CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY

PARKS AND RECREATION DRAFT PLAN 2016 – 2021

Please review and return any comments by the end of the business day on Thursday, February 4, 2016.

Thank you !

INTRODUCTION

This Recreation Plan describes the parks system and recreation opportunities in the City of Traverse City and establishes goals, objectives and an overall vision for our community's parks and recreation future.

The City Parks and Recreation staff takes the lead in the direction of the planning process and the preparation of the City Recreation Plan with guidance from the City Parks and Recreation Commission and other City staff members.

This Parks and Recreation Plan is the result of a collaborative effort undertaken by the City of Traverse City's Parks and Recreation Commission and various City departments. The intent of this plan is to identify the current status of parks and recreation, the recreational needs of the community, and to develop priorities for Traverse City by evaluating the current available resources such as planning documents and public input.

The citizens of Traverse City have continually demonstrated their support for the maintenance and development of quality City parks and recreation facilities. Past surveys revealed strong local support in favor of continued development and maintenance of the existing facilities. Perceived as an essential component of the community, these facilities function both in meeting the needs of local residents and by providing a major attraction for tourism, which is Traverse City's most important industry.

For purposes of this plan, recreation can be defined as any activity that promotes the physical and/or mental well being of the person who is participating, and that provides relief from the routine and stress of everyday life. Recreational activities are often classified into two broad categories of "active" and "passive" involvement. Open space is defined simply as space that is not used for buildings or man-made structures. It can be air, land or water and is an area that is often used for recreational activities.

SECTION 1

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

This recreation plan has been developed for the City of Traverse City, located in Grand Traverse County 253 miles northwest of Detroit and 316 miles north of Chicago. The City's northern boundary is Lake Michigan's Grand Traverse Bay, a large bay divided by the Old Mission Peninsula. The southern tip of West Grand Traverse Bay is fully within the City of Traverse City. The western portion of the southern tip of East Grand Traverse Bay is also in the City limits. Situated in the Boardman River Valley, the City is surrounded by forested hills, cherry and apple orchards, vineyards, and numerous inland lakes along with a rapidly growing community that expands out into the surrounding townships. The area's beauty has historically attracted sportsmen and outdoor enthusiasts from southern Michigan as well as throughout the U.S.A. Prior to developing a reputation as a recreation and tourist area, this part of the state, as well as all of northern Michigan, based its economy on lumbering and to a lesser extent, agriculture. In the 1850's, the City bustled with the activity of several sawmills and related industries along with a great number of diversified businesses of the era until the lumbering industry waned at the turn of the 20th century.

Today, several downtown buildings and businesses are reminders of that era dating back a century or more. Among them are the City-owned Opera House, the Hannah - Lay Building, and the old State Bank building (now Fifth-Third Bank). Both have maintained the 19th century flavor while adding modern conveniences of the 21st century.

Preservation of Traverse City's historic buildings and homes is important to residents. Within walking distance of downtown, one may tour the well maintained historic neighborhoods and view some of the finest "lumbering era" architecture in Michigan.

A number of major events are held in the area reflecting the region's tie to its natural resource and agriculture base. Some of the best known events are the National Cherry Festival, the Bayshore Marathon, "The Iceman Cometh" mountain bike race, the M-22 Challenge, the North American Vasa Cross Country Ski Race and the Great Lakes Equestrian Festival. In addition, the area hosts a variety of sporting events including sail boat races, boat and car shows, golf championships, disc golf tournaments, skiing events, foot races, off road bicycle racing, and all variety of sports tournaments.

Unlike many communities the size of Traverse City, the area is not lacking in cultural and educational activities. World famous artists perform throughout the year and outdoor summer concerts are a highlight at the Interlochen National Music Camp and Arts Academy. The Traverse City Film Festival continues to gain in prominence and is becoming well known internationally. In addition, the Northwestern Michigan College Dennos Museum permanently houses an extensive collection of artwork and a children's discovery area, along with works by masters and regional artists. The school ship, Inland Seas, provides classes on West Grand Traverse Bay for school aged children.

Each year, many additional concerts, plays and special events such as art, antique, car and boat shows take place in the Traverse City area. Traverse City features the Traverse Symphony Orchestra, the Old Town Playhouse, and many other music and theater groups providing varied entertainment. The restored, historic State Theatre on Front St. and the Bijou By The Bay theatre, housed in the former Con Foster Museum Building in the City's Clinch Park, allow for both live theater and motion picture venues. Both of these are operated by the Traverse City Film Festival organization. The City Opera House has undergone major restoration including a grand entrance in a former store front and new dressing room.

The 2013 population estimate for Traverse City proper was 15,018. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of Traverse City population as of the 2010 census was 14,674. This was up slightly from the 2000 census figure of 14,532 and down from the 1990 figure of 15,155. The surrounding townships however, continue to grow at a rapid rate. Grand Traverse County has grown from the 1970 population of 31,975 to the 2014 estimate of 90,782. The 2010 census figure was 86,986, in 2000 it was 77,654 and the 1990 population was 64,273. This figure indicates an over 29% increase during this 24 year period. The City of Traverse City has provided parks and recreation facilities that have been under increasing pressure from use by the growing area population along with the tourist influx, especially in the summer months.

NATURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Enjoyment of recreation in the Traverse City area is due in large part to the abundance of natural and physical resources in the region. Certainly, this is true for boaters, swimmers, bikers, campers, bird-watchers, fishing enthusiasts, scuba divers, hikers, and both cross country and downhill skiers.

EAST AND WEST GRAND TRAVERSE BAYS (Lake Michigan)

The bays are the most important natural resource. Its shoreline is an area of great concern, particularly in light of development pressures it is exposed to daily. While much of the bay shore is privately owned, the bay itself is a public resource. It is used for fishing, sailing, boating, swimming, wind-surfing, diving, and simply viewing from the shore. There is a desire to link all the City bay front parks together, featuring trails, walkways, etc., with interpretive educational centers as part of the trail. Several historical and watershed educational stations have been added in the past few years. There also is a push to enhance shore-based fishing, with an emphasis on more public fishing without need for a boat. One location in the planning stage is at the mouth of the Boardman River where it empties into West Grand Traverse Bay.

Management of the City's shorelines and riparian areas must include protection and enhancement of fish habitat to improve this fishery. Another aspect that needs improving along the shore line is the placement of storm water drains. There continues to be enormous thought going into planning for these positive steps to lessen impact on the bays. Stormwater treatment devices have been installed in four parks to help reduce the amount of pollutants and sediments reaching the Boardman River and the Bays. Removing or controlling several invasive species of plants and animals is also at the forefront of environmental efforts. The re-establishment of native vegetation in some disturbed habitat areas is the best defense against the growth of invasive plants.

About half of Traverse City's shoreline is sandy beach. Other parts of the shoreline have been altered with protective shoreline measures from rock revetments to broken concrete slabs to steel sheet pilings.

BOARDMAN RIVER SYSTEM

The Boardman River passes through the City of Traverse City including Boardman Lake. This lake level is enhanced approximately nine feet by the Union Street Dam right in the center of the City. The lake and river both offer many recreational opportunities both land based and water based. With the bays so close at hand, Boardman Lake and River do not see the level of use that they would have if located in a community away from the Great Lakes. The potential is great for development of

facilities that will enhance the uses of the Boardman River system as it passes through the City.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

HIGHWAYS

Traverse City is served by US-31, M-37, M-72 and M-22 allowing highway access to the community from any direction. US-131, a limited access highway from Grand Rapids, does not directly tie into Traverse City but comes within 39 miles of servicing the community. Located at the head of Grand Traverse Bay, several highways converge in the City. This phenomenon results in considerable traffic along the City's waterfront, especially during the peak travel months. An extension of Hammond Road, completed in 2010, connects with Keystone Road and has provided another alternative to going to the waterfront to get across Traverse City.

The heavy traffic along Traverse City's waterfront brings many people in close proximity to the City's fine recreation opportunities along the bay. With most parking located away from the bay, the roads bearing that heavy traffic also tend to create physical and physiological barriers to safely reaching recreation facilities and also create environmental concerns with storm water runoff and pollutants. The City has attempted to reduce the barriers with a pedestrian tunnel under Grandview Parkway (US-31, M-72, M-22) at Cass Street, an underpass at the Murchie Bridge near Grandview and Front Street, an at grade crossings at Oak Street and Elwood Avenue, and signalized crossings of Grandview Parkway at Division, Union and Park Streets. The City continues to explore options for carrying pedestrian traffic safely across Grandview Parkway to bayside destinations. This was one of the most important goals set during the "Your Bay, Your Say" planning sessions that began in 2005 and have begun implementation with the Clinch Park revitalization that was completed in 2013 and the Elmwood Avenue crossing in the fall of 2014.

LOCAL STREETS

Most City parks are accessed via Traverse City's local streets. These streets are continuously targeted for improvements through the City's Public Improvements Program. The City has nearly 29 miles of major streets and 49 miles of local streets as defined by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Hickory Hills Ski Area and Brown Bridge Quiet Area lie outside the City limits and are accessed by County roads. The County road servicing Hickory Hills is maintained in the winter by the City.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRAVEL

There are areas within the community that were designed years ago primarily for the automobile; where pedestrian travel has inadvertently been discouraged. In some areas, pedestrian and bicycle travel is challenging because streets were designed to move many vehicles as quickly as possible. The City is taking steps to correct these conditions by steadily enhancing the sidewalk network, adding trails and by marking bicycle lanes along many City streets. In 2009, the League of American Bicyclists designated Traverse City as a “Bicycle Friendly Community”.

Cities and communities across the country are developing inclusive transportation solutions that encourage pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Traverse City has studied and is nearing completion on an active transportation plan. Active recreation and transportation master plans look at more than your everyday rail to trail conversions and non-motorized pathways; more importantly they begin to look at an entire transportation system. The transportation system will include pathways such as the TART and Leelanau Trails, but must also include a transportation system to get to and from such pathways, as well as developing and designing guidelines for the development of bike facilities including those within City parkland.

