

# CITY OF Houghton

Our roadmap || 2021



All smart marketing plans are driven by research and stakeholder input. During the formal marketing process, we will engage the community and work to leverage our existing assets.

We will follow the recommended Redevelopment Ready Communities process.

## Research & Discovery

- Identify a champion
- Engage with community partners
- ✓ Conduct audit of existing assets
- ✓ Conduct identity audit
- Develop SWOT analysis
- Define target audience

## Development

- Develop goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics
- Define core messages
- Leverage visual assets
- Market priority sites
- Format the plan

## Implementation

- Develop marketing calendar
- Develop plan and create budget to execute plan
- Build tools and processes

## Track & Measure

- Evaluate all strategies and tactics
- Update marketing plan

## **THE OPPORTUNITIES**

The City of Houghton is in an uncommonly strong position to grow our population, attract talent and businesses, and strengthen our local economy. Timing has never been more important for us to leverage our assets and strengths as a community:

### **REMOTE WORK TREND**

The City of Houghton offers a unique lifestyle not found anywhere else in the Midwest, but the city population is experiencing only incremental increases. The remote workforce that has emerged during COVID presents a short window in which to attract working professionals who are looking for a more desirable lifestyle. Additionally, the city's public schools are nationally ranked in the top 5%, making Houghton attractive for families. The city is already experiencing the benefits from this trend, drawing new families and quickly increasing real estate values.

### **A GROWING UNIVERSITY**

The community's greatest asset is Michigan Tech University. The university has grown the student population to over 7,500. Along with that growth, they have attracted faculty and staff. MTU's aggressive growth goals in the upcoming years could increase the population to more than 10,000 students. The city brand, experience, and marketing are crucial elements of the student and faculty attraction process for Michigan Tech.

Our goal is to continue to grow job opportunities that will keep students in the community after graduation. Companies like GS Engineering, Calumet Electronics, ThermoAnalytics, Orbion Space Technology, and Signature Research are all growing and in need of engineering talent.

## THE OPPORTUNITIES

### HIGH-TECH BUSINESSES START HERE

MTEC SmartZone, one of Michigan's top-performing SmartZones, in partnership with Michigan Tech, continues to commercialize technologies coming out of the university. In the past 10 years, the 83 companies they serve have created 484 jobs. The MTEC SmartZone team has brought significant value to the local ecosystem with programs and services that are growing our companies. This type of programming will create opportunities to attract companies, fuel job growth, and retain a high-tech workforce.

However, the city lacks a strategy to leverage MTEC SmartZone to attract, grow, and create new businesses. Additionally, our retail and service communities and start-ups lack affordable, quality support and resources to start and grow new businesses.

### INNOVATION SHORE & OUR HIGH-TECH COMMUNITY

In 2018, community leaders representing Michigan Tech, the business community, and government worked together to create a brand called Innovation Shore. The purpose of the brand was to position the region as a place where professionals in STEM fields can enjoy a unique lifestyle and work professionally.

However, our primary goal with the brand was to attract businesses that could gain quick access to research at Michigan Tech and attract brilliant engineers from the university. While the Innovation Shore brand continues to exist with a web presence, it lacks funding and a sustainability plan. A smart marketing strategy will allow the city to develop a process and plan to leverage the brand.

## THE OPPORTUNITIES

### DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

In the past year, the city was able to attract a developer willing to make a \$50 million investment in the community. This project has been postponed for additional planning, but this process reinforced the fact that we are an attractive community for investors and developers.

The addition of three new hotels in downtown Houghton is another example of the city's ability to attract private investment.

Despite these private investment examples, the city struggles to create business development and attraction strategies because we lack detailed data that articulates community needs.

### BRAND CONFUSION

The City of Houghton lacks a cohesive brand strategy. As a result, everything — from too many logo variations on signs to inconsistent messaging — is holding us back from progress.

A smart branding process, driven by research and opportunities, will build on our assets and set the stage for immediate and long-term ROI.

Strategy

Action items

Develop a unified brand strategy.

- Engage with a marketing agency with economic and community development experience to develop a brand that is defined with research, community input, positioning, relevant messaging, and an identity. Support the brand with a marketing plan that enhances the city's overall value to attract, retain, and grow businesses and people.
- Connect the new city branding to downtown and all aspects of the city.
- Develop a strategy to execute the new marketing plan, supported by a budget.

Maintain and grow a thriving business community that attracts public and private investment.

- Develop a public and media relations plan (aimed at public funding sources and private developers) with success stories of local projects that promotes the city as a friendly place to do business.
- Partner with the Chamber and CVB to create and launch a unified local content calendar that promotes events, businesses, downtown, the waterfront, and living opportunities.
- Identify the community's most needed business types.
- Partner with regional and state economic development groups to promote the city's assets to site selectors.

Attract students, families and remote workers to live here.

- Promote lifestyle advantages, including higher ed, top-ranked public education, arts and culture, entertainment, access to everything outdoors, and diversity of housing,
- Leverage "Innovation Shore" branding platform to attract a younger demographic to the community.
- Partner with Michigan Tech University, MTEC SmartZone, KEDA, and local businesses to develop a plan that encourages local student interns, graduating students, and alumni to seek job opportunities locally.

Shape how visitors and residents experience Houghton.

- Write online marketing strategy that elevates the City of Houghton's online presence, optimized and targeted to outdoor adventure (both silent and motorized sports) seekers.
- Implement strategies that cross-promote tourism and lifestyle advantages.
- Develop a unified signage program to promote landmarks across the city.
- Launch a public media relations and content program to get Houghton featured or highlighted in travel blogs and magazines.

