

Gogebic Range Next Generation Initiative

Evaluation Plan

2010-2020

“Attracting and retaining young people to reverse the decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range”

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Gogebic Range Next Generation Initiative Evaluation Plan 2010-2020

Mission Statement: “Attracting and retaining young people to reverse the decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range”

Purpose: The Gogebic Range Next Generation Initiative is based on the principles presented to the community by author and consultant Rebecca Ryan in late 2008. Her “Live First, Work Second” message is that many of today’s young people value the place that they live over a high-paying job. Therefore, communities should make themselves attractive to young people in order to attract them to their communities.

To better understand the location preferences of young people living on the Gogebic Range, Will Andresen from the University of Wisconsin Extension, surveyed 668 high school students, college students and young people (under the age of 40). An evaluation of the results identified four opportunities to attract and retain young people on the range. The community created four work-groups to address each of these opportunities. These four work-groups created the structure of the Gogebic Range Next Generation Initiative to attract and retain young people.

Research Base:

Rebecca Ryan, Live First, Work Second (2007)

Richard Florida, The Rise of the Creative Class (2002)

Richard Florida, Who’s Your City? (2008)

Malcolm Gladwell, The Tipping Point (2000)

Jack Schultz, Boomtown USA (2004)

Michigan Cool Cities Survey (2002)

Gogebic Range Location Decision Making Survey (2008)

Youth Asset Report (2000 and 2009)

Next Generation Initiative Work-Groups

Attract Young Workers by Strengthening Our Niche

Rationale: Young people are moving to the Gogebic Range because of its nature-based outdoor recreation niche. If this niche is further strengthened, even more young people will choose to move to the range and those who already live here will be more likely to stay. Other age groups are also attracted to this nature-based outdoor recreation niche, including retirees and people with families. By strengthening this niche, the community will also support the area's tourism-based economy.

Research Base: John Kretzmann and John McKnight, Building Communities from the Inside Out (1993)

Attract Young Workers by Promoting Our Strengths

Rationale: We already have in place many quality of life factors that young people are looking for in a place to live, especially those who want to live in a small town or a rural area, including scenic beauty, safety, affordability and a good place to raise children. In order to attract more young people to the community, we should promote these positive attributes.

Research Base: Philip Kotler, Donald Haider, Irving Rein, Marketing Places (1993)

Retain Students by Better Connecting Them to the Community

Rationale: Very few of our high school and college students plan on staying or returning to the Gogebic Range. Even fewer perceive the community as a good place to live for people in their 20's and 30's. Students generally do not feel valued by the community, do not feel connected to the community and do not value the community's assets. To encourage more of our students to stay in the community (or return some day), we should work to better connect them to the community.

Research Base: Patrick Carr and Maria Kefalas, "The Rural Brain Drain" (2009)

Retain Young Workers by Building Social Capital

Rationale: Many young people are moving to the Gogebic Range because of its nature-based outdoor recreation niche. However, many of these young people are not finding friends in the community and then choose to leave. By building better social capital, it is expected that more of these young transplants will choose to stay in the community to live and to raise their own families.

Research Base: Robert Putnam, Bowling Alone (2000)

Strengthening Our Niche Work-group

Mission: “To strengthen the nature-based outdoor recreation niche of the Gogebic Range in order to attract young people to the range”

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Long</i>
<p>What We Invest:</p> <p>Work-group members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local government • Businesses • User groups • Public <p>Volunteer time</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>Research of ways to strengthen niche</p> <p>GIS technology</p> <p>Trail and route maps</p>	<p>What We Do:</p> <p>Develop, share and promote mapped vision for community-wide trail system</p> <p>Outreach to community regarding benefits of strengthening our niche</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases • Public presentations 	<p>Who We Reach:</p> <p>Local governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected officials • Parks and recreation departments • Planning commissions • Downtown development groups • Economic development groups <p>Chambers of commerce</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Civic and user groups</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Public</p> <p>Young adults</p>	<p>Changes in Learning:</p> <p>Heightened awareness of our nature-based outdoor recreation niche</p> <p>Better understanding of the benefits of strengthening our niche</p>	<p>Changes in Action:</p> <p>Resolutions of support for mapped vision</p> <p>Incorporation of mapped vision into community development plans</p> <p>Communities obtain internal and external funding for development of trail system</p> <p>Trail is developed, maintained and promoted</p>	<p>Changes in Conditions:</p> <p>More young people move to the Gogebic Range and stay on the Gogebic Range</p> <p><i>Leading to...</i></p> <p>Increased number of young people living on the Gogebic Range</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p>Reverse decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range</p>