Developing an active recreation and transportation master plan involves several key steps including in-depth fieldwork. Key steps to a successful plan include evaluating surfaces and travel lane widths, how long it takes to cross the street, curb and gutter design, and vehicular turning radii and speeds. The sequence and approach to designing for active transport is also important; moreover, designing for pedestrians first, bicyclists second, transit riders and operations third, and private motor vehicles last is typical when designing for active -transportation – and recognized in the City’s Master Plan.

The City Master Plan calls for community streets to be designed for a wide range of users, not just the motor vehicle driver. Roadway improvement designs must also consider the needs of the pedestrian and bicyclist, by incorporating sidewalks and bike lanes. Sidewalks need adequate separation from the roadway to provide comfort and clear demarcation between the road edge and the sidewalk. Driveways must be designed and limited in number so that they do not impair the safety of the pedestrian or bicyclist. Designs should also include consideration for mitigation of increased impervious surfaces or alternate surfaces.

To further encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel, a system of trails and connecting walks are being implemented to make these forms of travel through and around the community inviting. The eleven mile long TART trail is a paved urban transportation corridor that currently runs between Bunker Hill Road in Acme Township and Carter Road in Elmwood Township which is past the M22/M-72 intersection in Traverse City. The trail runs along Grand Traverse Bay, through downtown Traverse City neighborhoods and the Mitchell Creek watershed and is a favorite of families, visitors, bicyclists and in-line skaters.

The Leelanau Trail stretches 17 miles through the last of the Leelanau County railway corridors. The Leelanau Trail connects Traverse City and Suttons Bay. The entire distance is now paved. These two trails combine for 28 contiguous miles of hiking, biking and roller blading possibilities. Capital funds and grant monies have been used and more will be needed to construct additional new trails and to maintain existing trails and pathways.

The Boardman Lake Trail is moving forward toward completion. The Boardman Lake East Trail that connects Hull Park and the Traverse Area District Library at the north end and Medalie Park in Garfield Township at the south end was completed in 2005. In 2009, the Boardman Lake North Trail was completed that connects the Old Town and other neighborhoods west of Boardman Lake with the East Trail and the library. This trail includes a major pedestrian bridge that crosses the Boardman River. In 2014 the first portion of the West Boardman Lake Trail was completed from 10th Street to 14th Street. Plans are underway to complete the trail around the entirety of Boardman Lake. The Boardman Lake Trail now connects to the TART Trail and eventually will connect to trails in the Boardman Valley and beyond.

The Vasa Trail pathway which is managed under agreement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Grand Traverse County, and TART Trails, is located amid the pristine beauty of the Pere Marquette State Forest. The Vasa Pathway, utilized by cross country skiers, mountain and fat tire bikers, walkers and naturalists, features a series of loops and trails that offer both challenging and easier routes for every level of user.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Traverse City area, including Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties, is served by the Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA). BATA provides scheduled routes with the City loops, various local area loops, and regional connections.

Two services that BATA provides that serves the recreation community are the popular Bike-n-Ride and Ski-n-Ride programs.

Bike-n-Ride offers transportation for riders and up to 11 bicycles that don't want to pedal all the way both ways to enjoy two popular rides. One route serves Traverse City to Suttons Bay and Northport and the other from Traverse City to Glen Arbor and Empire.

Ski-n-Ride offers transportation from Traverse City, including stops at local middle schools, to Hickory Hills and Mt. Holiday during the week and to The Homestead and Crystal Mountain on the weekends. Skiers can take their equipment with them on the bus and for the middle school students, the schools have set up areas where the skis can be kept during the school day.

SECTION 2

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

The Parks and Recreation Commission, formed in 1992, serves as an advisory body to the City Commission in Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery matters. Six of the seven commissioners are appointed by the City Commission and serve staggered terms of three years. The seventh member is the City Manager's appointee. This body is an important liaison between the citizens of Traverse City and the City Commission, along with other groups and governmental units. The Commission was formed under the authority of Section 30 of the Charter of the City of Traverse City.

STAFF

The Parks and Recreation staff directs the operation and maintenance of parks, cemetery, and special facilities and develops and organizes recreation programs. The Parks and Recreation Division is under the direction of the Parks and Recreation Superintendent who reports to the Director of Public Services who reports directly to the City Manager. The City Manager is responsible to the City Commission which consists of six citizens elected for staggered four year terms and an elected Mayor that serves a two year term. The Mayor and the City Commission are, in turn, ultimately responsible to the citizens which they serve. The Brown Bridge Advisory Group makes recommendations to the City Manager on issues related to the Brown Bridge Quiet Area.

Day to day purchasing decisions of an operational nature are made by the management level employees up to the normal City spending limit of $2,000.00. The City Manager can authorize expenditures up to $7,000.00 and the City Commission for amounts larger than $7,000.00.

The Parks and Recreation Division is responsible for recreation programming and facilities, Hickory Hills Ski Area, Oakwood Cemetery, the urban forestry program, public park operations and maintenance, three outdoor ice skating rinks and snow removal from several City parking lots.

The Duncan L. Clinch Marina is under the direction of the Department of Public Services Director.

STAFFING LEVELS

In the Parks and Recreation Division there are currently fifteen full-time employees including:

- Parks and Recreation Superintendent
- Marina Dockmaster / Hickory Hills Manager
- Parks and Recreation Supervisor
- Departmental Secretary (shared among several divisions)
- Cemetery Sexton
- Recreation Specialist
- Waterscape / Hickory Hills Recreation Specialist
- Recreation Specialist / Parks Maintenance Worker
- An Office Clerk who works part time at the Oakwood Cemetery office.
- General Maintenance and Repair Specialist
- Five Parks Maintenance Workers
- Approximately fifty seasonal workers

The Senior Center Network, is now under the umbrella of the Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation Department. The Senior Center Network is supported by 5 FTE and over 100 volunteers.

Many other City divisions offer assistance to the Parks and Recreation Division, Marina, Oakwood Cemetery and Senior Center. These include the Streets, Water Treatment, and Sewer and Water Maintenance Divisions in the Department of Public Services. The Planning, Zoning and Engineering Departments lend assistance in the planning and designing of facilities, putting together grant proposals and long range planning.

From time to time for community service projects or special programs, the City gets the help of volunteers for various maintenance activities. Some examples are painting of buildings, litter pick-up, tree and flower planting, and beach clean-up.

PARKS OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The Parks and Recreation Division is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and repair of the public park lands, fixtures, and buildings. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Division is responsible for the maintenance and operation of Oakwood Cemetery, garbage pick-up in both the downtown and Old Town areas, the urban forestry program which cares for over 9,000 street trees plus parks and cemetery trees, numerous perennial and shrub beds, and planting and maintaining approximately 10,000 annual flowers each year. The Division also builds and maintains three outdoor ice skating rinks, operates Hickory Hills Ski area, plows some public parking lots, maintains and cleans the Union Street Dam and spillway of debris, plus other activities too numerous to mention.

During the National Cherry Festival in July, the Parks and Recreation and Streets Divisions spend considerable time setting up and taking down fencing and cleaning up during and after many events.

RECREATION PROGRAMS

Traverse City prides itself on a well maintained and diversified parks system. Using these areas, along with school and county facilities, the Parks and Recreation Division has developed a variety of programs for youth and adults. The City recreation programs are coordinated with other area agencies so as not to compete or conflict with their activities and programs. The programs run throughout the year and are available to residents and non-residents alike. Below is a summary of offerings available through the City to residents in the area.

1) Day Camp. Children 7-12 years of age may attend this summer program held at the Grand Traverse County Civic Center and Hickory Hills Recreation Area. The program emphasizes outdoor recreation, arts and crafts, nature education, and beach activities. The program is a cooperative effort between the City of Traverse City and Grand Traverse County. The City provides the registration, Administration and staffing and the County makes the space available at a low rental rate and provides some logistical support. The ten week program has a maximum of 50 children per week and is full many weeks.

2) Adult Volleyball Leagues. The City uses Traverse City Area Public Schools' elementary school gyms for this program which currently features women's, and co-ed leagues that play from October through March.

Several other recreation programs are held on City property and operated by local non-profit organizations. The main programs are:

1) The Traverse Area Community Sailing (T.A.C.S.) Program. This summer program gives children an opportunity to learn to sail and is located at the north end of Boardman Lake at Hull Park. Donations to the group funded the construction of docks and a large boat storage building.

2) The Grand Traverse Area Ski Club. The GTSC offers children the opportunity to learn how to ski and snowboard in a non-competitive format at the City's Hickory Hills Ski Area and then they can become involved in the Club's ski racing program. The Club has also been active in raising money for capital improvement projects and equipment for Hickory Hills.

3) The Northern Michigan Disc Sports Organization. This group first approached the City with the offer to design and set up a 24 hole disc golf course at the City's Hickory Hills Recreation Area in 1998. The course was completed in 1999 and has had subsequent improvements with the assistance of local community foundation grants. The NMDSO continues to be involved in the program with tournaments, weekly leagues and work bees to improve and maintain the course.

4) Traverse Area Community Rowing, is a new group that in 2016 will begin offering regular instructional programs in various types of rowing shells and opportunities

for those that already have the skills to use the group's boats to row on Boardman Lake.

Recent Recreational Program Participation Levels

Program	Total Number of Participants for Year			
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Day Camp for children	94	79	89	71
Downhill & XC skiing	11,737	13,186	13,996	12,056
Adult Volleyball	314	153	169	172
TOTAL ❖	12,145	13,418	14,254	12,299

❖ These figures do not include participants in the TACS Sailing Program, or any participants in the disc golf course located at Hickory Hills. The figures for day camp are based on the total number of different children enrolled and not the total number of camper days.