Strengthen an entrepreneurial community to start new business.

- Maintain strong partnership with MTEC SmartZone and KEDA to develop goals, support systems, and resources to encourage new business growth, with a focus on retail and service businesses.
- Develop a business attraction strategy for downtown Houghton aimed at job creation and retail development which promotes mixed use and a diverse population.

## WORKFORCE

According to the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB), as of March 2021 Houghton County has a labor force of 15,855 people, 95% of which are employed. The area's biggest employers (50+ employees) include:

### Education

- Michigan Technological University
- Local Public Schools & ISD
- BHK Development

### Healthcare

- Aspirus Hospital
- UP Health
- Bridge View Nursing Home

### Private Sector

- Calumet Electronics (advanced circuit board manufacturers)
- Braveworks (holding company for real estate, construction and retail brands)
- Campioni Enterprises (grocery and hardware retail)
- Econo Foods (grocery retail)
- Midwest Loan Services (mortgage company)
- ThermoAnalytics (engineering)
- GS Engineering (engineering)
- Northern Hardwoods (mill)
- Horner Flooring (sports flooring)
- McDonalds (retail)
- Moyle Construction (construction)
- Walmart (retail)
- Warm Rain (plastic plumbing fixtures)

### Community Service

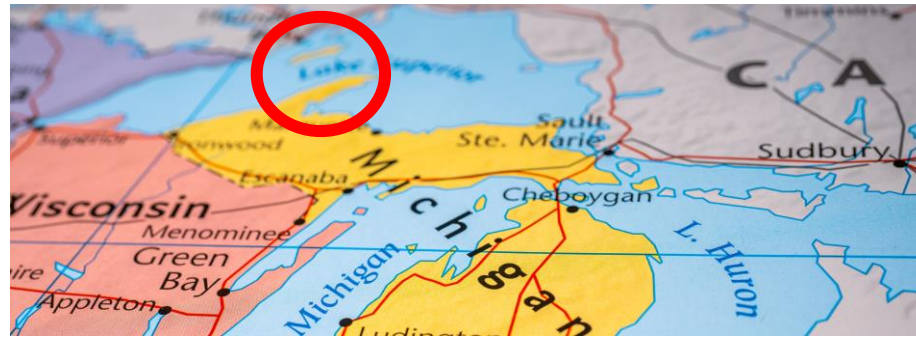
- Houghton County Corrections
- Copper Country Mental Health

## WORKFORCE

While Houghton's workforce is diverse, the majority of the people are working in the following fields:

- K-12 and higher education
- Engineering
- Construction
- Retail
- Hospitality
- Manufacturing



**LOCATION****HOUGHTON, MI**

Houghton is the heart of the Keweenaw Peninsula, which is surrounded by Lake Superior. Our remoteness, ruggedness, and panoramic views are what make Houghton the most unique place to live and visit in the Midwest — hands down.

100% of the people who visit Houghton and the Keweenaw Peninsula intentionally visit here. No one passes through Houghton on their way to somewhere else.

And while we're close to both everywhere and nowhere, the people who live here enjoy an average commute time of 17 minutes and can hop on a 45-minute flight to Chicago.

The Keweenaw Peninsula is home to three national parks, including Isle Royal National Park Headquarters, which is located in downtown Houghton. The 18,000+ visitors to the island arrive there via ferry or by small planes, the majority arrive through Houghton.

## SPACE

Houghton offers more waterfront and recreation opportunities than any other city in Michigan. The city is a historical waterfront community built on a picturesque hillside facing our sister city of Hancock. It is located on Portage Canal which provides community members and visitors public access to:

- 9.5 miles of waterfront walking trails that turn into snowmobile trails in winter
- 675-acre in-town summer and winter trail system with +100 km of biking, hiking and ski trails
- 27 public park areas — all unique and within a few miles of downtown
- 115-acre in-town access to Nara Nature Trails, connected to 21 miles of MTU trails and several hundred more miles in neighboring communities
- Keweenaw Waterway and Lake Superior for boating, paddling, fishing and recreation
- Ray Kestner waterfront park and outdoor event space
- East Houghton Skatepark and pavilion
- Historical Dee Stadium, home to professional hockey museum
- Diverse topography and panoramic views from everywhere

Cont.



**SPACE**

- Snow! Houghton is the 2<sup>nd</sup> snowiest city in America, with an average of +230 inches of powder a year
- Bridgeview Park with a view of the Portage Lake Lift Bridge
- Downtown Houghton — filled with sitting areas and other public areas
- 2 public beaches
- Waterfront kids' play area, "Chutes & Ladders"
- 5 free boat access points for 50+ boats of all sizes, including commercial docking
- Electric car charging stations
- Portage Paddle Sports — kayak and stand up paddle board rentals which attract thousands to the waterfront for recreation
- Waterfront RV park that packs in tourists from Memorial Day to Labor Day
- ATV/UTV trail-to-bridge access and escorts so that residents and visitors can travel through Houghton to hundreds of miles of trails throughout the Keweenaw Peninsula.
- A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum at Michigan Tech University
- Carnegie Museum
- Pewabic Street Community Garden
- GeoTour that identifies 30 sites in and around the city that explain the unique and natural history of the area

**INCENTIVES &  
FUNDING  
SUPPORT**

Houghton offers several funding opportunities to small businesses and start-ups as a strategy to attract and grow local small businesses:

- DDA mini-façade grants between \$2,500 - \$5,000
- Low-interest Revolving Loan Fund (\$500K) used for building renovations and expansion costs for existing businesses. Additionally, the loan can be used for start-up costs. Loans range from \$5,000 – \$100,000.

