pubs/index.html>









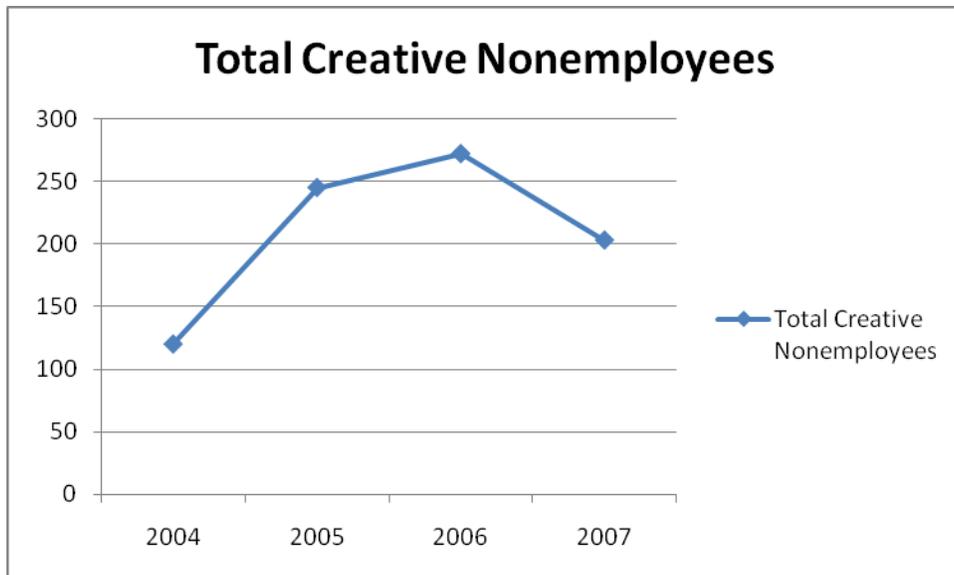
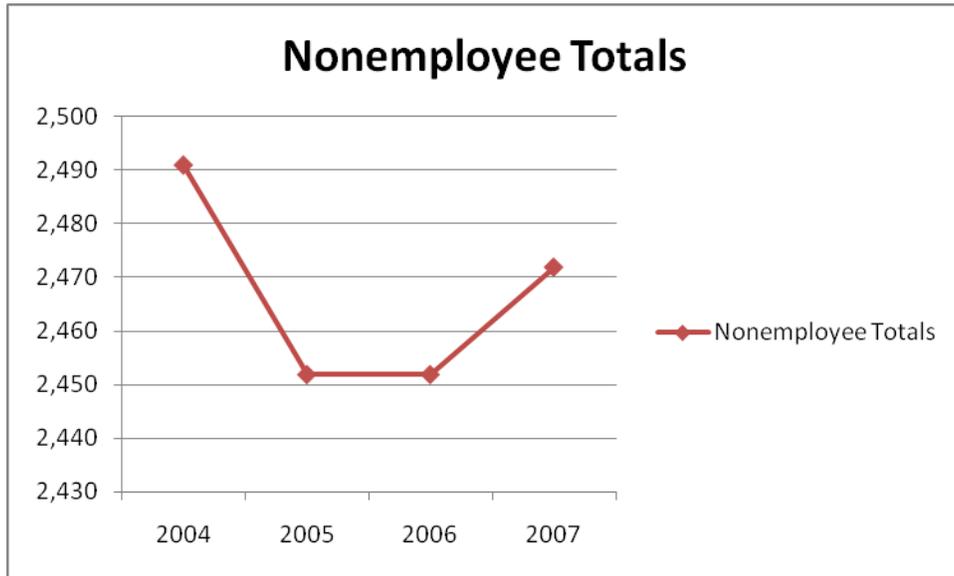