PARK AND RECREATION FUNDING

INTRODUCTION

Historically, the City of Traverse City has led the area in providing quality recreation. The community investment not only has improved the quality of life for the residents of the County, it has also helped to generate a strong tourist industry for the City. A past survey conducted by Traverse City Tourism indicated motel guests participated heavily in recreation when visiting the area. For example, 78% "relaxed on the beach" while staying in the area and 84% rated their recreational activity experience as "great." Maintaining a high quality park system is seen, from an economic perspective, as an important element to be considered during the budget process. Finding a balance between resident and tourist, however, requires sensitivity since interests between the groups may be divergent.

METHOD OF FINANCE

Parks and Recreation facilities and programs in the City of Traverse City are funded primarily by property tax revenues. During the fiscal year 2014-2015, approximately 90 % of the operating budget for Parks and Recreation (excluding marina) was generated from property taxes with the remainder from user fees.

Parks and Recreation financial resources from the City are dependent upon fluctuations in the municipal budget. However, other forms of revenue options are available to the City to ensure financial stability of a viable Parks and Recreation Program. Alternative sources used or proposed are: permits, metered parking, concession sales, adopt-a-park programs, user fees, intergovernmental cooperation, work release programs, park usage fees, gifts, and donations.

Major capital improvement projects for Parks and Recreation, including property acquisition and development projects, are funded by the Capital Improvement Budget. The decisions to fund larger projects or to accept grants for those projects lies with the City Commission. A number of capital improvements have been funded in part by organizations or grant programs such as: Coastal Management Program, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Recreation Bond Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Oleson Foundation, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails, Inc. (TART), Rotary Charities, Grand Traverse Whitetails, Ruffed Grouse Society, Ducks Unlimited, Grand Traverse Ski Club, Friendly Garden Club, Cherryland Garden Club, and the Kiwanis Club. These programs have provided not only matching funds but incentives to improve the City's recreational assets.

FUNDING LEVEL

Parks and Recreation funding has been a substantial portion of the City of Traverse City budget. For fiscal year 2015/2016 the City has allocated $1,911,100.00 for Parks and Recreation. The Duncan L. Clinch Marina budget is listed as $585,500.00. Of these total expenditures, approximately $734,500.00 is returned by revenue producing facilities or programs. Specifically, the marina is slated to generate $530,000.00 for the 2015/2016 budget. All of the parks and recreational programs combined will produce approximately $204,500.00 for the same period. The total operating budget allocated for Parks and Recreation constitutes just over 12.28 % of the City General Fund budget.

RECENT RECREATION RELATED ACTIVITIES BUDGETS

The following divisions and activities all are related to recreation pursuits. Some are passive activities and others are active. The Cemetery provides a more contemplative form of recreation with walking and historic observation. The other three take on a more active role in the provision of recreation.

Division	**2013-2014 (actual)**	**2014-2015 (actual)**	**2015-2016 (budgeted)**
Parks and Recreation	$ 1,704,842.00	$ 1,912,100.00	$ 1,911,100.00
Marina	$ 485,877.00	$ 582,600.00	$ 585,500.00
Senior Center	$ 120,890.00	$ 124,400.00	$ 122,500.00
Oakwood Cemetery	$ 323,831.00	$ 347,200.00	$ 369,800.00
TOTAL	**$ 2,635,440.00**	**$ 2,966,300.00**	**$ 2,988,900.00**

Compared to the surrounding townships and Grand Traverse County, the City allocates a much greater amount of funds for parks and recreation. In a Grand Traverse County Area Parks and Recreation Analysis done in August of 2010 by R. Clark and Associates of Traverse City, research indicated that townships adjacent to the City spent anywhere from $4.23 per capita for East Bay Township to $21.68 for Garfield Township. Grand Traverse County spent $15.11 per capita. In contrast, the City of Traverse City spent $111.39 per capita which is more than the County and four adjacent townships spent combined. There have been recent improvements for many of the area governments in budgeting for parks and recreation, especially in Garfield Township. The discrepancy in spending patterns may be partially tied to the reality that the City's budget includes staff and equipment for forestry maintenance along with Parks and Recreation maintenance and programs which may fall under the general public works departments or road commissions of some of those jurisdictions.

It is anticipated the costs will continue to increase for the City of Traverse City to maintain the existing level of service for the Parks and Recreation programs. The City taxing rate presently stands at 11.1167 mills.

Other sources of revenues may need to be secured in the near future to support City Parks and Recreation programs. Perhaps in recognition of the regional nature of Traverse City recreation facilities, financial agreements with adjacent units of government can be reached. There has been some movement in that direction

PUBLIC AGENCY COORDINATION

CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY / CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY

The City and Garfield Township combined to create a Recreational Authority for the initial purpose of purchasing and preserving some land that was on the Real Estate market. In the November 2004 General Election, two ballot funding proposals for the Recreational Authority passed.

The first proposal was "The Open Space and Natural Area Preservation Bond Proposal". This proposal will allow the Recreational Authority of Traverse City and Garfield Township to purchase and improve land to preserve open space and scenic views of the Bay and protect wildlife habitat and natural areas. Properties to be purchased include the West Bay Waterfront property (formerly the Smith Barney building), the Barns at the Grand Traverse Commons, and the property next to Hickory Hills. State law requires an annual independent audit of the Recreational Authority.

> "Shall the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority formed by the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield borrow the sum of not to exceed Six Million Six Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($6,650,000.00) and issue its general obligation, unlimited tax bonds for all or portion of that amount, payable in not to exceed twenty years from the date of issuance, for the purpose of open space and scenic view preservation and wildlife habitat and natural areas protection by purchasing and improving land for public parks, including West Bay Waterfront property, the Barns at the Commons, and the property next to Hickory Hills?"

The millage levied in 2004 was 0.27 mills ($0.27 per $1,000.00 of taxable value) and the estimated simple average annual millage rate required to retire the bonds is 0.27 mills ($0.27 per $1,000.00 of taxable value). This is expected to result in an increase of $13.50 in the tax levied on property valued at $100,000 for a period of 20 years.

The second proposal was "The Open Space and Natural Area Millage Proposal". This proposal will allow the Recreational Authority of Traverse City and Garfield Township to maintain natural areas, wildlife habitat, public parks, and open space. The proposal would levy a property tax of up to 0.1 mills that would cost the owner of a

home with a value of $100,000.00, $5.00 per year. State law would require an annual independent audit of the Recreational Authority.

> "Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be imposed on taxable property in the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority, be increased by up to 0.1 mill ($0.10 per $1,000.00 of taxable value) for a period of twenty (20) years, as a new millage for the purpose of protecting natural areas, wildlife habitat, and open space by acquiring, maintaining and improving public parks?"

Both proposals were only effective because they both passed. If one passed but not the second, the purchases could not have been accomplished.

The 0.1 mill general fund operational revenue is estimated to be $170,000.00 in the 2015-2016 fiscal year and the bond fund estimate is $530,000.00.

OTHER COORDINATED VENTURES

To make efficient use of limited fiscal resources and maximize usage of existing recreation facilities, the City coordinates a number of activities with the public schools and Grand Traverse County. For instance, the winter volleyball leagues are conducted within school gyms. Two outdoor City skating rinks are on school property, and one on City park land. Several school athletic programs use City parks for practice locations. Our summer Day Camp is located at the Grand Traverse County Civic Center.

The Traverse City Senior Center, located on the west arm of Grand Traverse Bay, serves adults 50 years of age and older with a wide range of programs. Currently over 3,000 people enjoy choosing among over 100 programs and activities such as; daily lunches, card games, computer lab with internet access and classes, exercise and dance classes, local and out-of-state trips, painting classes, ping pong and pool tables, tennis, pickleball, golf and shuffleboard leagues, wellness clinics for blood pressure, hearing, vision, reflexology and support groups. The Senior Center also serves as a meeting place for many senior related clubs and organizations. In 2015, over 49,000 visits were recorded at the Senior Center.

In the November 2, 2010 election, Grand Traverse County voters approved a millage to change the funding model and operation methods for the Senior Center. Grand Traverse County entered into an agreement with the City of Traverse City that took effect July 1, 2011 for the Grand Traverse County Commission on Aging to operate the Traverse City Senior Center along with satellite programs in several other smaller towns, to serve the entire County with more programs and with the expense of running the centers and programs spread to all County residents. Membership fees for County residents age 60 and over have been eliminated. County residents between ages 50 and 60 pay $10.00 per year. All non-county residents pay $50.00 per year. In 2015, Grand Traverse County reorganized the Commission on Again and moved the Senior

Center Network to the County Parks and Recreation Department. As of January 1, 2016, all Senior Center programs will be under the direction of the Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Senior Center is in the planning stages of a capital campaign to renovate the current building in Traverse City. The 2000 U.S. Census data shows us that the local population is aging at a rate higher than the national average. This equates to an increasing demand for services from those 50 and older. Membership to the Senior Center averages about 50 new members a month. The 50-year old building is literally bursting at the seams. There are structural and utility concerns that must be addressed. The building is not adequate to serve the existing programs, not to mention the expected increased use. Major renovations are a must if the program is to continue. The City and County Commissions have supported the conceptual plan to renovate the current Senior Center building. A feasibility study, funded with a grant from Rotary Charities, determined that the best course of action is to raise funds to improve the current structure. With the addition of satellite locations throughout the County and increased collaborations with local organizations and businesses, the Senior Center hopes to be able to accommodate participation growth. Staff will work with City administration to further these fundraising efforts.