The city partners with Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance (KEDA) to facilitate funding and grants through many economic development organizations, including MEDC, SBA, Northern Initiatives, and local banks.

Additionally, one of Michigan's top performing SmartZones has three locations in Houghton. Since MTEC SmartZone was chartered in 1999, more than 500 jobs have been created by over 55 new companies. MTEC SmartZone is the city's greatest asset for technology start-ups.

MTEC SmartZone offers start-up programming and support and facilitates funding programs for MEDC and other economic development organizations.

The city employs a business development person who connects existing and potential new companies to resources they need to grow business. These connections include business services and financing. This person also coordinates downtown activities.

**MARKET  
FACTS**

Houghton and its surrounding communities have proven to be resilient against national and statewide economic trends. Everything from real estate to employment statistics tend to remain flat. While DTMB does not publish specific city market data for Upper Peninsula towns, the following market data and trends are for Houghton County.

Our local economy is stable thanks to a diversity of business types and sizes. Michigan Tech, which employs 1,600 people, is the largest employer and a key driver of our local economy. They have a 30-year track record of increasing revenues and enrollment. Michigan Tech has experienced year-after-year growth for more than three decades.

Healthcare and manufacturing also make up a large percentage of employment and industry in Houghton County. Healthcare alone provides 1,800 local jobs and a higher average weekly wage.

Tourism and the retail trade provide over 3,000 jobs a year.

For over 30 years, Houghton's labor force has remained stronger than national and statewide averages growing 3–5% annually.

Additional highlights from the city's master plan include:

- With a population nearing 8,000, the diversity in age, race, and ethnicity in the city differentiates our community as compared to Houghton County.
- The number of housing units and households in the city has steadily increased.
- In the 2010 Census, the median family income in the city was \$56,146.
- The Michigan Tech Enterprise Corporation (MTEC) SmartZone continues to grow and develop high-tech jobs and entrepreneurial endeavors.
- Population growth is the most important factor influencing land use decisions. If the population of a community is growing, there will be a need for more housing, roads, commerce, industry, parks and recreation, and public services and facilities.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Much of the city's economic growth and quality of life is fueled by critical existing hard and soft infrastructure.

### Critical & Hard Infrastructure

- Portage Lift Bridge
- Well-maintained MDOT highway
- Houghton County Airport
- Waterway canal for large commercial transportation
- New constructed sewage and drainage
- Regular maintenance of waterfronts
- Modernized power and energy infrastructure
- Telecommunications infrastructure including high-speed and Wi-Fi
- Western Upper Peninsula Health Department

### Soft Infrastructure

- City of Houghton staff and council
- City of Houghton DDA
- City of Houghton planning commission
  
- Houghton County Commission
- City of Houghton Police and UPSET Drug enforcement team
  
- Houghton Public Schools
- Copper Country ISD
- BHK
- Michigan Technological University
- Gogebic Community College
  
- Healthy city and county government budgets
- The region's largest bank with statewide resources

**HEALTHCARE**

The city of Houghton has two hospitals with multiple locations within the city. Both hospitals have emergency locations within 10 minutes of the city.

- Aspirus Hospital is a non-profit, community-directed health care organization based in Laurium, Mich., with clinics and outreach services in Laurium, Houghton and Lake Linden. Aspirus Keweenaw is part of the Aspirus, Inc. exclusive hospital and clinic network, which includes home health and hospice care, pharmacy, critical care, medical goods, and a philanthropic foundation.

Aspirus is a critical care hospital, with 24/7 access to emergency care and is supported by five clinic locations, including a new, multi-service clinic in Houghton. Aspirus has 27 practicing physicians across 15 specialties and 25 beds.

- UP Health System and its outlying clinics support a multi-specialty group of over 40 physicians and over a dozen allied health professionals. The main campus is a 36-bed hospital with ancillary services including the area's only Open Bore MRI, 64-slice CT Scanner, PACS, nuclear imaging, digital mammography, and other radiological and laboratory services.

Additional services include cardiopulmonary, certified sleep disorder center, regional dialysis unit, pharmacy, rehab, a 12/7 hospitalist program, home care and hospice, and a 60-bed senior living community. UP Health System – Portage is home to the first Level III ASC-verified trauma center and emergency department in the state, as well as an Express Care walk-in clinic.

**QUALITY  
OF LIFE**

Houghton's quality of life is our greatest competitive advantage, topping that of other Midwest communities. We offer business owners, along with their employees and families, plentiful opportunities to grow their companies and enhance their lifestyle. The climate is ideal for people who prioritize good, clean, and safe living over the hustle and frenzy of metropolitan conveniences.

In addition to the simple, relaxed lifestyle, Houghton offers residents a vast selection of homes — from modest to spectacular — in a region filled with natural beauty. They're also affordable: the average home listing in Houghton is \$164,000. Homebuyers can choose from spacious modern homes to rustic cabins in the woods surrounded by nature. Life on the water rules in Houghton. Lakefront luxuries include boat lifts and yacht stalls...and yes, seaplanes.

Traffic jams are non-existent and commutes average less than 17 minutes. You'll even see people travel to work by boat, kayak, bike, snow mobile, and ATV. Forty percent of the workforce walks to work or school.

Families can be confident that their children will receive a well-rounded education — Houghton Public Schools are ranked among the top 5 % in the nation. Local students have been robotics champions and quiz bowl winners. U.P. kids aren't just strong academically, they're strong in character as well, due to the close-knit communities and a deeply-rooted work ethic.