<p>Assumptions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The community will support the effort to strengthen our niche if they understand the benefits of the nature-based outdoor recreation niche. 2. If we strengthen our niche, more young adults will move and stay here.

<p>External Factors</p> <p>Public and institution support; internal and external funding; long-term maintenance of trails; long-term promotional support</p>

Promoting Our Strengths Work-group

Mission: “To promote the existing strengths of the Gogebic Range in order to attract young people to the range”

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Long</i>
<p>What We Invest:</p> <p>Work-group members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chambers of commerce • Local Government • Economic development groups • Businesses • Public <p>Volunteer time</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>Research of area's marketable community strengths</p> <p>Promotional materials</p>	<p>What We Do:</p> <p>Develop and maintain web-site to promote region as a place to live and work</p> <p>Develop and distribute promotional materials connecting people to the web-site</p> <p>Develop and distribute materials promoting the region as a place to live and work – both locally and out-of-area</p>	<p>Who We Reach:</p> <p>Young adults</p> <p>Chambers of commerce</p> <p>Local governments</p> <p>Economic development groups</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Civic groups</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Public</p>	<p>Changes in Learning:</p> <p>Heightened awareness of community's strengths</p> <p>Better understanding of the benefits of promoting our strengths</p> <p>Greater awareness of marketing tools and resources</p> <p>More awareness among chambers regarding the benefits of working together</p>	<p>Changes in Action:</p> <p>Targeted market (young people who want to live in a small town with our attributes) will access web-site, review related promotional materials and consider moving to the Gogebic Range</p> <p>Increased cooperation among area chambers of commerce</p>	<p>Changes in Conditions:</p> <p>More young people move to the Gogebic Range from someplace else</p> <p><i>Leading to...</i></p> <p>Increased number of young people living on the Gogebic Range</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p>Reverse decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range</p>

Assumptions

1. Area chambers of commerce will work together to promote the region as a place to live and work if they understand that we offer what many young adults are looking for in a place to live.
2. More young adults will move to the community if they are aware of its assets.

External Factors

Support from chambers of commerce and businesses; internal and external funding; long-term maintenance of web-site and promotional materials

Retaining Our Students Work-group

Mission: “To better connect high school and college students to the community in order to encourage them to stay on – or return to - the Gogebic Range”

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Long</i>
<p>What We Invest:</p> <p>Work-group members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-12 Schools • Gogebic Community College • UW and MSU Extension • Businesses • Public <p>Volunteer time</p> <p>Staff time</p> <p>Research of successful ways in which other communities have connected students to their community</p>	<p>What We Do:</p> <p>Outreach to the public and community groups regarding the importance of connecting students to the community</p> <p>Develop, fund, implement and maintain programs connecting students to the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service learning • Youth-in-governance • Connecting to “nature-based” outdoor recreation niche 	<p>Who We Reach:</p> <p>Students, parents, families</p> <p>Schools (K-12, colleges, university extension)</p> <p>Asset development groups</p> <p>Chambers of commerce</p> <p>Local governments</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Civic groups</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Public</p>	<p>Changes in Learning:</p> <p>Students will understand that adults in the community care about them and value their contribution</p> <p>Better understanding that area students do not plan on living here (or returning)</p> <p>Better understanding that area students do not feel “connected” to the community</p> <p>Better understanding of how we can connect students to the community</p>	<p>Changes in Action:</p> <p>Students actively participate in programs that will make them feel more connected to the community</p> <p>Increased collaboration between youth service organizations, schools and other community groups</p>	<p>Changes in Conditions:</p> <p>More area students stay on the Gogebic Range or return some day</p> <p><i>Leading to...</i></p> <p>Increased number of young people living the Gogebic Range</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p>Reverse decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range</p>

<p>Assumptions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth organizations will collaborate to better connect students to the community if they understand that students are leaving the area because they don’t feel connected. 2. If students feel connected to the community, they will be more likely to stay or return.