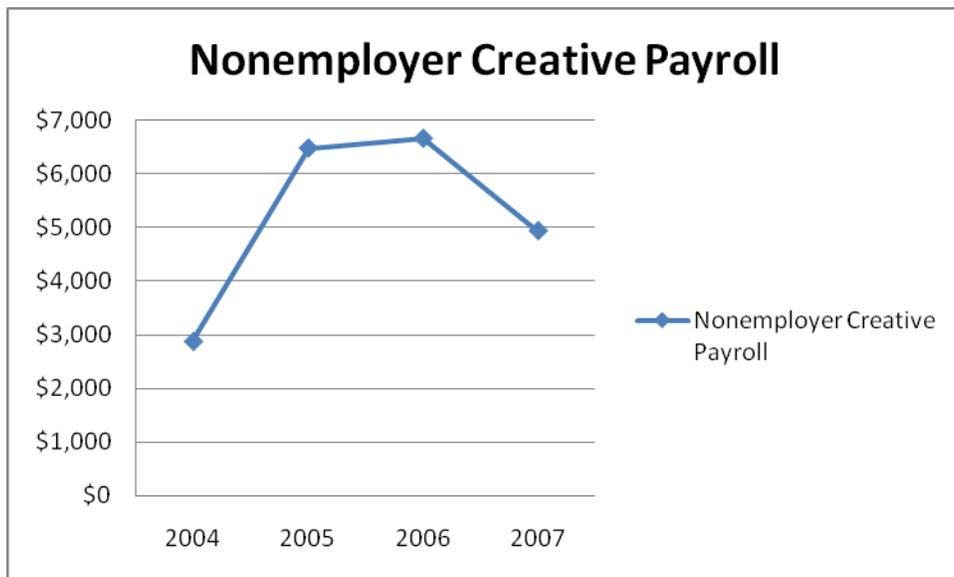
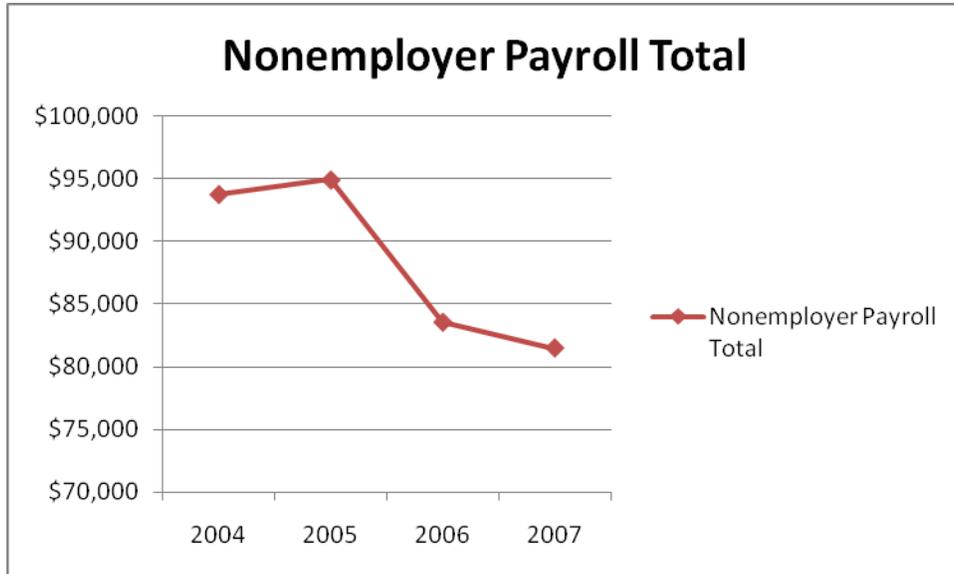
[NOTE. Data based on the 2004- 2007 County Business Patterns. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see Survey Methodology <http://www.census.gov/epcd/cbp/view/cbpmethodology.htm> .]

Additional data from 2007 was made available on June 25, 2009 and accessed in August, 2009. This data may be refined in the near future by the Census bureau. <http://www.census.gov/epcd/nonemployer/2007/M33029620.HTM>

Additional data from 2007 was made available on July 9, 2009 and accessed on August 2009. This is preliminary data and may be refined in the near future by the Census bureau. <http://censtats.census.gov/cgi-bin/testmsanaic/msasect.pl>

All data from the US Census Bureau at <http://factfinder.census.gov>; annual economic surveys. Creative Economy NAICS Codes (Core and Peripheral) and overall definition of the Creative Economy are based on the New England Foundation for the Arts publication, *The Creative Economy: A New Definition - November 2007*, which can be found online: <http://www.nefa.org/pubs/index.html>





[NOTE: Data based on the 2004 - 2006 County Business Patterns. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see Survey Methodology.]