**QUALITY  
OF LIFE**

Every location in our city offers beautiful natural views, experiences, and amenities driven by our many cultural anchors, natural resources, and recreational opportunities. They include:

- Snow! Houghton is the 2<sup>nd</sup> snowiest city in the U.S., with an average of +230 inches of powder a year
- Bridgeview Park with a view of the Portage Lake Lift Bridge
- Downtown Houghton, which is filled with sitting areas and other public areas
- 2 public beaches
- Waterfront kids play area — “Shoots & Ladders”
- 5 free boat access points for 50+ boats of all sizes, including commercial docking
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**QUALITY  
OF LIFE**

- 9.5 miles of waterfront walking trails that turn into snowmobile trails in winter
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- Diverse topography and panoramic views from everywhere

**COST OF  
DOING  
BUSINESS**

The cost of doing business in Houghton is extremely competitive across the board:

Real Estate

- The city of Houghton has experienced a **32.17%** increase in taxable values in 10 years. That is confidently expected to increase much higher in the upcoming years.
- The cost of commercial real estate is often half the cost of real estate in other markets. Average business office real estate costs range from \$200-350K. Retail location rent options range from an average of \$800 to \$1,800 per month.
- MTEC SmartZone has three locations in Houghton that offer tech start-ups and new non-retail businesses affordable office and lab space as a temporary opportunity to help keep start-up costs down.

Workforce

The general workforce labor wages align with the low cost of housing (\$164,000 average property values) and modest cost of living.

The most common job groups, by number of people living in Houghton, MI, are:

- Education, Instruction & Library Occupations (553 people)
- Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations (292 people)
- Sales & Related Occupations (277 people).

Compared to other places, Houghton, MI has an unusually high number of residents working as:

- Architecture & Engineering Occupations (3.83 times higher than expected)
- Education, Instruction & Library Occupations (2.91 times)
- Life, Physical & Social Science Occupations (2.62 times).

**COST OF  
DOING  
BUSINESS**

Highest Paid Wages

The highest paid jobs held by residents of Houghton, MI, by median earnings are:

- Health Diagnosing & Treating Practitioners & Other Technical Occupations (\$53,611)
- Business & Financial Operations Occupations (\$40,909)
- Management, Business, & Financial Occupations (\$34,350)

Employment by Industries

The most common employment sectors for those who live in Houghton, MI, are:

- Educational Services (941 people)
- Retail Trade (380 people)
- Accommodation & Food Services (341 people)

**COST OF LIVING**

In addition to an unbeatable lifestyle, the cost of living is very competitive compared to other desirable communities:

	Houghton	Minneapolis	Metro Detroit	Seattle	San Francisco	Ann Arbor	Anchorage	Denver
Inexpensive Restaurant (1 meal)	\$12.00	\$15.00	\$11.00	\$15.00	\$16.50	\$11.00	\$19.00	\$15.00
Imported Beer	\$4.12	\$1.95	\$1.50	\$7.00	\$8.00	\$4.75	\$6.50	\$6.00
Bottled Water	\$1.25	\$1.33	\$1.15	\$1.62	\$1.91	\$1.31	\$2.17	\$1.46
Milk	\$2.38	\$2.60	\$2.53	\$3.23	\$4.25	\$2.49	\$4.00	\$2.88
Dozen Eggs	\$1.35	\$1.62	\$1.76	\$2.99	\$3.60	\$1.56	\$3.06	\$2.65
New Car	\$21,348.00	\$19,093.06	\$21,900.00	\$22,432.25	\$21,019.43	\$20,576.50	\$20,696.17	\$20,905.93
Utilities	\$162.50	\$132.46	\$161.33	\$152.675	\$107.37	\$161.33	\$228.79	\$109.32
Fitness Club (per month)	\$41.00	\$54.52	\$30.06	\$52.49	\$79.10	\$48.39	\$69.64	\$40.85
Pair of Jeans	\$38.50	\$47.50	\$38.87	\$50.00	\$60.09	\$36.86	\$43.54	\$47.51
1 bedroom rent downtown	\$575.00	\$1,436.74	\$1,119.29	\$1,979.46	\$3,365.87	\$1,450.00	\$1,194.74	\$1,621.30
3 bedroom rent downtown	\$1,000.00	\$2,827.78	\$1,814.29	\$3,549.12	\$5,705.56	\$2,887.50	\$1,945.50	\$2,769.48
1 bedroom rental	\$450.00	\$1,017.27	\$797.06	\$1,519.09	\$2,676.69	\$1,008.09	\$973.53	\$1,264.43
3 bedroom rental	\$800.00	\$1,701.27	\$797.06	\$1,519.09	\$2,676.69	\$1,008.09	\$973.53	\$1,264.43
Mortgage Interest Rate %	4.34%	4.21%	4.17%	4.30%	4.25%	4.17%	4.17%	4.30%
Per Gallon of gas (based on 1.3.19 prices)	\$2.17	\$1.91	\$1.79	\$2.91	\$3.49	\$1.99	\$2.89	\$1.94

**OTHER  
COMMUNITY  
PLANS**

Community Plans that focus on business and people attraction, visitors, and real estate developers include:

- [The City of Houghton Master Plan](#)
- [Keweenaw Economic Development Strategic Plan](#)
- [Regional CEDs plan](#)
- [Houghton County Market Analysis](#)
- [Michigan Tech Strategic Portrait of 2045](#)
- [2009 City of Houghton Marketing Plan](#)
- [Winter Cities Plan](#)
- [City of Houghton non-motorized transportation plan](#)
- [City of Houghton Zoning Map](#)