<p>External Factors</p> <p>Support from schools and other youth service organizations; on-going program and financial support</p>
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Building Social Capital Work-group (Go-In Forward Group)

Mission: “To offer social networking opportunities to young people living on the Gogebic Range in order to encourage them to stay”

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Long</i>
<p>What We Invest:</p> <p>Go-In Forward leaders</p> <p>Promotional materials</p>	<p>What We Do:</p> <p>Provide social activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nightlife • Outdoor recreation • Cultural activities <p>Conduct promotional activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wage advertising campaigns • Distribute brochures and business cards • Maintain Facebook page • Deliver E-mail reminders 	<p>Who We Reach:</p> <p>Participation in social activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All adults <p>Participation in promotional activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome wagon • Chambers of commerce • Media • Schools • Realtors 	<p>Changes in Learning:</p> <p>Transplants understand that there are other young adults in the community that share their interests</p> <p>Transplants feel more “at home”</p>	<p>Changes in Action:</p> <p>Young adults participate in social and networking activities</p> <p>Young adults create new friendships</p> <p>Young adults connect more strongly to the community</p>	<p>Changes in Conditions:</p> <p>More young adults choose to stay on the Gogebic Range</p> <p><i>Leading to...</i></p> <p>Increased number of young people living on the Gogebic Range</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p>Reverse decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range</p>

Assumptions

1. The community will support social and networking opportunities if they understand that young adults are leaving the area because they don't feel connected.
2. If young adults build social connections with others, they will be more likely to stay in the community.

External Factors

On-going financial and institutional support from community participants

Overall Effort

Mission: “To attract and retain young people to reverse the decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range”

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Long</i>
What I Invest: Time Thought Research Educational Materials Technology (e-mail lists and web-site)	What I Do: Small-group presentations Public presentations One-on-one counseling Community outreach Prepare presentation materials Prepare and release media information Maintain and promote web-site	Who I Reach: Work-group leaders Work-group members Beautiful Northwoods Group (the “mentor” group) Community leaders Public	Changes in Learning: <u>Structural Frame</u> Community understands rationale for the creation of the four work-groups and how they can help grow the community <u>Human Resource Frame</u> Work-group leaders enhance their leadership and organizational development skills, become more confident in their abilities and become more motivated <u>Political Frame</u> Community leaders understand the importance of the initiative's proposals in helping to grow the community <u>Symbolic Frame</u> Community fully understands the vision of the initiative and gains greater enthusiasm for it	Changes in Action: <u>Structural Frame</u> All four work-groups are in place, are strong, supported and well-financed <u>Human Resource Frame</u> Work-groups leaders provide excellent leadership and organizational support to their groups <u>Political Frame</u> Community leaders support NGI initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolutions of support • Inclusion in budgets • Inclusion in plans • Grant-writing <u>Symbolic Frame</u> Create and share a compelling “story” for the future of the community Create an image to instill pride and optimism in the community	Changes in Conditions: Structural, human resource, political and symbolic frames of the Gogebic Range Next Generation Initiative are in place to attract and retain young people on the Gogebic Range <u>Leading to...</u> Increased number of young people living on the Gogebic Range and Reverse decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range

Assumptions: Using all four organizational frames will enhance the likelihood that the NGI will be successful in meeting its mission to attract and retain young people.

