

Department of History, Arts and Libraries  
Office of Cultural Economic Development  
**IDLEWILD, MICHIGAN TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE UPDATE**  
December 4, 2007

The *Idlewild, Michigan Transformation Initiative*, a unique partnership between the Idlewild/Yates Township community and a host of public and private partners, is successfully moving forward. Grounded in community-identified priorities, the work of Initiative partners over the last year has been focused on blight removal, community building, cultural revitalization, historic preservation and strategic economic development. While much has been accomplished, much remains to be done in the coming months and years, toward achievement of the community's vision for Idlewild by 2012, its centennial year.

Accomplishments:

- National Resource Team provided a comprehensive report on Idlewild, Michigan
- *Positive Image* community action group was established
- A clean-up of state-owned sites in Lake County was conducted
- Past issues related to Michigan Department of Natural (DNR) Resources grants were resolved
- Idlewild Lake/Williams Island skid pier/ boat launch was repaired by the DNR
- *The Pride*, a community online newsletter was established
- The Idlewild community's first community strategic visioning meeting was convened
- Governor Jennifer M. Granholm visited Idlewild and announced \$93,875 in combined federal and state grants in support of historic preservation activities
- The Yates Township Board adopted an *Idlewild Vision Statement for 2012*
- The *Idlewild Jazz Festival* received \$6,800 from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs
- Idlewild's US 10 entrance was improved, through the generous efforts of local citizens, and commemorated by an official flag raising event
- MSHDA awarded \$25,000 to Yates Township to support environmental assessment and blight removal
- Yates Township Planning and Zoning Commission crafted a new economic development vision for Idlewild
- MEDC and MDOT awarded \$44,000 to Yates Township to support development of a comprehensive transportation vision and economic development action strategy
- Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs awarded to Yates Township \$11,000 to support development of a youth music camp and \$24,000 to support development of the *Idlewild, Michigan Oral History Project*

*Idlewild, Michigan Transformation Initiative* partners include Yates Township, the Michigan Department of Corrections, Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), HAL Office of Cultural Economic Development, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), Idlewild African American Chamber of Commerce, Library of Michigan, Idlewild Citizens, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Enterprise Community Board, Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG), National Trust for Historic Preservation, Office of Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick, Office of the Governor (Lansing/D.C.), Office of Congressman John Conyers, Positive Image (Group), State Representative Geoff Hansen, Travel Michigan The National Parks Service, United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development, United States Forest Service, and Wayne State University.

The *Idlewild, Michigan Transformation Initiative* was established by Governor Jennifer M. Granholm in 2006 to "create jobs, build a thriving community and ensure a bright future for Idlewild". It is anticipated that the initiative will also prove beneficial to the region as a whole. For more information about the Initiative, log on to [www.michigan.gov/hal](http://www.michigan.gov/hal) or contact the HAL Office of Cultural Economic Development at 517/241-3973 or by e-mail to [bboone@michigan.gov](mailto:bboone@michigan.gov)