All data from the US Census Bureau at <http://factfinder.census.gov>; annual economic surveys. Creative Economy NAICS Codes (Core and Peripheral) and overall definition of the Creative Economy are based on the New England Foundation for the Arts publication, *The Creative Economy: A New Definition - November 2007*, which can be found online: <http://www.nefa.org/pubs/index.html>

Assessment Survey Summary

Methods This report summarizes opinions of 328 people from the Boyne City area to a survey assessing cultural assets and cultural economic opportunities for the region. Boyne City Main Street and its business and economic development partners distributed the survey to their constituents. The results do not necessarily represent the opinions of all Boyne City citizens, but do provide a good sample of business owners, economic development advocates, creative workers, and cultural sector representatives. The survey opened March 16 and closed March 31, 2009.

Respondent demographics Two thirds of survey respondents are female and most are married or partnered with children. Most are college educated, employed, and have a middle class income (\$40,000-80,000). The average age is 52 and 98% are white.

Common Boyne City word associations Clusters of words most frequently associated with Boyne City listed in order most frequently mentioned (the number indicates frequency of the comment). Nearly all comments were positive.

- Lake Charlevoix, water, lake, lakefront, or waterfront (cited by 93 respondents)
- Friendly, welcoming (83)
- Beautiful, beauty, natural beauty (80)
- Peaceful, peace, quiet, relaxed serene, tranquil, pastoral, pleasant, calm (70)
- Small, small town, little, cozy (62)
- Home, hometown, homey (62)
- Quaint, charming (46)
- Fun (35)

- Outdoor recreation, skiing, boating, hiking (40)
- Restaurants, ice cream, Red Mesa Grill (27)
- Nature, scenery, Avalanche Park, Young State Park (27)

Significant attractions and services Most frequently mentioned services or attractions associated with Boyne City listed in order most frequently mentioned (the number indicates frequency of the comment):

- Lake Charlevoix, lake, waterfront, or water (cited by 184 respondents)
- Parks (58)
- Red Mesa (58)
- Restaurants, dining (46)
- Skiing (41)
- Boyne Mountain (37)
- Farmers' Market (35)
- Mushroom Festival, morels (31)

Importance of cultural attractions Respondents ranked cultural attractions. All suggested attractions are important. Of these four are most highly ranked: 1) locally owned food and drink places, 2) farmers' market, 3) parks, nature preserves, gardens, trails, and waterways, 4) and festivals and special events.

Cultural memberships Nearly half of respondents were members, volunteers, or otherwise associated with local area cultural organizations. Most common are arts associations, performing arts groups, and the library.

Cultural contributions Just over half of

respondents made a cash or cash equivalent contribution to a local arts, heritage, or cultural organization within the past twelve months.

Purchase of Michigan art Nearly half of respondents had purchased a local or Michigan visual art work within the past twelve months.

News media sources Survey respondents report they most frequently get their news and information about area attractions from the Petoskey News-Review, personal referrals, word of mouth, Chamber/Main Street email, web sites like Chamber of Commerce or Main Street, and posters, brochures, and fliers.

Downtown Boyne City strengths Respondents ranked the strengths of downtown Boyne City shopping and businesses. Features ranked in order of perceived greatest strengths: Familiar faces - I know the people, they know me; attractiveness; cleanliness; customer service; convenience; parking; and authentic experience. The weakest areas are: selection and variety; price and value; and open hours. Quality is seen as equal to other communities.

Business owners A third of respondents owned or operated a business or intended to open one and 119 people answered questions in the following section.

Conducting business in Boyne City Business owners rated Boyne City business climate. They most strongly agreed with the following statements (listed in order of most strong agreement):

- Boyne City's small town look and feel is important to our customers.
- Business significantly improves on days of festivals and most other special events.

- Downtown facade and street improvements have really helped business.

Business people tended to agree or be more neutral with the following:

- We do a good job of referring customers to complementary businesses and attractions in Boyne City.
- Customers who visit special community events return later to shop.
- There are unique or distinctive businesses and attractions that attract and retain customers.
- Highway and street signs and markers clearly direct visitors to local businesses and cultural attractions.

Business people mostly disagreed with the following statements:

- Boyne City's reputation as an historic and cultural center attracts customers.
- City permits and regulations encourage business development.
- There is an adequate mix of businesses to attract and retain customers.

Majority would recommend Boyne City to other businesses Six in ten business owner respondents would encourage a friend, who wishes to start or relocate a business, to do so in Boyne City. For those who are not sure they would recommend Boyne City to start a business, most often they cited the small size and seasonal nature of the market.