SECTION 3

RECREATION INVENTORY

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Probably the greatest attraction of the Traverse City area is its abundance of recreational opportunities in a varied, interesting landscape. Within a one-half hour driving distance from the City are a National Lakeshore, three State parks, two regional ski resorts (Holiday Hills and Hickory Hills), a large expanse of State forest lands, a State game area, many public swimming areas, inland lakes, biking trails, and within 1 to 1 ½ hours you have seven major ski resorts (Crystal Mountain, Nub's Nob, Shanty Creek, Boyne Mountain, and Boyne Highlands, The Homestead and Caberfae Peaks). In addition, numerous historic sites, as well as the beauty of the peninsulas, bays, and various orchards and vineyards, attract people from all over the State of Michigan and the country to the Traverse City region. These areas provide an unlimited array of recreational opportunities to the residents of Traverse City as well as to the outside visitor. The map identifies the locations of many recreational opportunities in the region.

FEDERAL AND STATE FACILITIES

Although available, many State and Federal recreational areas are not geared toward serving a day-use population. Day-use can occur, but the primary focus of these parks is more passive long-term recreation. For example, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, after many years of development, is a major recreation area. The Dunes once serviced a localized population but they now attract a wider range and larger number of outside visitors because they are now better publicized and better known. Day-use of the area by local residents of Traverse City is possible since it is located relatively close to the community; however, repeated day-use is deterred because of higher day use costs and the likely competition for facilities by outside visitors.

COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP FACILITIES

The facilities on the county and township levels serve both day-use and overnight users. It has been pointed out that the Sand Lakes Quiet Area, among others, and the open

space area surrounding the City provide many opportunities for day-use activities. The recreational focus of some of the County-wide facilities is more toward longer term recreation. As to the nature of the long-term facilities, camping opportunities are available along the Boardman River and are concentrated in the State forests, the two State parks and Whitewater Township Park. Two major trails pass through the County along the Boardman River. The Cross State Riding and Hiking Trail is a developed trail that runs throughout the northern part of Lower Peninsula. Unfortunately, in Grand Traverse County, it does not connect with any major recreational area or site. A trail for snowmobiling has been developed and runs parallel to the riding and hiking trail. During the summer months it unofficially doubles as a motorcycle/ATV trail.

Public access to many nearby lakes and streams is available, ranging from those for non-motorized craft to power boat launching. In the City, the only public park on West Grand Traverse Bay that can handle larger motorized boats is a two lane launch site at Clinch Park Marina. Small to medium sized motorized boats can be launched at the river launch site near the Boardman River mouth on West Bay. East Bay Park has a small ramp that can be used by small boats in times of higher water levels such as are occurring now. During low water levels it is usable only for watercraft that can be carried in. Other sites exist around the Bay as shown on the County-wide recreation facilities chart. The City has a launch ramp at Hull Park at the north end of Boardman Lake that will accommodate up to medium size power boats. Official public access sites are available on many inland lakes throughout the area, but more areas are needed to meet the growing demands of this recreational pursuit.

Picnic sites exist throughout the County; however, many of these sites often tend to be little more than roadside rest areas with a scenic focus. These sites are somewhat buffered from traffic and are geared toward day-use.

Grand Traverse County itself owns nine recreational facilities with special restricted uses and are described below.

Power Island (formerly named Marion Island) and Bassett Island - The 202 acre wooded Power Island has hiking trails, picnic grounds, and there is a small, four site primitive campground on the attached 2 acre Bassett Island. The islands are in the West Arm of Grand Traverse Bay and are accessible only by boat.

Twin Lakes Park - This facility is located on a 175 acre parcel of land bordering North Twin Lake. It has Gilbert Lodge which is a dining and meeting facility for up to 200 people, and a large dormitory building that can sleep up to 142 people. Hiking trails run throughout the property and a beach is located on the lake. The facility can be rented out by various organizations or groups for meetings, retreats, weddings, etc. for a day or up to a week.

The Nature Education Reserve - The Natural Education Reserve was set aside as a "natural environmental classroom for area youth" and is comprised of 505 acres. The property, which includes over seven miles of improved trails, runs along the Boardman River south of Boardman Lake and is used by naturalists, students, hikers, fishermen, kayakers and canoeists. The Boardman River Nature Center that opened in August of 2008 on the Reserve, is operated by the Grand Traverse Conservation District.

Civic Center - The Civic Center is located within the city limits of Traverse City and is situated on 45 acres of land. The facility has an indoor ice skating rink, indoor swimming pool, skate park, several softball/baseball fields, a paved one mile walking/biking trail, basketball courts, an amphitheater, and a picnic shelter that is available for reservations.

Medalie Park – a 15 acre park at the south end of Boardman Lake that has picnic facilities including a picnic shelter with restrooms, paved hiking/biking trail, a canoe launch and fishing platforms. The East Boardman Lake Trail connects Medalie Park to the City's Hull Park at the north end of the lake.

Beitner Park - This 5 acre park is a canoe/kayak launch site on the Boardman River just south of the Nature Reserve.

Bartlett Park, Vasa Pathway Trailhead - A 40 acre parcel located at the beginning of 34 kilometers of non-motorized trails, which features parking, restrooms and a warming hut.

Keystone Soccer Complex - In a cooperative venture with Traverse Bay Area Youth Soccer (TBAYS), 16 soccer fields have been developed just south of Traverse City on 40 acres of the 77 acre parcel.

Maple Bay Park – A recently acquired 400 acre farm on East Grand Traverse Bay is in the early development stages including parking and a two mile trail. The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy helps with some programming and stewardship at the park.

Bunker Hill Property – This includes the TART trail between Bunker Hill and Five Mile Roads.

Many of the townships in the area have their own park facilities for the enjoyment of their residents and guests. Some of the most active townships are Acme, Blair, East Bay, Garfield, Green Lake, Long Lake and Whitewater Township in Grand Traverse County and Elmwood Township in Leelanau County.

Taking into consideration the amount of recreational opportunities available throughout the region and the County, the average Traverse City resident is fortunate to have a number of facilities available that address a wide variety of recreational activities.

CITY FACILITIES

At the present time, Traverse City owns 34 parks and recreational properties, ranging from a small downtown parcel to the larger Hickory Hills Ski Area, Grand Traverse Commons and Brown Bridge Quiet Area. The City enjoys a broad range of recreational opportunities. Much of the park land is heavily concentrated along the Boardman River and along the shoreline of the West Grand Traverse Bay. The City park locations are shown on the accompanying map. In total, over 1,600 City-owned acres are currently dedicated to recreational pursuits including Hickory Hills Ski Area and Grand Traverse Commons that are each approximately 125 acres and Brown Bridge Quiet Area, located 10 miles southeast of the City, has nearly two square miles (1,310 acres) of natural area along the Boardman River. City parks are listed beginning on the page 24.

Clinch Park Marina is operated by the City and is located on West Grand Traverse Bay at the north end of Union Street at the intersection with the Grandview Parkway. The marina, a State Grant-In-Aid harbor operated under policies of the Michigan State Waterways Commission, was rebuilt in 2002 - 2003. It offers 65 seasonal and 54 transient slips. Amenities include water, electricity (50 and 30 amp), restrooms, showers, gasoline, diesel, pump out, ice, boat launch, playground/park (Clinch Park), grills/picnic tables, cable TV hookups, and laundry.

CULTURAL FACILITIES

Typically, cultural amenities are tied to the more heavily populated metropolitan regions of the state, leaving the rural northern areas of Michigan largely void of such opportunities. Traverse City, however, is atypical of most communities of its size and is blessed with a wealth of cultural developments complementing the natural beauty of the area. World famous artists perform throughout the year and outdoor concerts are a highlight at Interlochen Center For The Arts. The Traverse Symphony Orchestra holds both summer and winter concerts and season tickets are in high demand.

The Old Town Playhouse Civic Players entertain tourists and residents throughout the year. The local State Theatre has been renovated by the Traverse City Film Festival non-profit organization and is open again showing movies and holding other community events. In a cooperative agreement with the City of Traverse City, the Con Foster building that used to house the Con Foster Museum Collection in Clinch Park, is now

home to the “Bijou By The Bay” movie theatre that is also operated by the Traverse City Film Festival. In and around the community are numerous art galleries exhibiting every medium of art. In addition, there is the City Opera House, Crooked Tree Arts Center of Traverse City, Northwestern Michigan College Dennos Museum, Lars Hockstad and Milliken Auditoriums for concerts, WIPR, WIAA, and WNMC Public Radio, the local public access channel, Maritime Heritage Alliance and numerous art fairs.

Although cultural events may not be seen as recreational to some, it is clear the citizens of Traverse City view these amenities as important in contributing to their quality of life. Residents ranked "live entertainment" as the third most popular recreational activity in a past survey. The downtown even holds special “Friday Night Live” events in August which brings thousands of people into the downtown area.

OTHER FACILITIES

Many other properties used for recreational purposes are located in the City limits and surrounding areas. School facilities provide playgrounds, sports fields and indoor facilities used by the community. Seven public, three parochial, and two charter school sites are located in the City Limits plus Northwestern Michigan College. One of the six public elementary schools has been closed to their former use to cut costs to the school district but the grounds are still available for recreational use. The Traverse City Country Club offers a nice green space along the southern boundary of the City. Here is a list of schools and a chart of other non-county public and private recreational lands and facilities within five miles of the City.

