



risingtide

Action Strategy

Village of Newberry
January 2016



rising tide

Rising Tide is an initiative envisioned by Governor Snyder and implemented by the Department of Talent and Economic Development (TED) with the mission of supplying at-risk communities with the tools they need to design and build a successful economic framework. Project Rising Tide supports vibrant, thriving communities to attract business investment and talent by creating a sustainable path toward economic stability and growth.

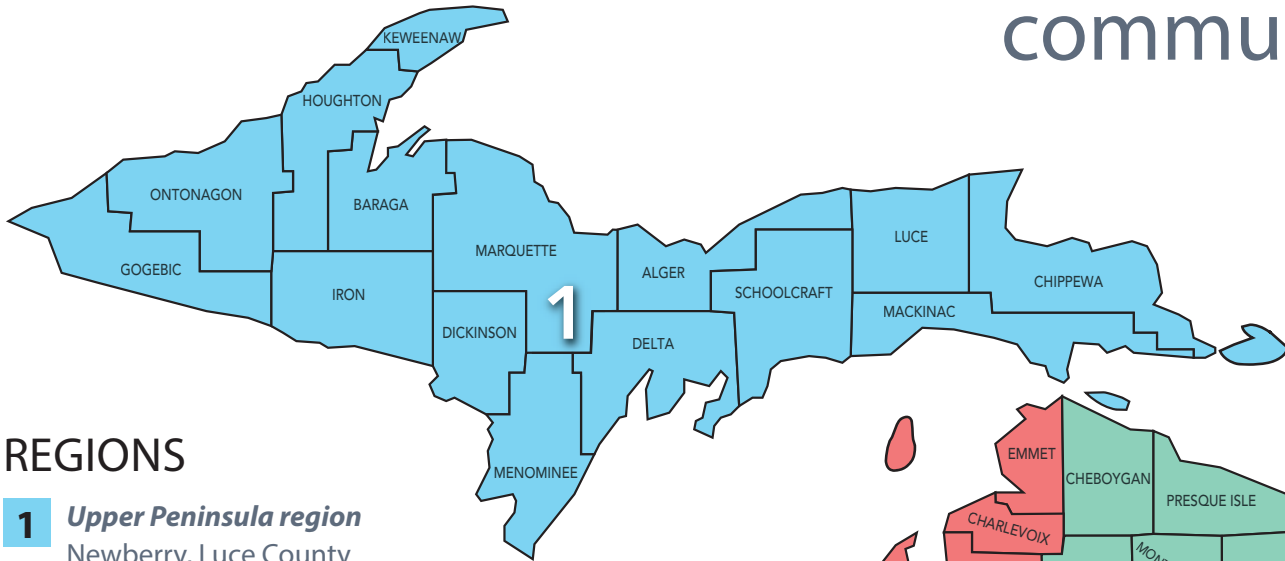
The Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Talent Investment Agency, and Michigan State Housing Development Authority (TED team) have committed their assets to engaging specific communities across the state in order to empower them to shape their future and maximize economic potential.

One community in each of the 10 prosperity regions was selected using the following data cross matched by population (the data are provided in Appendix A):

- Poverty level
- Unemployment level
- Labor participation rate
- Renter occupied units
- Vacancy rates
- Percentage of households receiving food stamps