## PLACE

### Public Access

- Hands down the Midwest's most desirable lifestyle
- Well-preserved historical downtown located on the waterfront
- Hometown where professional hockey started
- 2 hockey stadiums, Dee and Michigan Tech
- Carnegie Museum
- Regional waterfront library
- A.E. Seaman Mineral museum at Michigan Tech
- Rosza Center for the Performing Arts
- Ray Kestner Waterfront Park and public beach
- Shoots and Ladders waterfront kids adventure park
- 13 neighborhood parks and 2 public outdoor ice rinks
- ½ mile waterfront boardwalk, fishing piers and public boat marina

**PLACE**

**Lifestyle & Adventure**

- 9.5 miles of waterfront walking trails from Chassell to Kestner Park
- Portage Canal & Lake Superior
- Diverse topography and panoramic views everywhere
- The second snowiest city in America, with over 230" of average powder a year
- School system rated in the top 5% in the country and 1% in the state
- Strong local arts and music community.
- Neighborhoods for everyone: waterfront, historical, and traditional
- A wide array of outdoor sports, from paddling and CCXing to snowmobiling and fishing
- Waterfront skatepark
- Mont Ripley ski hill
- Portage Lake Golf Course
- 115-acre Nara Nature Trails connected to 21 miles of MTU trails and several hundred more miles in neighboring communities



**LOCAL,  
REGIONAL &  
STATE  
PARTNERS**

The City of Houghton's success is due to its great local, regional, and state partners, including:

**Real estate agents**

- Century 21
- Statewide of Houghton
- ReMax Douglas Agency
- Northern Michigan Land Brokers

**Local businesses**

- UP Architects and Engineers
- Marketing Department, Inc.
- Industrial Graphics

**Local Community Groups**

- Keweenaw Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce
- Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance
- Houghton & Keweenaw Counties
- Downtown Houghton Business Group
- Houghton Rotary Club
- Keweenaw Trail Services
- Keweenaw Young Professionals
- Houghton Farmer's Market

**Regional Groups**

- InvestUP
- Western Upper Peninsula Planning Region
- MML

**Statewide Partners**

- MML
- MEDC

## CURRENT MARKETING ASSETS AND PERFORMANCE

The City of Houghton has some basic marketing and communication assets. While the majority of the city's successes cannot be measured, as communication becomes more electronic it will be possible to leverage those tools to better gauge communication strengths and weaknesses.

Prior to launching a new website in January 2021, we had no data. Since January we have collected the following website performance data:

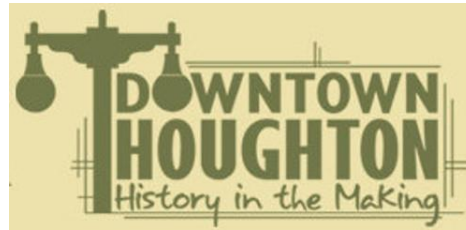
- Total 2021 YTD visits = 81,000
- Average monthly visits = 5,674
- Most visited pages
  - RV Park
  - Utilities, trash and recycling
  - City Council
  - Building, planning and zoning
- Bounce rate = 44.69%

Over the past few years the city has used Facebook to communicate city-related updates. Our greatest obstacle has been lack of human resources to manage the social media to grow our reach and promote the city. Some of our social media metrics include:

- Total Post Engagements 52% (2,219 average month)
- Total Post Reach 57% (5,499 average month)

**CURRENT  
MARKETING  
ASSETS AND  
PERFORMANCE**

The Downtown Houghton brand, “History in the Making” was successfully launched 10 years ago. The brand promotes downtown business and activities. The branding process allowed us to develop consistency from the website to signage, but the city has lacked human resources and budget to support any additional promotion.



**LOCAL &  
REGIONAL  
MARKETING  
EFFORTS**

Several local groups actively promote our area outside the region on a regular basis. These activities create credibility and visibility for Houghton:

**The Keweenaw Convention & Visitors (KCVB)**

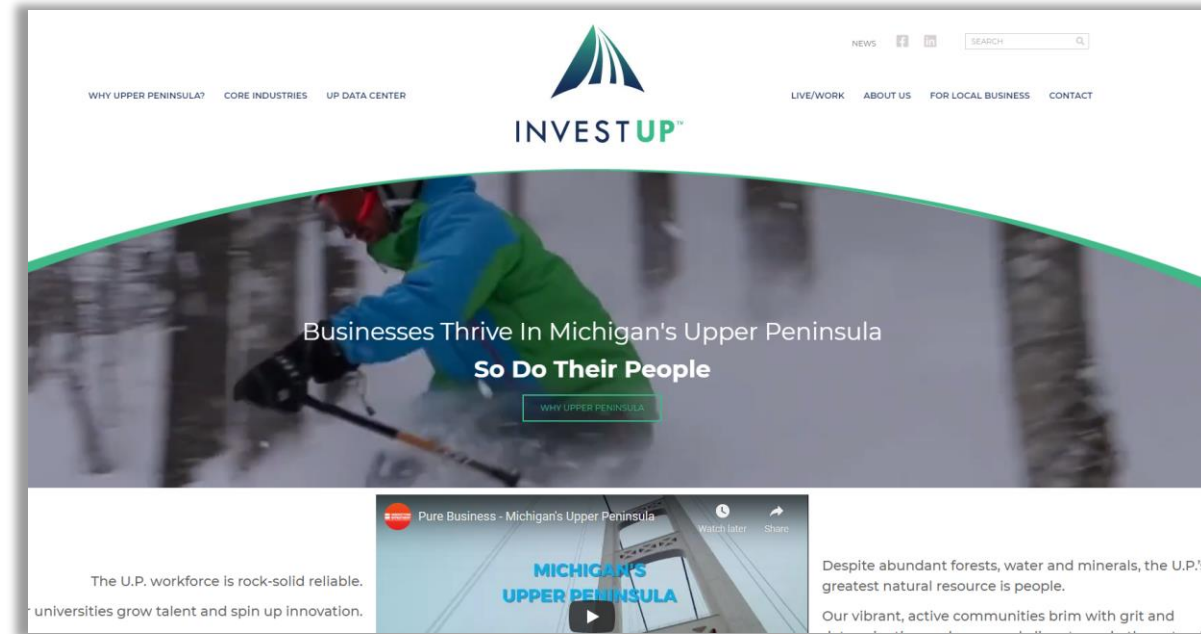
KCVB does an effective job of promoting the community to visitors with a limited budget. Because Houghton is the heart of the Keweenaw, the city is often the centerpiece of their advertising and public relations activities. There is a strong relationship and regular collaboration with the board and executive director. Additionally, we provide the KCVB with photography and other promotional assets.