Traverse City Area Public Schools that offer a combination of playgrounds, court and field sport facilities, and indoor gymnasiums:

Central Grade School - 301 W. 7th St., TC

Courtade Elementary – 1111 Rasho Rd., TC

Eastern Elementary – 1600 Eastern Ave., TC

Glenn Loomis Montessori – 1009 Oak St., TC

Silver Lake Elementary – 5858 Culver Rd., TC

Traverse Heights Elementary – 933 Rose St., TC

Willow Hill Elementary – 1250 Hill St., TC

TC Central High School – 1150 Milliken Dr., TC

TC West High School – 5376 N. Long Lake Rd., TC

Traverse City High School – 3962 Three Mile Rd., TC

International School at Bertha Vos – 3723 Shore Dr., Williamsburg

East Middle School – 1776 Three Mile Rd., TC
West Middle School – 3950 Silver Lake Rd., TC

Other local schools:

Trinity Lutheran School – 1003 S. Maple St., TC
Immaculate Conception Elementary – 720 Second St., TC
St. Francis High School – 130 E. Tenth St., TC
St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton Middle School -
The Children's House Montessori – 5363 N. Long Lake Rd., TC
Traverse City Christian School – 753 Emerson Rd., TC
Grand Traverse Academy – 1245 Hammond Rd. East., TC
The Greenspire School – 1026 Red Dr., TC
New Campus School TBAISD – 1100 Silver Dr., TC
Oak Park School TBAISD – 301 S. Garfield St., TC

Recreation Facility	Owner	Address	Description
East Bay Public Access (4 Mile Rd)	East Bay Township	Four Mile Rd at US-31	Small public boat launch
Dock Road Access Site	GT County Road Comm.	Dock Road, Acme	East Bay public boat launch
Tibbets Lake Access Site	East Bay Township	Badger St off Poplar St	Public boat launch
High Lake Access Site	East Bay Township	Badger St off High Lake Rd	Public boat launch
Deepwater Point Natural Area	Acme Township	Shore Rd at Deepwater Point Rd	Natural area – hiking, nature study
Bayside Park	Acme Township	Shores Beach Ln at US-31	Beach, playground, picnic facilities, sports
East Bay Public Access	State of Michigan	Bunker Hill Rd at US-31, Acme	Small public boat launch
East Bay Shore (Tony Gilroy Roadside Park)	State of Michigan	US- 31 south of M-72, Acme	Picnic area, shore access
Everflowing Waters Campground	Private	5481 Brackett Rd, Acme	Private campground
East Bay Harbor Marina	Private	US 31 North, Acme	Private Marina on East Bay
Grand Traverse Resort and Spa	GT Band	US 31 North, Acme	3 Golf courses, pool
Lochenheath Golf Course	Private	Lochenheath Dr. off US-31 N, Acme	Golf course
Traverse Bay RV Park Inc.	Private	6500 Traverse Bay Dr., Acme	Private campground
Boardman River Access	State of Michigan	Shumsky Rd, Blair Township	River access site
Holiday Park Campground	Private	4860 US-31 South – Grawn	Private Campground
Incredible Mo's	Private	1355 Silver Lake Crossings Blvd, Grawn	Bowling, indoor miniature golf, arcade
Killingsworth Park	East Bay Township	2807 Chandler Rd	Boat launch, picnicking, playground
Grace McDonald Park	East Bay Township	133 E. Arbutus Lake Rd	Court and field sports, sledding, picnicking, playground
Pine Grove Park	East Bay Township	920 Hemlock St	Picnicking, basketball, playground
Arbutus Lake #5 Public Access Site	East Bay Township	East Arbutus Lake Rd	Picnicking, fishing pier, playground
Pines Park	East Bay Township	1750 Eikey Rd	80 Acre parcel to be developed
Gen's Park	East Bay Township	2263 US-31 North	Picnicking and East Bay beach access
Kelly Park	East Bay Township	2817 Point View Rd	Chandler Lake boat launch
Spider Lake Access Site	East Bay Township	587 Peninsula Trail	Spider Lake boat launch
Keith Charters Traverse City State Park	State of Michigan	1132 US-31 North - TC	Campground, beach playground, picnicking
Arbutus Lake #4 Public Access Site & Campground	State of Michigan	2720 Arbutus Lake Rd - TC	Primitive campground, boat launch
VASA Trail	State of Michigan	Supply Rd - TC	Hiking, biking, cross country skiing
Spider Lake South Public Access Site	State of Michigan	Grace Rd off E. Arbutus Lake Rd - TC	Public boat launch
Elmbrook Golf Course	Private	420 Hammond Rd East, TC	Golf Course
Pirate's Cove	Private	1710 N. US-31 North, TC	Miniature golf, water slide, go-carts, arcade
Pebble Brook	Private	2072 US-31 North, TC	Miniature golf

Recreation Facility	Owner	Address	Description
Mt. Holiday	Private non-profit	3100 Holiday Rd	Ski area, tubing, zip lines
Timber Ridge Campground	Private	4050 E. Hammond Rd, TC	Campground, cross country skiing
YMCA Camp	Private non-profit	1350 E. Arbutus Lake Rd	Private Camp
Refitt Nature Preserve	East Bay Township	Three Mile Rd	Hiking, nature study
The Crossing	Garfield Township	Crossing Circle Dr	Hiking
Zimmerman Property	Garfield Township	1785 N East Silver Lake Rd	Hiking
Grand Traverse Commons	Garfield Township	Red Dr – Part of old State Hospital	Hiking, mountain biking
Silver Lake Access Site	State of Michigan	N. East Silver Lake Rd, TC	Public boat launch
Silver Lake Recreation Area	Garfield Township	N. East Silver Lake Rd	Picnicking, playground, court & field sports, dog park, hiking
YMCA - Silver Lake Rd	Private non-profit	West Silver Lake Rd, TC	Pool, gyms, indoor court sports, fitness center, field sports
YMCA – Racquet Club Dr	Private non-profit	3000 Racquet Court Dr, TC	Court sports, field area
Lake Point Walkway	Private	East side of Boardman Lake, TC	Hiking
Bay Meadows Golf Course	Private	5220 Barney Rd, TC	Golf course
Traverse City Golf and Country Club	Private	1725 S. Union St., TC	Golf course
The Crown Golf Course	Private	2411 W. Silver Lake Rd, TC	Golf course
Great Wolf Lodge Water Park	Private	3631 Franke Rd, TC	Large indoor water park
Kid's Creek Park	Garfield Township	US 31 near Franke Rd	Hiking, nature study
Cedar Run Historical Building	Long Lake Township	11779 Cedar Run Rd.	Historic site
Bass Lake Access Site	State of Michigan	Fishing Site Rd, TC	Public boat launch
Timbers Girl Scout Camp	Private non-profit	8195 Timbers Trail, TC	Girl Scout camp
Round Island	Long Lake Association	In Long Lake	Picnicking
Traverse City Golf Center	Private	6270 Secor Rd, TC	Golf driving range
Archie Park	Peninsula Township	10273 Center Rd	Picnicking, playground
East Bay Access Site	State of Michigan	8400 Center Rd, TC	Public boat launch
TBAYS Coast Guard Soccer Field	Traverse City	Airport Access RD at Parsons Rd, TC	Soccer Field
Thirlby Field	TCAPS	13th St at Pine St, TC	Football stadium, softball, outdoor ice rink
Lucky Jack's	Private	Garfield Rd north of S. Airport Rd	Bowling, arcade
Greilickville Harbor Park and Marina	Elmwood Township	M-22 at Grandview Rd	Beach, playground, picknicking, boat launch
Elmwood Township Park	Elmwood Township	10090 Lincoln Rd.	Court and field sports, picnicking, playground
Cedar Lake Public Access	State of Michigan	Cherry Bend Rd. TC	Public boat launch

CITY PARK INVENTORY

American Legion Park - .47 acres – Washington Street at Cass Street

This small neighborhood park has frontage on the Boardman River and serves those entering or leaving downtown as a place to stop and rest. There is a memorial to area Veterans, and park benches. Only the sidewalk passing adjacent to the park meets accessibility guidelines.

Arbutus Park - .13 acres – At the east end of Arbutus Court at Boon Street

A small, neighborhood park with quarter court basketball court, a donated child's recycled plastic picnic table and a park bench. Used primarily by those living close by, for a place to relax or to shoot a few free throws. Only the sidewalk passing adjacent to the park meets accessibility guidelines.

Ashton Park – 4.70 acres - Between Wayne and Hill Streets at Madison Street

A neighborhood park adjacent to Willow Hill Elementary School that features an old growth forest of beech, hemlock, oak and maple trees. This park is used as a shortcut route to school and as a nature study area by the neighborhood and school. There is a short self-guided nature trail located in the wooded area. Along the east side of the park near Wayne Street, there is a small, older Jack and Jill play structure and a climber. Only the sidewalks passing adjacent to both sides of the park meet accessibility guidelines.

Boon Street Park - .34 acres – On Boon Street, west of Rose Street

This neighborhood park services a several block area along the south central boundary of the City. Amenities include: half court basketball court, slide, swing set and climber. None of the park areas meet accessibility guidelines.

Brown Bridge Quiet Area – 1,310 acres – South-east of the City off Garfield Road

A regional parcel that is park-like and offers hiking trails, including some accessible trails, water access on the Boardman River and a vault-type toilet. This rustic area is popular with nature enthusiasts. The dam that formed Brown Bridge Pond was removed in 2013 and the river channel re-established and the lake bottom planted with native species for restoration. Recreation opportunities, land and water features, maintenance practices and capital expenditure requirements changed as a result. Some of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Bryant Park – 3.32 acres – Peninsula Drive at North Garfield Avenue

A community park that serves residents, non-residents and tourists alike. Bryant is located at the south-east corner of West Grand Traverse Bay and has a great swimming beach, boat-themed play structure constructed in 2002, swing set, picnic grills, park benches and a restroom building. Most of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.

Clancy Park – 3.0 acres – Sheridan Road at West Orchard Drive

This larger neighborhood park features a large open grass field area for informal sports and games along with some wooded areas. The service area is the large Orchard Heights neighborhood. Facilities include a Jack and Jill play structure, slide, swing set, merry-go-round, climber and quarter court basketball. Currently, none of the park features meet accessibility guidelines however a project that has been awarded a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant will include accessible walkways, benches, a small picnic shelter and new play equipment.