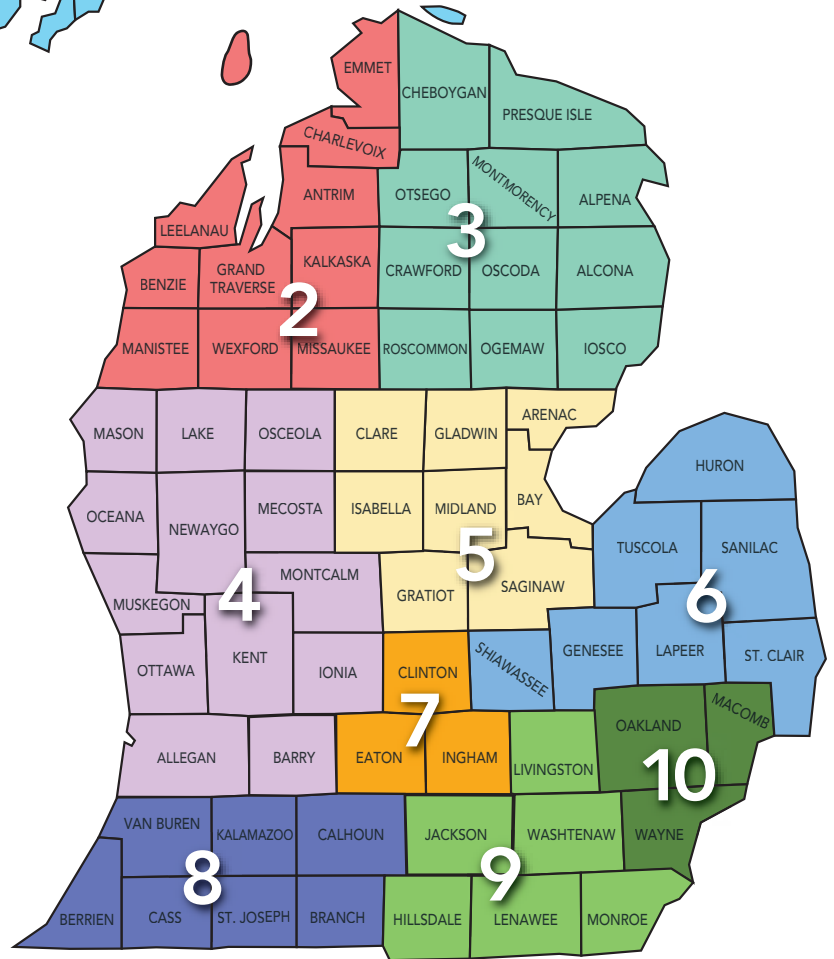
This initiative will employ the MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) program as the initial mechanism to support the Rising Tide platform in each of the 10 prosperity regions. Depending on each community's unique challenges, additional supportive services may be provided.





REGIONS

- 1** **Upper Peninsula region**
Newberry, Luce County
- 2** **Northwest region**
Central Lake, Antrim County
Main Street Community, Associate Level
- 3** **Northeast region**
Grayling County
Main Street Community, Select Level
- 4** **West Michigan region**
Ewart, Osceola County
- 5** **East Central Michigan region**
Harrison, Clare County
- 6** **East Michigan region**
Sandusky, Sanilac County
- 7** **South Central region**
Charlotte, Eaton County
- 8** **Southwest region**
Paw Paw, Van Buren County
- 9** **Southeast Michigan region**
Hillsdale, Hillsdale County
Redevelopment Ready Communities, evaluation completed
- 10** **Detroit Metro region**
River Rouge, Wayne County
Redevelopment Ready Communities, evaluation pending



SUMMARY FROM STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

In September 2015, the TED team initiated meetings with community stakeholders in Newberry. The initial stakeholder meeting discussed the community background and identified community challenges and priorities to inform Project Rising Tide (PRT) efforts moving forward. Over the course of several months the TED team met with the village manager, village council members, local business owners, Luce County Commissioners, Luce County Administrator, Luce County Economic Development Corporation, Newberry Area Chamber of Commerce and Newberry residents.

Stakeholders identified many local assets to build upon, including the abundance of four-season recreational opportunities and the village serving as the gateway to Tahquamenon Falls State Park, the area is a camping destination and in close proximity to Munising and Grand Marais, new village infrastructure with additional capacity, streetscape improvements, Luce County Industrial Park, historical building stock downtown and employment assets including state government positions.

During conversations with Newberry stakeholders and staff, several challenges impacting the data sets used to select this community as a priority for the PRT pilot were identified. A reoccurring theme throughout interviews was the need to develop a cohesive vision for the community and better coordinate activities of stakeholders and groups contributing to economic development. Community stakeholders also identified an opportunity for a strengthened community brand and increased marketing of the area and wayfinding signage to attract residents, visitors and businesses. The need for the creation of strategy to assist with the implementation of placemaking efforts was also a priority identified.

Stakeholders selected the development of a comprehensive economic development strategy for growth and attraction as the top priority for the village of Newberry. This marks a unique opportunity to address several of the above mentioned issues. A community economic development strategy will focus on attracting and retaining jobs and investment. Economic development efforts are supported by taking steps to communicate and promote local opportunities. While the village has not adopted a master plan for land use and does not currently enforce zoning regulations, the village recently participated in community placemaking training with the Michigan State University Extension staff and is contemplating drafting a form-based or character-based master plan for the village. The village is considering formalizing a downtown group, potentially a Downtown Development Authority (DDA), to assist with implementation of these placemaking efforts. While the creation of a marketing and branding strategy was not selected as the top priority, economic development and

marketing are closely related, and it is likely that the economic development strategy will include marketing elements and define deliberate steps to promote and draw attention to community attributes and economic opportunity.