**LOCAL &  
REGIONAL  
MARKETING  
EFFORTS**

**InvestUP**

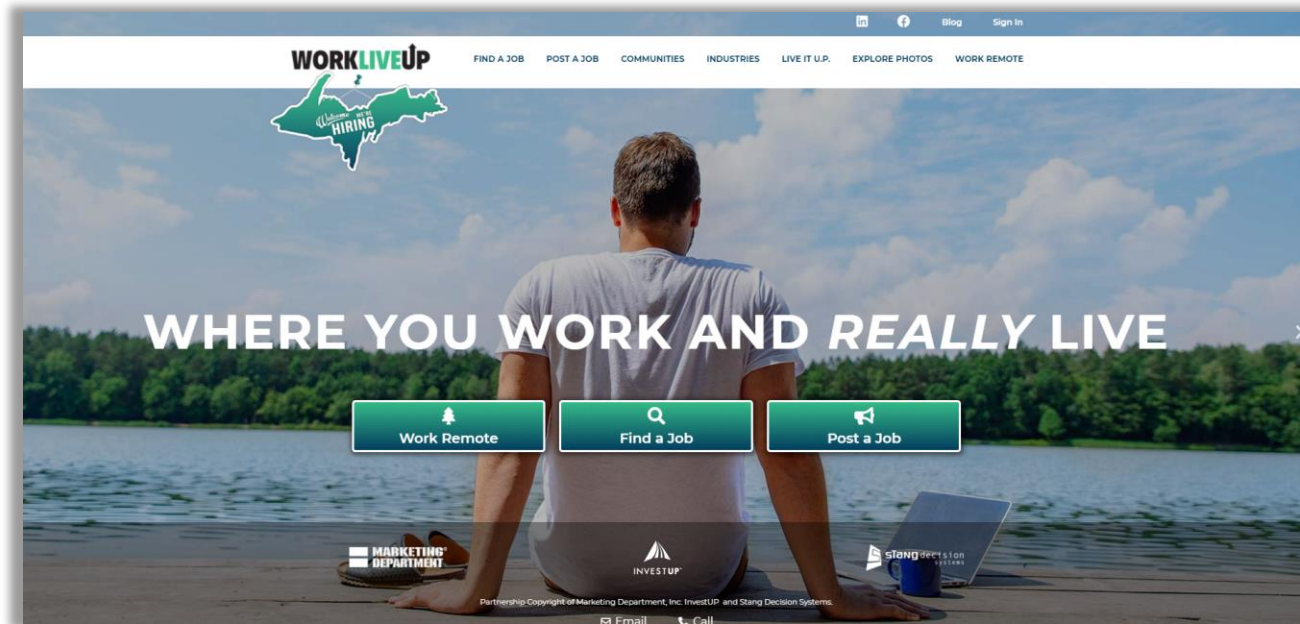
The Upper Peninsula's leading economic organization has a strong advertising and public relations program which is managed right out of Downtown Houghton. As the second largest economy and community in the region, Houghton is prominently featured to attract people and business to the area.