Source: Bolman and Deal Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership (2008)

External Factors: Continued investment of time by work-group leaders and participants

Continued financial, organizational, political and networking support from key community leaders and institutions

Outcome Measures

Strengthening Our Niche Workgroup

Outcomes	Who	What	When
<u>Short-term Changes in Learning:</u>			
Heightened awareness of our nature-based outdoor recreation niche	NGI participants and the public	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
Better understanding of the benefits of strengthening our niche	NGI participants and the public	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
<u>Medium-term Changes in Action:</u>			
Resolutions of support for mapped vision	Local governments	Key informant interviews with government officials	2011
Incorporation of mapped vision into community development plans	Local governments	Key informant interviews with government officials	2012
Communities obtain internal/external funding for development of trail system	Local governments	Key informant interviews with government officials	2015
Trail is developed, maintained and promoted	Local governments	Key informant interviews with government officials	2020
<u>Long-term Changes in Conditions:</u>			
More young people move to the Gogebic Range and stay on the Gogebic Range	Target market	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
		Key informant interviews with realtors, and chamber and school officials	2012
		Census data	2010, 2020

Outcome Measures

Promoting Our Strengths Workgroup

Outcomes	Who	What	When
<u>Short-term Changes in Learning:</u>			
Heightened awareness of community's strengths	NGI participants and the public	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
Better understanding of the benefits of promoting our strengths	NGI participants and the public	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
Greater awareness of marketing tools and resources	Workgroup members Chambers	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants Key informant interviews with chamber officials	2010 2012
Heightened awareness among chambers regarding benefits of working together	Chambers	Key informant interviews with chamber officials	2012
<u>Medium-term Changes in Action:</u>			
Targeted market will access web-site, review related promotional materials and consider moving to the Gogebic Range	Target market	Web-site hits Key informant interviews with realtors, and chamber and school officials	2011 2012
Increased cooperation among area chambers of commerce	Chambers	Key informant interviews with chamber officials	2012
<u>Long-term Changes in Conditions:</u>			
More young people move to the Gogebic Range from someplace else	Target market	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants Key informant interviews with realtors, and chamber and school officials Census data	2010 2012 2010, 2020

Outcome Measures

Retaining Our Students Workgroup

Outcomes	Who	What	When
<u>Short-term Changes in Learning:</u>			
Students will understand that adults in the community care about them and value their contribution	Local students	Student asset building survey	2014
Better understanding that students do not plan on living here (or returning)	NGI participants and the public	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
Better understanding that students do not feel “connected” to the community	NGI participants and the public	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
Better understanding of how we can connect students to the community	NGI participants and the public	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
<u>Medium-term Changes in Action:</u>			
Students actively participate in programs that will make them feel more connected to the community	Local students	Program counts and participant surveys	2011
Increased collaboration between youth service organizations, schools and other community groups	Youth service organizations, schools and community groups	Key informant interviews with youth-service, school and community group officials	2012
<u>Long-term Changes in Conditions:</u>			
More area students stay on the Gogebic Range or return some day	Local students	Student asset building survey Census data	2014 2010, 2020

Outcome Measures

Building Social Capital Workgroup (Go-In Forward Group)

Outcomes	Who	What	When
<u>Short-term Changes in Learning:</u>			
Transplants understand that there are other young adults in the community that share their interests	Young transplants	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
Transplants feel more “at home”	Young transplants	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
<u>Medium-term Changes in Action:</u>			
Young adults participate in social and networking activities	Local, young adults	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
Young adults create new friendships	Local, young adults	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
Young adults connect more strongly to the community	Local, young adults	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
<u>Long-term Changes in Conditions:</u>			
More young adults choose to stay on the Gogebic Range	Local, young adults	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants Census data	2010 2010, 2020

Outcome Measures

Overall Gogebic Range Next Generation Initiative

Outcomes	Who	What	When
<u>Short-term Changes in Learning</u>			
Greater understanding of how we can create a community more attractive to young people	NGI participants	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
New skills have been learned (e.g. leadership, presentation, organizational)	NGI participants	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
<u>Medium-term Changes in Action</u>			
Perceptions of the Gogebic Range have improved	NGI participants and the public	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants	2010
New collaborations, partnerships and projects have developed	NGI participants and community groups	Zoomerang survey of NGI participants Key informant interviews with community group officials	2010 2012
<u>Long-term Changes in Conditions:</u>			
Increased number of young people living on the Gogebic Range	Local young adults and students	Census Data	2010, 2020
Reverse decades-long population decline of the Gogebic Range	Local residents	Census Data	2010, 2020