What is needed to improve the climate for business in Boyne City

- More and more varied retail (cited by 16 respondents)
- Promote and match outdoor attractions and downtown amenities, draw in boaters and skiers (10)
- Active business recruitment (6)
- Tax breaks, seasonal adjustments (6)

Creative workers Nearly a quarter of respondents described themselves as a creative worker, a professional visual or performing artist (any discipline), craft person, designer, writer, historian, librarian, cultural manager, or other cultural or creative worker. Eighty two creative workers answered questions in the following section.

Jobs Fifteen of the creative business owners each employed from 1 to 7 workers. On average they employ 2.7 workers. The other 29 creative workers are not employers.

Self employment Three quarters (74%) of creative workers are self-employed.

Local markets Six in ten Boyne City artists and other creative workers rely primarily on local markets. About a third market primarily regionally. A few market internationally.

Other work Half of responding creative workers also work at other jobs to help support themselves and their families.

Creative worker needs Artists and other creative workers described their highest priority needs in this order: Increased sales or other earnings; affordable health insurance; validation of their work; networking with others with similar interests; stimulation of exhibitions, performances, or other creative experiences; finding equipment, materials or supplies; and

marketing.

Cultural organizations Seventeen percent of respondents were staff, board, or other volunteer leaders of a local area cultural organization (arts, humanities, heritage, or environmental). Fifty eight cultural leaders offered their opinions in the following section.

Cultural organization needs Leaders of cultural organizations identified eight most important needs: volunteer development, operating funds, programming funds, recruiting board members, help in marketing/audience development, public information/advocacy, information, and training/assistance in funds development.

Nonprofit funding trends A slight majority of Boyne City cultural organizations report individual contributions have trended up over the past two years, though nearly as many report decreases. Every other source of funding has dropped at least somewhat. This is consistent with national trends.

What would most help cultural organizations make a greater contribution to the community's economic development Most often, cultural leaders cited increased funding or board/volunteer development.

Economic and Community Development organizations Seventeen percent of respondents were connected with economic development, community-development, or other civic improvement organizations. Fifty seven of these answered questions in the following section.

Business and economic development organization needs Leaders of economic and business development organizations cited nine important needs in order of priority: Information, information technology, volunteer development, help with business incubators and start ups, operating funds, networking, programming funds, public

information/advocacy, and developing board of directors. Interestingly (for a plan to enhance cultural economic development) the least important need is “Help providing

assistance to artists and other creative workers.”



Boyne City Cultural Economic Development Planning

Marketing Study and Report

March 24, 2009

Objectives

The purpose of this report is to record observations and recommendations about the marketing of Boyne City's cultural resources to inform the development of a cultural economic development plan by Dreeszen and Associates.

Cultural Resources Defined

We consider cultural resources to include history and historic buildings and sites; visual and performing arts producers and presenters; artists and craftspeople; museums, galleries, shops; and studios; historic inns and restaurants; library, writers, and bookstores; and specialty food producers and retail shops. We include creative workers and businesses such as designers, architects, and news media.

Research and Analysis Conducted

In preparing this report, I engaged in a four-stage process for researching Boyne City's marketing image.

1. **Review of 2004 Market Study:** An extensive market study was conducted by the Downtown Professionals Network in 2004, and results of this study were reviewed as part of this research.
2. **Brochure Review:** 25 brochures picked up by Tom Borrup in literature racks on a recent site visit to Boyne City were reviewed for this part of the marketing analysis.
3. **Internet Presence:** In engaging in this part of the analysis, I selectively reviewed the web presence of Boyne City along two dimensions:
 - **Selected Web Sites:** I reviewed a handful of web sites that emerged among the top three listings in Google with the search terms "Boyne City" and "Boyne City Art." The data is conclusive that the majority of traffic to web sites is driven by people

who look for it on a search engine, and that most Americans who use the internet make use of search engines on a daily basis.³ Because of this, it is most likely that visitors and residents will use search engines to locate events and attractions in Boyne City, and those that emerge in the top results are most likely to be visited. Web sites reviewed were:

- **Boyne City Chamber of Commerce/City Government Web Site:** www.boynecity.com I clicked on the chamber and reviewed the Chamber web site for this purpose. This site came up #1 when I typed in the search phrase "Boyne City"
- **Petosky Area Visitor's Bureau:** <http://boynecountry.com/> This site came up #2 when I typed in the search phrase "Boyne City"
- **Boyne City Performing Arts Center** http://www.boyne.k12.mi.us/auditorium_page/facility.html This site came up first when I used the search phrase "Boyne City Art."
- **Pure Michigan: Michigan's Official Travel and Tourism Site :** <http://www.michigan.org/Things-to-Do/Shopping/Art-Galleries-and-Crafts/Default.aspx?city=G2838> Listing of Galleries in Boyne City