**LOCAL &  
REGIONAL  
MARKETING  
EFFORTS**

**WorkLiveUP**

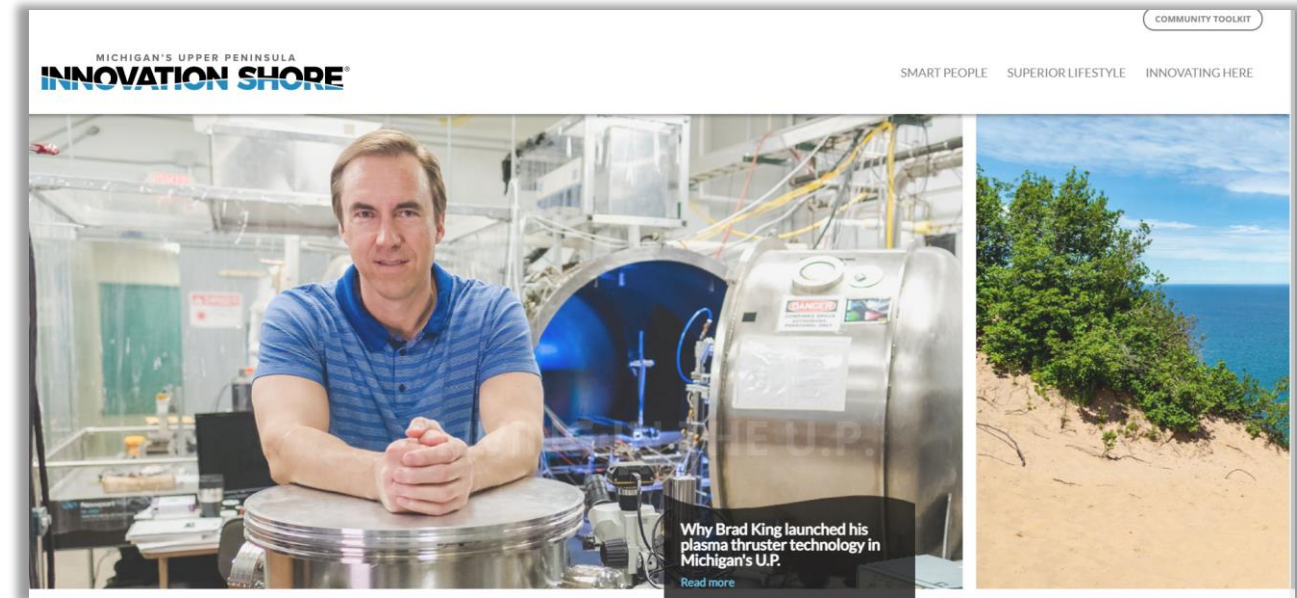
In addition to InvestUP promoting Houghton for business attraction and retention, we are featured in much of their talent attraction initiatives under the WorkLiveUP brand. We work closely with InvestUP on stories to promote our region.



**LOCAL &  
REGIONAL  
MARKETING  
EFFORTS**

**Innovation Shore**

Several years ago, the community was awarded a grant that allowed us to brand our region as Innovation Shore. Innovation Shore promotes our region's lifestyle to attract smart young professionals. It's also a tool and place for us to leverage copy, branding, and photo assets for our city's marketing. While the community lacks funding to promote the region, we leverage the marketing assets regularly.



**BUSINESS  
ASSETS**

Business Assets

- Michigan Technological University, which attracts people and students
- A business community, including several engineering companies, all growing and successful
- Thriving downtown, which today has only one empty storefront
- Busy shopping corridor that provides affordable goods and services to residents
- 3 downtown hotels that drive tourism traffic to local businesses
- 2 MTEC SmartZone incubator spaces located in downtown which have grown over 50 companies, resulting in more than 500 jobs



**RESIDENTS'  
CURRENT  
PERCEPTIONS**

One objective of our marketing process this year is to truly understand the current perceptions of the city. While we don't have hard to data, anecdotally the perceptions of residents are very consistent:

"We love where we live."

"We are safe and protected."

"A lifestyle free of urban noise and clutter gives you the room to think, innovate and be creative."

"We have a strong history, but need to look to the future."

"We have access to the nation's greatest trails."

"We are education-driven."

"This is the best place in America to raise children."

"Smart people live and move here — we are a STEM community."

"Houghton offers STEM professionals exciting professional opportunities and livability in a smart, safe, vacation-like setting."

"With the cost of living, you can live here more generously for less, in historical neighborhoods, remote cabins, lake-front homes or on your boat."

"Whether you hike, fish, bike or ski, chances are you're within five minutes of your preferred playground."

"As government and healthcare job sectors decline, STEM businesses and education are driving regional job opportunities."

**NEIGHBORING  
COMMUNITIES'  
PERCEPTIONS**

Houghton is the Upper Peninsula's second largest community and economy, following our "neighbor," Marquette, which is 100 miles down the road. We are considered "the main town" for the entire Western Upper Peninsula region.

Other communities perceive Houghton as the region's most beautiful area.

People in neighboring communities often refer to the people who live here as tougher, smarter, and more entrepreneurial than most U.P. and Midwest communities.

**COMMUNITY  
PRIDE**

Community pride in Houghton is stronger than in most cities in America.

Why? The city is not a place for everyone, but this community is proud of that idea. Living here requires a certain level of grit, determination, and strong sense of adventure.

The people the who live here believe:

- **EDUCATION IS EVERYTHING.**

Our region has the highest-ranked education system in the Midwest as listed in USA Today. We are committed to education, so we invest in our children and in our schools. And our commitment doesn't end with high school. We have leading-edge research universities too.

- **YOU SHOULD PLAY AS HARD AS YOU WORK**

With more than 1,000 miles of untouched shoreline and trails that span hundreds of miles, we live where most people dream of vacationing. A kayak lunch or afternoon mountain bike ride is right outside any door.

- **220" OF SNOW IS NOT NEARLY ENOUGH.**

The ruggedness, remoteness, and snow are as extreme as the people who live here. We crave adventure and fresh air — they feed our innovation.

- **OUR COMMUNITY IS EXTENDED FAMILY. OUR NEIGHBORHOODS ARE SAFE.**

Houghton is one of America's last true, traditional, small and safe towns. We live where neighbors help each other out with no expectations. Community is family. Crime rates are among the lowest in the country.

**CURRENT  
LOGO**

When we rebrand this year, we will likely create a new and finalized logo as part of that process. Until a new logo is created, we have created a simple transition logo to reflect a new, brighter identity.