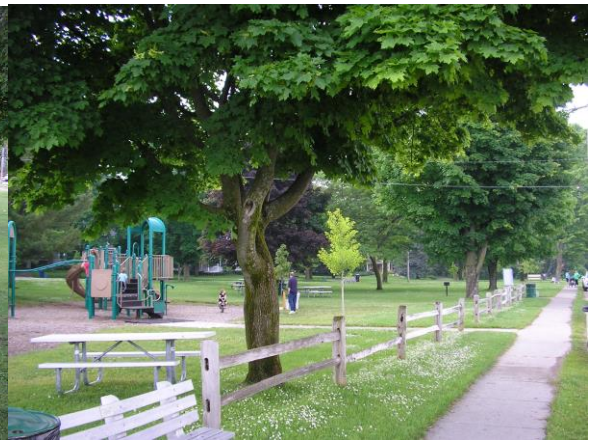
Clinch Park – 6.72 acres – Grandview Parkway at Cass Street

Clinch Park features the longest, wide beach in Traverse City and a portion is the former home of the Clinch Park Zoo that showcased Michigan wildlife for 50 years. The Spirit of Traverse City, a ¼ scale steam locomotive that pulled passengers around the former zoo property and through a picnic area near the beach stopped operation in

2012. New construction in 2012 – 2013 funded in part by a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant replaced the old restroom and food concession building. The project also included a new waterscape spray park and small playground, improved beach access and new walkways. The Con Foster Building that formerly housed the local history museum is now the "Bijou By The Bay" movie theater operated by the local non-profit, Traverse City Film Festival. The Traverse Area Recreational Trail (TART) runs through the park. The Duncan L. Clinch Marina is adjacent to the park and features a boat launch and boat slips. Almost of the facilities in the park meet accessibility guidelines.

Darrow Park – 1.11 acres – Bay Street at Monroe Street

Darrow Park has the size and appearance of a neighborhood park but with its location across from West Grand Traverse Bay, gets a lot of summer use from tourists and non-residents. The park features a play structure and swing set. There are ten plastic recycled benches in the park and a spring rocking toy in the playground donated in memory of local residents. Most of the features of this park meet accessibility guidelines.



East Bay Park – 3.23 acres – East Bay Boulevard at East Front Street

East Bay Park is a community park used by many people in the City and surrounding area, along with tourists. The park has bathroom facilities, a play structure and swing set, a small boat launch and a swimming beach on East Grand Traverse Bay. Most of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.

F and M Park – 3.5 acres – Surrounded by State, Hope, and Washington Streets and Railroad Avenue

F & M Park, so named due to the Florida and Michigan fruit packing company that used to be on the site, is a great neighborhood park that often takes on the role of a community park. During the National Cherry Festival, large numbers of people attend Cherry Kid's events held at F & M. Many school groups from the region stop at the park for end of year parties and as a stop on field trips. Amenities include a gazebo constructed in 2003, a train-themed play structure installed in 2009, slide and merry-go-round. An ice skating rink has been installed here since 2006. Most features of this park meet accessibility guidelines.

Fulton Park – 9.19 acres – Carter Road off of M-22

This natural area park features a four tenths of a mile self-guided nature trail. There is access to the trail from a small parking lot and from the Traverse Area Recreational Trail (TART). The parking area meets accessibility guidelines.

Grand Traverse Commons – 129.80 acres - Centers around Division and 11th Streets

The Grand Traverse Commons is a community park. A portion of the former Traverse City State Hospital has become dedicated City park land with two trails that were used by patients at the hospital. These were called the Women's Walk and the Men's Walk and have kept the same names. Work by Eagle Scout projects and Camp Pugsley work crews rejuvenated the trails in the 1990s. A significant portion of this entire property is dedicated wetlands and nature study is a major activity at this park. The local Veteran's Coalition has relocated the War Memorials that were previously located at the former Veteran's Memorial Park to a site on the Commons' Parkland near the corner of 11th Street and Elmwood Avenue. Walkways, a picnic shelter, and benches have been added to this area. The sidewalks passing along Eleventh Street and Division Street along the park and the Veteran's Monuments area meet accessibility guidelines.

Hannah Park – 2.29 acres – Sixth Street at Union Street

Hannah Park features a large change in elevation from its southern border along Sixth Street downhill to the Boardman River. A walking path traverses the upper portion of the park linking Sixth Street to Wadsworth Street. The park hosts many weddings and "Shakespeare in the Park", along with fishing on the platforms constructed in 2007. The sidewalks passing along Sixth Street and Union Street meet accessibility guidelines as does the new Perry Hannah statue plaza (2015) at the intersection corner of the two streets.

Hickory Hills Recreation Area – 122.5 acres – At the west end of Randolph Street, 1 ¾ miles west of Division Street

Hickory Hills is a multi-season recreation provider and regional park. In the spring, summer and fall, a 24 hole disc golf course constructed by the Northern Michigan Disc Sports Organization with donations from local foundations and labor from the club members, receives heavy use. The cross country ski trails attract many hikers during eight months of the year. In the winter, Hickory is transformed into a downhill and cross country ski area featuring eight downhill runs with five rope tows. One of the slopes

also has terrain park features added when snow conditions allow. Approximately three kilometers of cross country and snowshoe trails are available, along with a lodge with a warming fireplace, restrooms and a snack bar. Lighting is present for seven of the downhill runs and one cross country trail. Some of the features meet accessibility guidelines. A recently completed master plan and an active advisory group are currently raising funds to make many improvements to Hickory Hills. These include a new lodge, more downhill terrains, more features that can be used during the other three seasons such as a ropes course, climbing wall, and trails for hiking and biking.

Highland Park – 1.35 acres - Between Highland Park Drive and Bloomfield Road

Highland Park is a neighborhood park that is primarily an open field for informal play and sports. There is a slide available and there is pedestrian access from three easements provided when the neighborhood was created. None of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Hull Park – 6.4 acres – Hannah Avenue west of Woodmere Avenue

Hull Park was transformed in 1999 by a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant, from a road through a field with a boat launch on Boardman Lake to a very attractive community park with a multi-use building with restrooms and a picnic/meeting area. Other facilities include a small wooden gazebo overlooking the lake, four seating platforms, boardwalks and docks with fishing opportunities and an improved boat launch. In 2009, the Traverse Area Community Sailing (TACS) group donated the materials and construction costs for a large boathouse to store their sailing fleet for summer classes taught to area young people and some also offers some adult classes. TACS has a long term management agreement for the boathouse and they also use the multi-use recreation building for teaching sailing lessons. TACS has recently installed an accessible lift to get people into boats on the lake. Some money for the boat lift and related projects was from the Kellogg Foundation grant program. A new non-profit called Traverse Area Community Rowing plans on starting a community rowing program in 2016. Almost all features of this park meet accessibility guidelines.

Huron Hills Park – 1.71 acres – Between Kewaunee and East Timberlane Drives just west of Birchwood Avenue

This is a small neighborhood park with no amenities except for a small open field and a small hill that is sometimes used as a sledding hill. None of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Indian Woods Park - .62 acres – Between Indian Woods Drive and Huron Street, just south of East Front Street

This two-tiered neighborhood park has frontage on two streets and offers a Jack and Jill play structure, swing set, merry-go-round, climber and benches. None of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Lay Park - .79 acres – Union Street near 6th Street

This downtown neighborhood park offers a shaded sitting area and park benches. Only the sidewalk passing along Union Street along the park meets accessibility guidelines.

Meijer's Silverbrook Acres – 58.89 acres – Division Street at West Silver Lake Road

This undeveloped parcel along US-31/M-37, is a natural area with Kid's Creek running through the length of the property. This property is deed-restricted for use as a nature study area and only viewing platforms or boardwalks for that purpose, could be constructed. None of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Mini-Park - .30 acres – East Front Street at Grandview Parkway

This small neighborhood-sized park straddles the Grandview Parkway, with a walkway along the Boardman River offering fishing opportunities. This path also serves as the TART trail as it passes under the Murchie (US 31/M37, Grandview Parkway) Bridge. The park also features the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and a State Historic Marker. Most of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Open Space Park – 7.19 acres – Grandview Parkway at Marina Drive

This is a park that fulfills both the community and regional labels depending on the time of year. Several major and minor festivals held on this space, draw crowds from all over the region. The Cherry Festival and Film Festival draw people from all over the United States, along with several other countries. The park features a promenade along the West Grand Traverse Bay which doubles as the TART trail. There are few other amenities, as this area is kept as the name implies, open space. Most of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Park A – 1.2 acres – Between Arrowhead Drive and East Timberlane Drive

This neighborhood park is a wooded parcel that is surrounded by homes in one of the newer developments on the east side of the City. It is strictly a natural area used by park neighbors. None of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Park C - .10 acres – Birchwood Avenue at Kewaunee Drive

This small neighborhood park offers access to East Grand Traverse Bay down a set of steps that were constructed in 2006 by a Camp Pugsley work crew. A bench is also provided along the steps. None of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Senior Center Park – 3.7 acres – East Front Street at Barlow Street

The Senior Center Park houses the Senior Center building that serves the entire Grand Traverse area community with programs for mature adults age 50 and over. The park, that fronts on West Grand Traverse Bay, offers tennis courts that are also marked for pickleball, shuffleboard courts, and picnic facilities. A swimming beach and public restrooms are also available. Most of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Slabtown Corner (formerly Veteran's Memorial Park) - 2.24 acres – Division Street between Bay and Cypress Streets

This community park offers four lighted tennis courts, a restroom building, a small swing set and slide. The park is also home to Wags West, the first off-leash Dog Park in the City. Until 2010, the park was home to a grouping of memorials commemorating the ultimate sacrifice of Veterans from conflicts dating from the Civil War to present day. These memorials have been relocated to the new Veteran's Memorial on City Parkland at the Grand Traverse Commons. Most of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

J. Smith Walkway - .06 acres – 100 Block of East Front Street between Union and Cass Streets

This tiny downtown pocket park offers an attractive path from Front Street to a pedestrian bridge across the Boardman River to the Farmer's Market area. The park features benches, tables, wall seating and a fountain. All of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Sunset Park – 2.22 acres – East Front Street at Hope Street

Sunset Park is a small community park that has a beach on West Grand Traverse Bay. A swing set and merry-go-round are also found at the park. Only the sidewalk passing along Front Street along the park meets accessibility guidelines.