The TED team and local stakeholders have completed the six RRC self-evaluations and have noted areas where the village may begin to make improvements to move toward economic growth and development. The TED team has also provided the village with an analysis of the municipal website and suggested various enhancements to improve the impact and effectiveness of this key marketing tool (Appendix B).

RECOMMENDED ACTION STEPS

This action strategy will be the shared responsibility of village staff, village council, Chamber of Commerce, Luce County, additional stakeholders, with the assistance of the TED team, when appropriate. It is the intention the action strategy will be a shared vision for what will be accomplished over the next 6–12 months and will help to establish accountability for the work to be done.

In addition to the items listed in the action strategy, the TED team acknowledges the village is exploring or should explore the following items:

- Strengthening the community brand
- Coordinating marketing activities
- Establishment of a Downtown Development Authority
- Continue to implement Redevelopment Ready Communities® Best Practices that are not in place as identified in the self-evaluations completed in October 2015
- Update village website based off of TED team's website review (Appendix B).

The philosophy of this action strategy is to lay the foundation for economic development activities in the village that can sustainably function without in-depth assistance from the TED team.

- ✓ Cohesive community vision
- ✓ Coordinate stakeholder activities
- ✓ Strengthen community brand
- ✓ Coordinated marketing activities
- ✓ Placemaking implementation
- ✓ Downtown development
- ✓ Economic development strategy

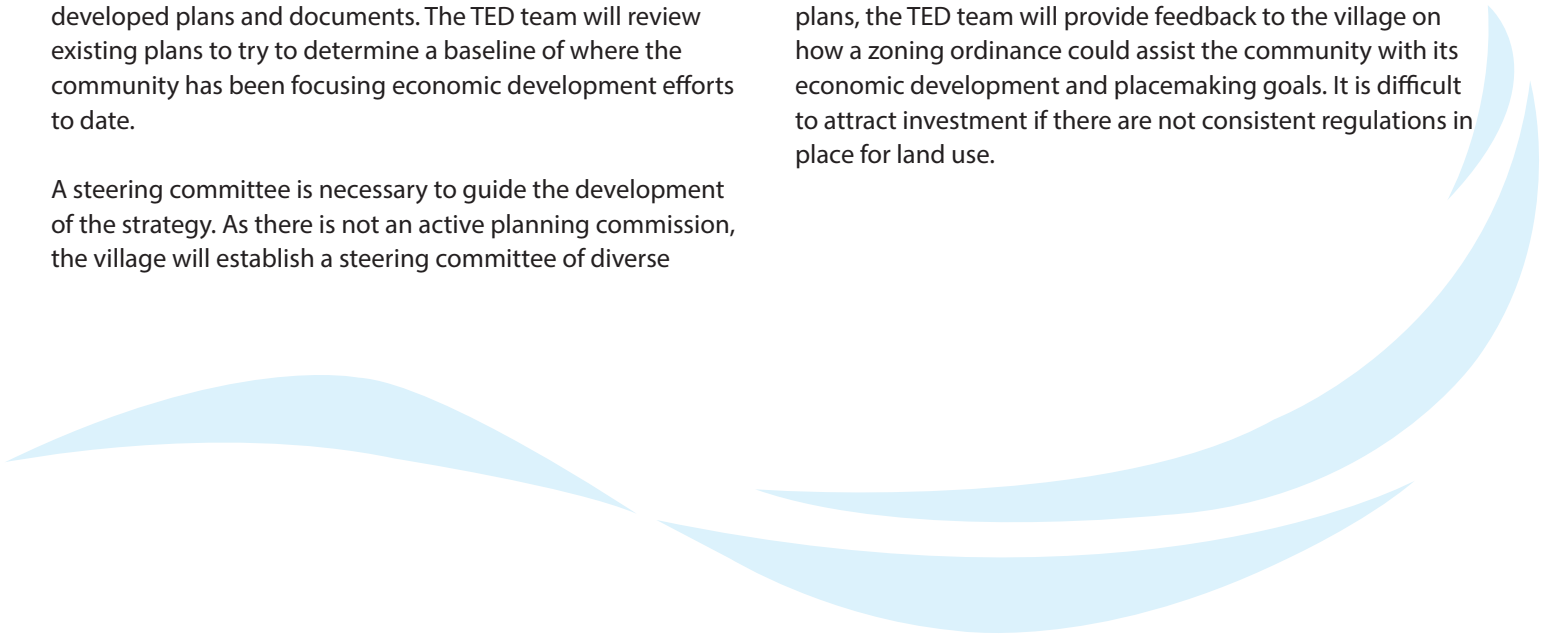
JANUARY–MARCH 2016		
Action item	Owner	Deliverable
Recruit local stakeholders to lead economic development planning efforts	Village manager	Local steering committee established
Summarize essential background information	Village manager, Eastern UP planning, Luce County EDC, MSU Extension, SBDC, steering committee	Data and background information regarding population, workforce, tax base, market data, etc., summarized
Review of economic development strategy	TED team	Feedback on economic development strategy presented to local stakeholders
Summarize economic challenges based on data gathered	Village manager, steering committee	Comprehensive list of economic challenges developed
Review zoning ordinance	TED team	Feedback on how a zoning ordinance could assist the community with its economic development and placemaking goals