- **Social networking site presence:** I reviewed the Boyne City presence on three key social networking sites: You Tube (video sharing site), Technorati (blog site search engine), and My Space. All are among the most frequently used social networking sites on the web.⁴ Sites reviewed were:

³ A 2008 study by the *Pew Internet and the American Life Project*³ indicates that 49% of internet users use a search engine on a typical day, which is up 69% from 2002. The #1 search engine site in the U.S. is Google.

- Dog Hill Kitchen Blog-Article on morel festival
<http://doghillkitchen.blogspot.com/search?q=boyne+city> This site came up #1 when I typed in the search phrase “Boyne City, MI” in technorati.com (the #1 blog search engine site).
 - Absolute Michigan Blog:
<http://www.absolutemichigan.com/dig/michigan/absolute-michigan-2008-holiday-gift-guide/> 2008 Holiday Gift Guide features Log Art Inc.'s Gallery. This site came up #2 when I typed in the search phrase “Boyne City, MI” in technorati.com (the #1 blog search engine site).
 - Boyne Chamber You Tube Site:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/boynecchamber> This site came up #1 when I typed in Boyne City as a search phrase in You Tube.
 - Boyne City My Space Site:
<http://www.myspace.com/boynecity> Harriet Miller's My Space site came up first in the search for Boyne City in My Space.
4. Interview: Six civic leaders (selected by Boyne City Main Street Manager, Hugh Conklin) participated in our one hour phone interview on March 24, 2009, including: Hugh Conklin, Main Street Manager; Michelle Cortright, Chair of the Main Street board, township official and owner of successful publishing and marketing company; Jim Baumann, executive director of the Boyne Area Chamber of Commerce; Jodi Adams, who serves on the Main Street board and is executive director of the County Humane Society; Randy Calcaterra, director of the Boyne City High School Visual Imaging Program and independent filmmaker; and, Ed Brehm, owner of a local convenience/liquor store. Interview questions were designed to elicit cultural tourism strategies that have been utilized in Boyne City, the successes and challenges encountered, and ideas to guide future marketing efforts.

Acknowledgments Boyne City is one of four innovative Michigan Main Street communities to undertake cultural economic development planning. Planning is sponsored by the Michigan Main Street program, a joint partnership between the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and its Michigan Main

Street Center and the Michigan Department of History, Arts, and Libraries and its State Historic Preservation Office. Local planning is organized by Boyne City Main Street.

OBSERVATIONS:

Market Study Review⁵:

Downtown visitors in 2004 tended to be residents of Boyne City

Although the intercept surveys were largely conducted on weekdays during normal business hours (which can skew the data), there was a strong tendency for visitors to be residents of the area. (p. 19-20)

In 2004, tourism was seen as an important part of the economy

Despite the preponderance of residents who visit downtown, town meetings and public meetings showed that residents feel that tourism is an important part of the economy. (p. 19)

In 2004, Newspaper was the #1 source for news and information on Boyne City

Because of the closure of the newspaper, this local media source has been eliminated as an option and is a significant change from 2004. (p. 23)

In 2004, 46% of Boyne City businesses had a web site

It would be interesting to re-administer this survey today to see changes in the number of web sites, and in their perceived effectiveness. (p. 23)

In 2004, consumers felt that Boyne City was comparatively stronger to other communities in terms of its “friendliness, attractiveness and cleanliness.”

⁵ All observations culled from a review of the report by the Downtown Professionals Network, “Downtown Boyne City Market Study,” July 2004.

The attribute “friendliness” correlates with one attribute interview participants described as a strength of their community. (p. 25)

80% of consumers and 81% of businesses surveyed in 2004 felt that the more festivals and events should be staged in the downtown area (p. 26)

The need for more cooperative advertising and marketing was offered as a key recommendation (p. 56)

Brochure Review:

Cultural resources are well represented on the literature racks in town

Of the 25 brochures reviewed, 40% were advertising cultural venues and events, such as public art sites, festivals and films, art center newsletters and similar materials. Not surprisingly, the overall quality ranged from higher end (full color, high quality) to lower cost brochures (produced on a home computer), with most materials representing current or future events.