Triangle Park (the park is in the process to be renamed Jupiter Gardens) - .14 acres – Boyd Avenue at Rose Street

This small neighborhood park borders the TART trail and has a bench and peace pole donated by the local Rotary Club. The trail meets accessibility guidelines. The planet Jupiter model is depicted on a pole mounted adjacent to the park as part of the scaled solar system installed along the TART trail from Hull Park to a point about 5 miles east.

Union Street Dam Park - .93 acres – Union Street at 6th Street

Union Street Dam offers fishing opportunities for trout, salmon and other species along the toe of the dam or on the fishing deck along the river. There is also a fish-ladder for passage of (primarily) steelhead trout to reach upstream spawning grounds. Some of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Volleyball Court Area – 2.79 acres – Grandview Parkway east of Oak Street

The community park includes two parcels separated by a parcel owned by the City of Traverse City – Garfield Township Recreational Authority. The eastern parcel has a parking lot and access to the beach on West Grand Traverse Bay. The western parcel has six sand volleyball courts. The TART trail also passes along the southern boundary of this park. Some of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

Wellington Street Plaza - .07 acres – East Front Street at Wellington Street

Wellington Street Plaza is a small downtown pocket park nestled between two businesses. It offers Boardman River fishing, some seating areas and a place to tie up a boat for short-term day use access to downtown. It connects to the Mini Park and TART trail. Some of the park features meet accessibility guidelines when entered through the Mini Park.

West End Beach – 4.06 acres – Grandview Parkway from Oak Street to Division Street

This long narrow community park stretches along the Grandview Parkway (US 31/M-37/M-72) and is fronted on West Grand Traverse Bay. A marked swimming area is present at the west end of the volleyball courts and the TART trail follows the entire park to the second marked beach at the intersection of Division Street. There is a bathroom facility at this second beach location. Some of the park features meet accessibility guidelines.

PARK NAME	PRIMARY SERVICE AREA
American Legion Park	Downtown employees and residents
Arbutus Court Park	Traverse Heights neighborhood
Ashton Park	Slabtown neighborhood and Willow Hill School
Boon Street Park	Traverse Heights neighborhood
Brown Bridge Quiet Area	Entire region and tourists
Bryant Park	Entire City, community and tourists
Clancy Park	Orchard Heights neighborhood
Clinch Park	Entire City, community and tourists
Darrow Park	Slabtown neighborhood and tourists
East Bay Park	Entire City, community and tourists
F & M Park	Boardman and Oak Park neighborhoods and community
Fulton Park	Entire community and TART trail users
Grand Traverse Commons	Entire region and tourists
Hannah Park	Central neighborhood and community
Hickory Hills	Entire region and tourists
Highland Park	Local neighborhood
Hull Park	Entire community
Huron Hills Park	Local neighborhood
Indian Woods Park	Indian Woods neighborhood
Lay Park	Downtown employees, residents and tourists
Meijer's Silverbrook Acres	Entire community
Mini Park	Downtown and Boardman neighborhoods and tourists
Open Space	Entire region and tourists
Park A	Local neighborhood
Park C	Local neighborhood
Senior Citizen Park	Entire community and tourists
Slabtown Corner	Entire community and tourists
J. Smith Walkway	Downtown employees, shoppers and tourists
Sunset Park	Entire community and tourists
Triangle Park (Jupiter Gardens)	North Traverse Heights neighborhood and TART trail users
Union Street Dam Park	Entire community
Volleyball Courts (West End)	Entire region and tourists
Wellington Street Plaza	Downtown employees, shoppers and tourists
West End Beach	Entire region and tourists

ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

The City of Traverse City is moving forward in providing facilities that are barrier-free to better serve all segments of the population. As an example, the Streets Division has installed ramps at all intersections throughout the City. Four playgrounds have been installed that meet current accessibility guidelines. As old picnic tables need replacing, they are replaced with tables designed for accessibility. Changes have been made to parking lots and other changes are in the works for a possible public fishing pier at the mouth of the Boardman River. Accessible walkways on the beach are now available at Bryant, Clinch and East Bay parks. Older restrooms have been retro-fitted with new faucets, grab bars, etc. to bring them up to current standards and new restrooms have been built at Clinch Park. The Hickory Hills Master Plan has recommended facilities that will all meet current accessibility standards. The City will continue to make improvements until all possible facilities and public spaces will be accessible.

An important step in this process was an August 2013 ADA compliance review by the Disability Network of Northern Michigan. In their report, they listed various items in parks and other areas of public accommodation where remediation was necessary. Most of these items have been corrected except those that are longer term fixes when buildings are renovated or replaced. A few items that were recommended are not ideal in their current configurations but are within the recommended tolerances for compliance and therefore were not changed.

The following list indicates for each park what the current barrier-free status is, as determined by Parks and Recreation staff, and current plans for improvements. The rankings are defined by the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design as:

ADA Ranking 1 – None of the site elements meet ADA Standards
ADA Ranking 2 – Some of the site elements meet ADA Standards
ADA Ranking 3 – Most of the site elements meet ADA Standards
ADA Ranking 4 – All of the site elements meet ADA Standards
ADA Ranking 5 – The facility meets the Principles of Universal Design

- American Legion Park – ADA Ranking 2 - No facilities except for sidewalks on two sides of park, a Veteran's monument and a drinking fountain that are barrier-free.

- Arbutus Court – ADA Ranking 2 - Accessible from neighborhood sidewalk.

- Ashton – ADA Ranking 1 - Wooded lot featuring old growth beech and hemlock trees. Small playground and trails not accessible.

- Boon Street Park – ADA Ranking 1 - Small neighborhood park with 3 pieces of playground equipment and ½ court basketball. Currently has grass with no hard surface path to any of these items.

- Brown Bridge Quiet Area – ADA Ranking 2 - Wild and scenic area with some barrier free nature trails and MDNR-type primitive toilet.

- Bryant Park – ADA Ranking 3 - Has barrier free flush toilet facility, designated parking and a playground meeting ADA standards. A hard surface path connects parking to the play structure along with a picnic table and barbeque grill pad. A portable ADA path to beach was installed in 2014.

- Clancy Park – ADA Ranking 1, after grant project in 2016 will increase to a ranking of 3 - Old playground, 1/4 court basketball and large grass area. No hard surface paths to either. MNRTF grant has been recommended for funding for 2016 to add walkways, playground pieces and small picnic shelter that will be accessible.

- Clinch Marina - ADA Ranking 4 - New construction of entire marina completed in 2003 allows access to all parts of the marina by all.

- Clinch Park – ADA Ranking 3 - New barrier-free restrooms and paths were opened in 2013 thanks to donations and a MNRTF grant. A beach access walk was added in 2012 and upgraded in 2014.

- Darrow Park – ADA Ranking 2 - New playground installed in 2000 is per ADA accessibility guidelines. Sidewalks surround park and lead to playground.

- East Bay Park – ADA Ranking 3 - New playground installed in 1996 is per ADA accessibility guidelines. New parking lot also installed with designated parking and sidewalks to restroom, playground and toward the beach. An accessible walkway on the beach was relocated from Clinch Park in 2015.

- F & M Park – ADA Ranking 2 - A new play structure was constructed in late fall of 2009 per ADA accessibility guidelines. A gazebo constructed in 2003, has a sidewalk added in 2005 that connects the gazebo to the sidewalk system surrounding the park.

- Fulton Park – ADA Ranking 2 - Natural area that had new parking lot installed in 2004 that is ADA accessible.

- Grand Traverse Commons – ADA Ranking 2 - Sidewalks exist on the edges of portions of the property. Current nature trails are not ADA accessible. The Veteran's Memorial area is ADA accessible.

- Hannah Park – ADA Ranking 2 – A new statue plaza was installed in the south east corner of the park in 2015 that is accessible. The rest of the park is not currently accessible except a sidewalk along Sixth and Unions Streets. The park facilities include two sets of steps leading to the lower level near the Boardman

River and three fishing platforms overhanging the river.

- Hickory Hills Ski Area – ADA Ranking 1 - Needs new lodge and parking arrangements to become barrier-free. A master plan has been completed and fund raising has begun. Construction is tentatively planned for 2018.

- Highland Park – ADA Ranking 1 - No development to this small neighborhood park. Only a slide is currently present. Only access is across grassy areas.

- Hull Park – ADA Ranking 3 - Major renovations completed in 2002 allow access to boardwalk, boat launch facilities, restrooms and amphitheater. An accessible boathouse used for sailing classes was completed in 2009. The East, North, and first leg of the West Boardman Lake Trails connect at Hull Park and are accessible.

- Huron Hills Park – ADA Ranking 1 - Small grassy neighborhood park, no facilities, no access.

- Indian Woods Park – ADA Ranking 1 - Four pieces of play equipment accessible only by grass lawn areas.

- Lay Park – ADA Ranking 2 - No development to this downtown park except for sidewalks on three sides.

- Meijer's Silverbrook Acres – ADA Ranking 1 - No development, no access at this natural area park.

- Mini Park (Wequetong Point) Park- ADA Ranking 2 - Walkways to river are accessible for fishing and sight-seeing.

- Open Space Park – ADA Ranking 2 - Has accessible walkways to observe West Bay. Improvements could be made to the interior of the park with walkways and picnic facilities.

- Park A – ADA Ranking 1 - No development, no access. Small wooded parcel.

- Park C – ADA Ranking 1 - Small set of steps leading to East Bay frontage. Not currently accessible.

