

LEARN MORE ABOUT RTA

The first RTA was conducted in partnership with Roscommon County Economic Development Corporation, including Roscommon County and the communities of Prudenville/Houghton Lake, St. Helen, and the Village of Roscommon.

Learn more about the inaugural assessment by scanning the QR code below.



FOR MORE INFO CONTACT:

- **Andy Northrop,**
northro5@msu.edu
- **Garrett Ziegler,**
zieglerg@msu.edu



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RURAL TOURISM ASSESSMENT PROGRAM



Find your way with RTA!



OUR PROCESS



Phase 1: Planning and asset identification workshop



Phase 1 serves as the foundational stage of the Rural Tourism Assessment (RTA) process. During this initial phase, held in workshop format facilitated by MSU Extension, stakeholders identify assets and key metrics central to their tourism economy. Identified assets are prioritized by stakeholders which serve to support subsequent Phases. Additional steps are taken to generate specific questions stakeholders would like answered from First Impressions Tourism (FIT) assessment(s) conducted during and central to Phase 2.

Phase 2: Data collection and analysis



Phase 2 centers on gathering data generated through surveys and site visits using MSU Extension's FIT program. FIT provides valuable insights into the tourism experience from both first-time visitors and community perspectives generated during Phase 1.

Phase 2: Contd.

The collected data is then thoroughly analyzed to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities related to rural tourism development in participating communities. Presentations are then generated for the purpose of sharing with community stakeholders offered during a community forum setting as part of Phase 3.

Phase 3: Results dissemination and community engagement



Approx. 6 months after completing Phase 2, Phase 3 commences. Results obtained from the first two Phases are merged and shared with stakeholders participating in the Rural Tourism Assessment. This phase also provides an opportunity for residents and community members to engage in discussions and provide feedback on the first-time visitor perspectives, fostering collaboration and shared decision-making.

Phase 4: Implementation strategy development



Phase 4 consists of facilitated discussions with stakeholders around next steps and implementation strategies for communities participating in the entire RTA process. These discussions heavily focus on insights gathered directly from FIT assessments conducted during Phase 2 and shared during Phase 3. Tourism development models are applied, where and when necessary, to help guide discussions. Tailored strategies are developed to enhance the tourism experience based on visitor feedback and community priorities.



WHY COMPLETE A RURAL TOURISM ASSESSMENT?

- ✓ Engaging stakeholders in the process of identifying assets within your geography is a valuable way to strengthen collaboration and foster sustainability.
- ✓ Capturing first-time visitor perspectives of your assets will help highlight strengths, weakness, and opportunities.
- ✓ Helping to ensure rural tourism has a solid place in future community economic development is a key component of the RTA approach.

WHO IS A GOOD FIT FOR RTA?

- RTA is available to communities and counties. More importantly, it is ideal for stakeholders that see the value and synergy tourism provides to rural economies.