Throughout discussions with local stakeholders, the need for a cohesive vision to move the village forward was evident. While many communities have a general idea of how they intend to encourage economic development, a clear strategy that describes how they intend to build tax base and create jobs is key to attracting investment. Economic development strategies are often rooted in various community planning documents, including master plans. The village of Newberry does not have a master plan for land use, and the most recent planning documents include a downtown blueprint from 2003 and a 1985 economic development plan, which are outdated. The village is exploring ways to strengthen economic development and will provide the TED team with all previously developed plans and documents. The TED team will review existing plans to try to determine a baseline of where the community has been focusing economic development efforts to date.

A steering committee is necessary to guide the development of the strategy. As there is not an active planning commission, the village will establish a steering committee of diverse

stakeholders to lead the strategy development process. The choice is a local one, but above all, the steering committee should have significant credibility, influence and authority. Community champions should be associated with the process and beyond local representation, other external local interests should be included in the conversations and the process. The steering committee will develop a comprehensive list of economic challenges based on the background data gathered. This will help to begin aligning stakeholder efforts and create accountability in economic development activities moving forward.

In addition to reviewing existing economic development plans, the TED team will provide feedback to the village on how a zoning ordinance could assist the community with its economic development and placemaking goals. It is difficult to attract investment if there are not consistent regulations in place for land use.



APRIL–JUNE 2016		
Action item	Owner	Deliverable
Convene a stakeholder input session	Village manager, steering committee	Public engagement session to identify economic assets and opportunities
Draft economic development “task list”	Village manager, steering committee	Tasks will be identified and prioritized including responsible parties, timelines and potential funding sources
Draft economic development strategy	Village manager, steering committee	Assemble information into a localized plan for the community
Review of economic development strategy	TED team	Coordinate meeting with steering committee to confirm information which will be presented back to the community and additional stakeholders.
Review development process	TED team	Flowchart of development process and additional feedback presented to village staff

Effective economic development strategies are consensus-driven and the product of inclusive community dialogue. An economic development planning stakeholder input session will be hosted by the steering committee. The event will seek to bring together community leaders and the public, with the goal of information sharing, collaboration and visioning.

Based on information collected at the input session, the steering committee will develop goals and actions for an overall community vision, describing what the village seeks to accomplish through the creation of the strategy. Tasks will be identified and prioritized including responsible parties, timelines and potential funding sources.

While the village does not currently employ zoning, the TED team will present information on typical development processes for the village’s review and discussion. A flowchart of any existing development steps will be created and posted on the village’s website to assist interested developers with navigating the process in Newberry.



JULY–SEPTEMBER 2016		
Action item	Owner	Deliverable
Inventory redevelopment sites	Steering committee, village council, TED team	List of prioritized sites available for redevelopment One property information package developed and posted online
Present economic development vision and strategy to local stakeholders	Steering committee, TED team	Village economic development strategy completed and presented to local stakeholders and village council
Adopt and begin to implement plan objectives	Steering committee, TED team	Village council publicly considers and adopts economic development strategy Steering committee works on prioritized TASK 1

In the third quarter, the TED team will assist the village with the identification of priority redevelopment sites. This includes assembling a property information package that includes basic site information, a vision and available incentives.