Cultural events and artists are not well represented in general tourism materials and in brochures designed to promote and attract businesses to the region

While cultural resources were well represented in the literature racks, materials whose purpose was to promote general tourism (such as shopping maps, chamber guides to the town, etc.—28% of the brochures) or promote Boyne City businesses (business center, phone and resource books, etc.—the final 28%), generally did not feature arts events or cultural attractions. A notable exception was the Boyne Area Chamber of Commerce, which devoted an entire page (page 13) of its publication to the arts and culture of the region.

Cross-promotional materials are notably missing

While individual events, such as festivals, are well represented, no single brochure promoted the *collection* of festivals and events in Boyne City. Similarly, no brochures advertised attractions across the larger region, except for “Historic Boyne Country” (which promotes historic sites in Petoskey, Harbor Springs, and Boyne City).

Internet Presence Review

Boyne City is well represented as a travel destination in search engines

Search engine results revealed high rankings for travel sites that list Boyne City as a destination.

Boyne City Chamber of Commerce has positioned itself well on social networking site *You Tube*

Boyne City Chamber of Commerce has taken advantage of the social networking site, You Tube, to post images from recent festivals and meetings. This is a forward looking step on the part of the Chamber, given the rising popularity of this site on the web (according to a recent article in the New York Times, it is now the #2 search engine on the web, after Google).

Web sites are not well optimized for search engines

Analyzing keywords (hidden text that helps automated search engines locate information on web sites) in each of the “official” sites reveals there is little attention to basic search engine optimization features.

Few Boyne City galleries have a web presence

While several galleries were listed in the Art Galleries section of the Boyne County CVB (see <http://boynecountry.com/art-galleries-56/>), few had a web presence. Given the enormous popularity of the internet (70% of Americans use the internet), this lack of presence could be a serious business liability.

Interview

Retirees and families emerged as a key target audience for Boyne City’s marketing efforts

While there is a desire to reach all markets, retirees and families were most commonly cited during the interview as a key focus of Boyne City’s marketing efforts.

Natural resources are a draw for visitors

The presence of the lake and beauty of the surrounding region are seen as a significant draw for visitors to

Boyne City. There was spirited discussion about the possibility of branding the region as a “quiet vacation,” and perhaps capitalizing on the need for visitors to get away from traffic and noise in cities.

There is a need to build visitor traffic in the “off-season” with marketing materials

There was consensus that visitor traffic to Boyne City is healthy in the summer months, especially during festivals and other attractions.

Boyne City is great at promoting festivals

From the morel festival to the July 4th festivities, Boyne City offers many festivals that draw thousands of visitors, especially in the summer months.

Successful businesses may provide marketing ideas and inspiration

Red Mesa Grill and Water Street Café were both viewed as successful restaurants that draw significant traffic. According to Ed Brehm, Red Mesa conducts regular focus groups.

PRELIMINARY SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION BASED ON REVIEW OF MARKETING MATERIALS AND INTERVIEW:

There is significant opportunity for cooperative marketing

Creative marketing partnerships could be instigated between successful restaurants like Red Mesa Grill and Water Street Café and cultural attractions, such as historic sites, festivals and galleries. Discount coupons could be distributed to encourage visitors to visit both the restaurant and cultural venue or festival. Similarly, a cooperative marketing campaign with Boyne Mountain, which draws a significant number of tourists each year, could offer enormous potential for cooperative marketing.

Promote festivals as a way to build traffic both on-season and off

According to those interviewed, there is no central festival promoter in Boyne City. For a small investment,

it may be possible to hire a contractual person to convene festival promoters and seek ways to co-promote events and festivals in Boyne City, and to tap their creativity to see if there are off-season festivals that could be imagined.

Create stronger connections between eco-tourism and cultural tourism

The area’s natural attractions (including Boyne Mountain) are a wonderful complement to cultural tourism events. These events can easily appeal to the same visitor.

Utilize information from area businesses to learn more about your target customers

The focus of marketing efforts should be narrowed based on data from the 2004 study, supplemented with information gleaned in focus groups at Red Mesa Grill and other sources.

Establish methods for tracking the success of marketing efforts

There are multiple ways to track the success of marketing efforts, including the free service Google Analytics for web sites; email marketing service statistics (such as Vertical Response and Constant Contact), simple surveys at businesses (how did you hear about our business today?, collecting zip code information, etc.), observation of attendance at events after specific promotions, and so forth.

This will help marketing investments to be well considered.