OLD LOGO



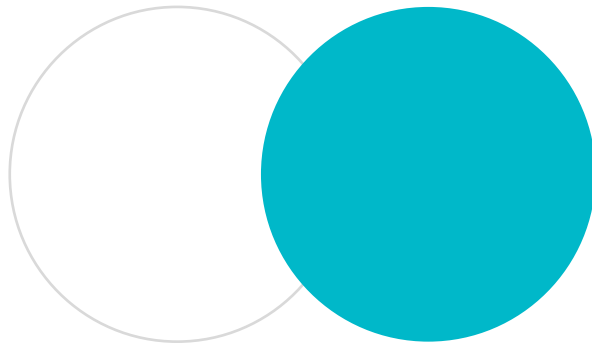
TRANSITION  
LOGO

*TO COME*

NEW LOGO

**CURRENT  
BRAND  
COLORS**

WATER & WINTER



**PRIMARY**

True White

RGB 0-184-201  
Hex #00B8C9

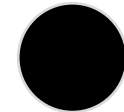
WELCOMING, INSPIRING & POSITIVE



**SECONDARY**

RGB 231-86-37    RGB 254-201-42    RGB 68-34-93  
Hex #E5625    Hex #FEC92A    Hex #44225D

BALANCE



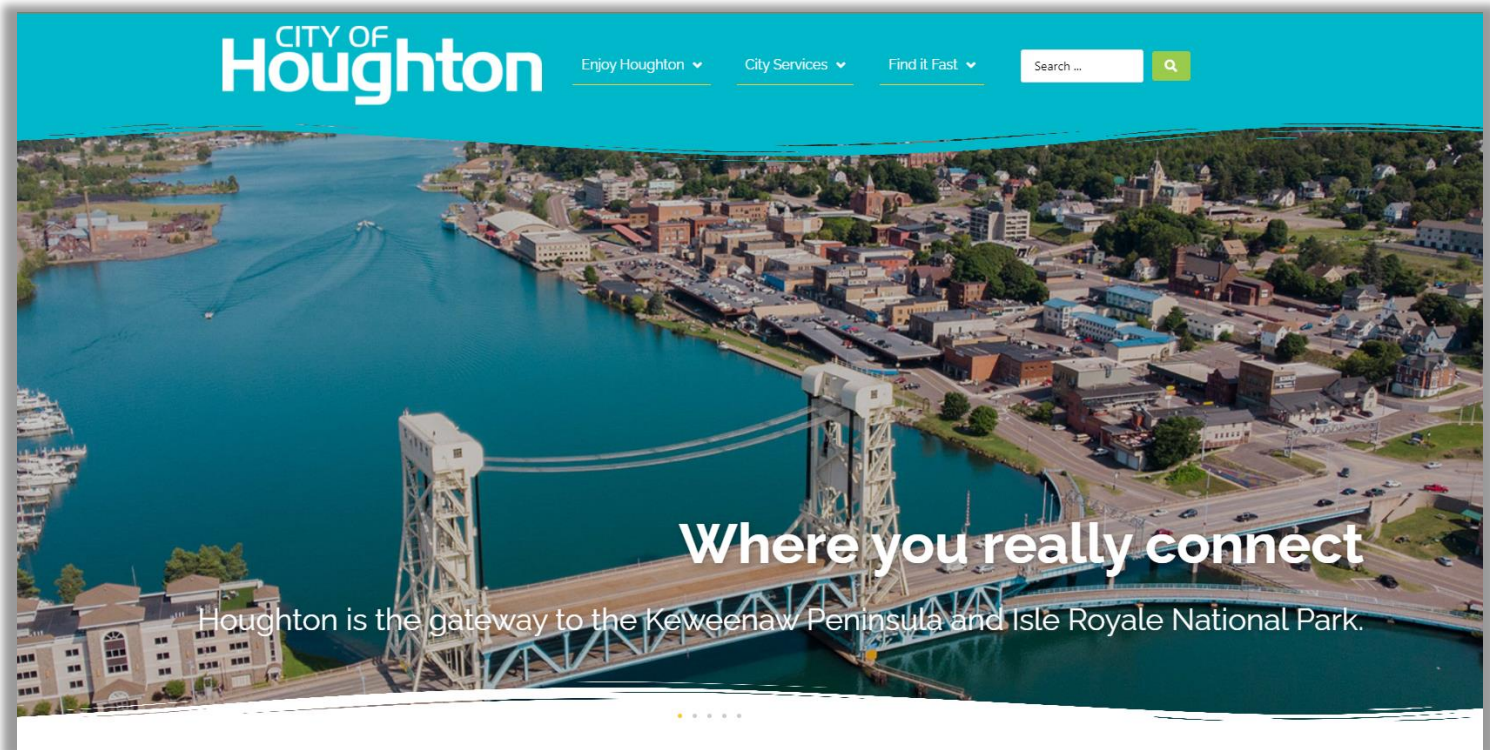
**ACCENT**

RGB 0-0-0  
Hex #000000

**Brand  
Guidelines**

While the city doesn't formally have brand guidelines, we are fortunate to have a national branding agency located in Downtown Houghton who helps ensure the city's brand remains consistent. It is a priority for us this year to formalize our brand guidelines, including the development of messaging.

We are currently transitioning our identity, project-by-project, and as the city budget allows to brighten up our city image. The starting point was the development of the new website which launched early in 2021. Since then we've taken the new color palette and started to integrated it into all of our marketing materials.



**VOICE**

**PERSONALITY**

Welcoming

Inspiring

Determined

Tough

Authentic

Positive

**TONE**

Confident

Direct

Informative

**PURPOSE**

Inform

Sell

Surprise

**LANGUAGE**

To the point

Approachable

Impactful