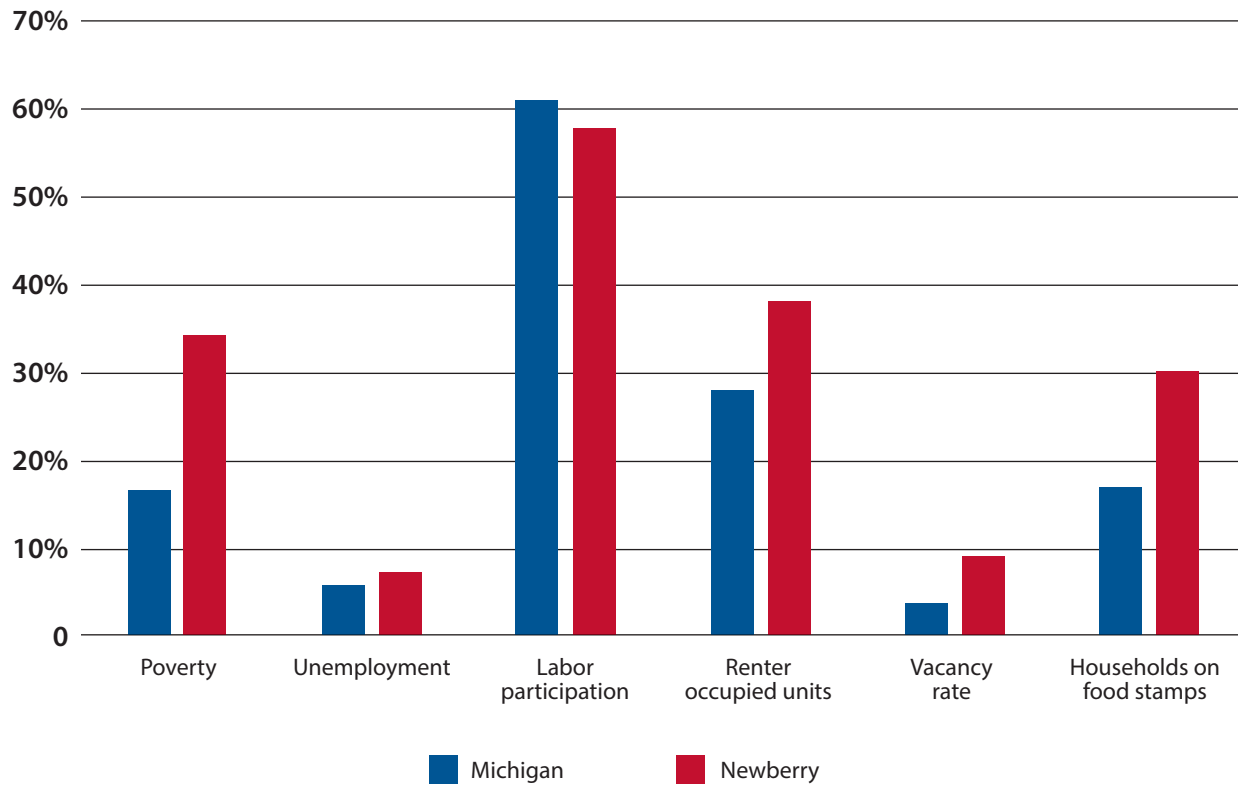
By the end of September, the village will have a completed economic development strategy, providing the framework for moving forward. The economic development vision and strategy will be presented to local stakeholders and the village council will review and adopt the strategy, which will become the official statement of economic development efforts. The

strategy for economic development will align the activities of all stakeholders, the website will be updated to be more user friendly, the village will have information about zoning and the development process to consider, and sites available for redevelopment will be inventoried and actively marketed to attract investment. There will be a better understanding of the benefits of investing in Newberry and available local, state and federal resources to assist in doing so. The economic development strategy should drive major community decisions and be a reliable predictor of future village actions to support economic development.



APPENDIX A

DATA USED TO SELECT PROJECT RISING TIDE COMMUNITIES											
	Michigan	Region 1: Newberry	Region 2: Central Lake	Region 3: Grayling	Region 4: Ewart	Region 5: Harrison	Region 6: Sandusky	Region 7: Charlotte	Region 8: Paw Paw	Region 9: Hillsdale	Region 10: River Rouge
Population	9,886,095	1,673	1,078	1,849	1,569	2,324	2,651	9,064	3,498	8,257	7,857
Poverty	16.8%	34.2%	21.1%	32.7%	36.4%	32.9%	26.2%	18.00%	46.3%	31.60%	38.50%
Unemployment	5.9%	7.3%	7.5%	7.7%	6.8%	7.9%	6.6%	4.70%	6.5%	5.80%	7.70%
Labor participation	60.5%	58.4%	53.6%	50.2%	50.3%	47.9%	53.8%	57.30%	57.6%	56.50%	53.60%
Renter occupied units	27.9%	38.0%	35.4%	52.7%	53.6%	39.5%	42.5%	35.90%	62.1%	46.20%	43.50%
Vacancy rate	4.0%	9.0%	10.7%	11.9%	4.7%	9.7%	5.0%	6.50%	7.4%	7.00%	9.50%
Households on food stamps	16.9%	30.6%	30.9%	35.6%	40.9%	39.1%	31.4%	24.20%	34.1%	28.10%	40.80%



APPENDIX B

Project Rising Tide website review: Village of Newberry

A municipal website serves numerous purposes. At a basic level, it is a way to share information about public meetings, access public documents, find links to other community organizations and to obtain general community information. The main audience for this basic information is local residents and officials. Beyond this, a municipal web site is also a demonstration of community character and image. People unfamiliar with a community will often look to a website for information and form first impressions and conclusions. In the context of the RRC program, it is essential that communities meet the threshold of functionality. Beyond basic functionality, a municipal website should also communicate an appealing community image. The village of Newberry website is functional and well organized, however website enhancements could lead to greater impact and higher performance levels. These are discussed below in the context of the RRC Best Practices and in terms of general observations.

Assessment of community website and potential future steps

1. Does the website incorporate basic methods of public notification?

Relevant contact information is available. The village website includes a header quick access menu bar across the top to organize the home page and makes it easy for viewers to navigate. Tabs include home, calendar, minutes, ordinances, contacts, forms, photos, water and light. Under the minutes tab, there is no information provided; the calendar tab, only holidays are posted; there are no photos posted under the photos tab.

Recommendations

Update the vision/mission to reflect Newberry’s desire to move forward, rather than “provide the best service, planning, budgeting, and environmental/economic opportunities possible for the greatest number of visitors to, and residents of the village of Newberry at the least cost.” Provide agendas of upcoming meetings along with minutes from previous meetings. Provide a schedule of future village board meetings under the “Minutes” tab. Provide photos of tourist attractions, assets in town, downtown businesses under the “Photos” tab. Under the calendar tab, either add upcoming meetings/office hours/events to the calendar or eliminate the tab.

2. Is it easy to locate pertinent planning, zoning and economic development documents on the village website?

Information on obtaining planning, zoning and economic development documents are not provided. The village does not have an economic development strategy, but if one is completed, it should also be made available on the website. Several applications are available on the website including a fence permit. The applications are easy to use and include contact information. The fee schedule is also available on the webpage with fence permit form. Employment opportunities with on line applications are available. All other village ordinances are also online.

Recommendations

While there may not be a planning and zoning department, it would be helpful to provide a link to Luce County’s website where building permit applications, planning and zoning information is provided, along with needed forms. Brief descriptions of existing board and commission duties should be added to the website, along with an application for open seats.

3. Does the community website include housing and talent information and link to external partner organizations?

The village website should link to numerous external organizations that include state representatives, county and local government services, the Chamber of Commerce. There is no information or any external links on the village website regarding housing or talent information.

Recommendations

Include links on the village website to additional external partner organizations to cover talent, housing and additional development information. Links to consider:

- Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning and Development Commission
- Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance
- County Building Department for building permit information
- Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency Human Resource Authority Inc. for low-income weatherization and homeowner rehabilitation services
- Recreation opportunities: Newberry Area, northern Michigan snowmobiles
- Webpage marketing redevelopment ready sites
- Initiatives to support small/locally owned businesses
- Tahquamenon Area Library
- Village of Newberry Public Schools

4. Does the website serve as a community marketing tool?

The village website could benefit from additional photos, links and information to better serve as a marketing tool for the community.

Recommendations

Short term goals could be to expand the home page narrative to include some history on Newberry and reasons why people would choose to live/work/visit. Provide links to upcoming local events. A long term goal could include the development of a community logo and tagline to express the character of the village of Newberry. A focused branding effort, resulting in a community supported logo and tagline, could provide a sense of local opportunity and vibrancy. This step may be best accomplished as part of a larger community marketing effort and could lead to related website enhancements.