- Senior Center Park – ADA Ranking 3 - Shuffleboard Courts and Tennis Courts are accessible along with the main part of the building. The restrooms that are reached from the exterior of the building need some renovation. The building will be updated as soon as fund- raising is complete. 2017-18 is target year.

- J Smith Walkway – ADA Ranking 4 - Small park with accessible walkway to downtown. Upgrades completed in 2006 made it more attractive and accessible.

- Sunset Park – ADA Ranking 1 - Only facilities are swings and a merry-go-round. They are not reachable by hard surface paths, nor is beach. There is an accessible sidewalk on one side.

- Triangle Park (soon to be Jupiter Gardens) – ADA Ranking 1 - Park that has the TART trail passing adjacent to it. Has no facilities except for a bench and peace pole donated by the Rotary Club but does have the TART trail access.

- Union Street Dam Park – ADA Ranking 2 - Long sloping ramp to fishing dock is present. Accessible walk across dam

- Slabtown Corner (formerly Veteran's Memorial Park) – ADA Ranking 3 - Sidewalks from accessible parking to restroom building and tennis courts is complete. Improvements to restroom accessibility were completed in 2005. Wags West off-leash dog park was opened in 2013. Sidewalks lead to the gate of the dog area.

- Volleyball Court Area – ADA Ranking 2 - The TART trail passes along the edge of this property and a parking lot with designated spaces is a short distance from the courts.

- Wellington Street Plaza – ADA Ranking 2 - River access for fishing is accessible from the South Mini-Park.

- West End Beach – ADA Ranking 2 - Draft plans have been prepared for a new restroom structure and ramped path to beach. Waiting for funding to become available. TART trail runs the length of this park area and new pathway was constructed in the fall of 2014 that allows access to the beach level at Elmwood Avenue.

GRANT INVENTORY

Grant Number – 26-00333 Land and Water Conservation Fund
Veteran's Memorial Park Development - 1972

Scope items: Two lighted tennis courts, shelter and restroom building, tot lot play equipment, fencing, walks, benches, parking, landscaping and utilities.

Tennis courts have been removed and replaced with new courts. Benches were deteriorating and were replaced, some of landscaping has died or become unsightly and was replaced. The original fencing along Division Street has been replaced as part of the Wags West dog park project. This park was renamed Slabtown Corner in 2014 after the Veteran's monuments were moved to another location.

Grant Number – 26-10247 Land and Water Conservation Fund
Boardman River Access – 1981
(Cass St. at the river, east side – Called the Chamber of Commerce River Plaza for identification reference.)

Scope Items: Boat landing, retaining wall planter, steps and barrier free ramp, boardwalk, lighting and landscaping.

Some decking has been replaced on boardwalk, steps and ramp. Some of the retaining wall was redone with construction of the new Chamber of Commerce Building. Landscaping has been updated in many locations.

Grant Number – TF704 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
West Grand Traverse Bay Acquisition – 1983

This 3.83 acre parcel is along West Grand Traverse Bay from the area that is now the volleyball courts to near West End Beach. This area is used as a beach, volleyball courts, general park green space / sitting area along the Grandview Parkway (U.S. 31/M – 37/M – 72).

Grant Number TF88-184 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
West Bay Beach – 1988 *(Called West End Beach)*

Scope Items: Create beach, topsoil and seed, irrigation, landscaping, plaza with sidewalks, parking lot, lighting, bike trail, wooden steps and decking.

All items in good shape, some aging to wooden deck and steps. The bike trail has been resurfaced.

Grant Number TF92-199 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Riverfront Acquisition - 1992

This project added 70 acres to the Brown Bridge Quiet Area with 2,500 feet of Boardman River frontage protecting it from further development and adding to the natural area.

Grant Number TF99-160 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Hull Park Waterfront- 1999

Scope Items: Multiuse recreation pavilion, boardwalks and accessible docks, parking for boat trailers, bituminous pathway, shade pavilion / overlook, move access road, landscaping and irrigation.

All development items are in good condition and used heavily. Has turned field and small dock into a vibrant community park.

Grant Number TF02-151 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Boardman Lake Trail - East

Trail is in good shape with the exception of some root damage to bituminous surface in a few locations. Trail is well used and a great community asset.

Grant Number TF05-104 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Boardman Lake Trail – West (North)

Trail is in good shape with the exception of some root damage to bituminous surface in a few locations. Trail is well used and a great community asset.

This trail connects the East Boardman Lake Trail through Hull Park, across the Boardman River to the north end of the west side of the lake. All items are almost new and doing very well.

Grant Number TF11-060 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Boardman Lake Trail West

Trail, picnic shelter and fishing dock / kayak launch were constructed in 2014 with dedication in 2015. The trail and other amenities are in new condition. Trail is great addition to the local trail system and is this first part of the west trail that will eventually connect the East and North trails to surround Boardman Lake.

SECTION 4

PLANNING METHODS

INTRODUCTION

Park and Recreation planning for the City of Traverse City is a participatory process involving the public, City Staff, the Planning Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the City Commission. Principal City staff involved in the process is the Parks and Recreation administration and office team.

LAND USE

The City's Master Plan (2009) incorporates a "Natural Resources Element" and a "Parks and Recreation Element" both of which have provided a basis for this plan. The “Natural Resources Element” deals specifically with environmentally sensitive lands such as steep slopes, wetlands, shoreline zones, and wildlife habitat. Management guidelines are provided to minimize negative impacts when developing in or near these sensitive areas. Generally, the guidelines limit or discourage development in the environmentally sensitive areas.

The “Parks and Recreation Element” provides policies and guidelines for developing and regulating the use of the municipal park system, and its facilities. The plan discusses the various types of parks the City has and guidelines for their development.

Generally, the plan indicates the areas within the City that should be committed to permanent open space usage. A sizable percentage is proposed to be preserved as open space providing protection for flood plain, stream basin, shoreline, steep slope, and wetland areas.

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE PLAN

Another element of the City Master Plan is the provision of “linkages” that tie groups of parks along the bay and Boardman River together. These linkages strengthen the relationship between recreational areas and enhance usability.

Perhaps the most noted portion of the plan concerns the “Bayfront Plan”, a generalized name given to the property lying between Senior Citizen Park on the east and the

intersection of M-72 and Grandview Parkway on the west. The “Bayfront Plan” area is intended to be a balanced active and passive facility designed to serve residents and tourists alike. The overall park is really a succession of specialized smaller parks interconnected by green space linkages. In 2004, the City of Traverse City - Garfield Township Recreational Authority was established with the intentions of acquiring and developing additional land for the area’s future. Bond and millage issues passed that allowed another parcel on West Grand Traverse Bay to become public recreational land.

ZONING

The City Zoning Ordinance allows for the development of parks, playgrounds, and community recreational buildings owned or operated by the City, and country clubs or golf courses (public or private), in most zoning districts.

OVERVIEW

The Traverse City Parks and Recreation Plan was prepared by staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission for review by the public and City Planning Commission. After advertised public meetings, the City Commission adopts this document by formal resolution as the Traverse City Parks and Recreation Plan and authorizes submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for approval.

In addition, the Traverse City Planning Commission must prepare a Public Improvements Plan annually for submittal to the City Commission. The plan describes all major proposed physical improvements and equipment purchases for the next six years, including improvements for City parks and recreation facilities. The plan complements the Traverse City Parks and Recreation Plan's Public Improvement Schedule and is prepared annually rather than once every five years, as is the case with the Recreation Plan.

The Public Improvements Plan and subsequent reviews are held at public meetings both at the Planning Commission and City Commission levels. Finally, the plans are carried into action via the Traverse City Annual Budget as prepared by staff for City Commission implementation.

STAFF INPUT

The principal City staff involved in the process is the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Public Services Clerical Support Staff, with input from the Senior Center Director, Brown Bridge Quiet Area Project Coordinator, Director of Public Services, City Planning Director, Planning and Zoning Administrator, and the City Manager.

SECTION 5

PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

SURVEYS

During the past few years, several formal and informal surveys, mostly in an on-line format, have been completed on topics, such as the Hickory Hills Master Plan (2014), Triangle Park (2015) and Sunset Park (2015) improvements and use patterns. A survey was also distributed in various media forms in the fall of 2010. The survey was made available at the "Public Workshop for Parks" held on September 23, 2010, a link to the survey was placed on the City's website, the neighborhood groups were informed of the survey availability and the Downtown Development Authority publicized the survey.

These surveys, while not scientifically administered, offer valuable information on what a portion of the citizens and area residents feel about the facilities and programs offered by the City. The Hickory Hills survey was gathered during the master plan process and its results were very valuable in creating the final report.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Parks and Recreation Plan and the Public Improvement Schedule (PIS) were a collaborative effort of the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Director of Public Services, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Planning Director and the City Manager. The PIS is reviewed and amended by the City Parks and Recreation Commission at public meetings and forwarded to the Planning Commission and then to the City Commission for their action.

"YOUR BAY - YOUR SAY" PUBLIC PLANNING PROCESS HISTORY

Beginning in February 2004, a committee was formed to begin looking at what to do with the space that would become park land when the Bayfront Power Plant was removed. About a year later, the scope of the committee was expanded to include a roughly two mile stretch of waterfront from Senior Center Park on the east side, to the intersection of M-72 and the Grandview Parkway on the west side.

The Small Town Design Initiative program from Michigan State University and the Master's Level program in Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning from the University of Michigan were both contracted to assist in planning the Bayfront area. The MSU group was concerned mainly with the Bayfront and Boardman River area and the

U of M group was charged with strengthening the connections between the downtown area and the Bayfront.

On June 23, 2005, the first public meeting was held with about 150 people in attendance. At this meeting, people were asked to list what they were proud of, sorry about, and what they would like to see from a hot air balloon if they flew over Traverse City in 5 to 10 years.

The next series of meetings was held on September 15 - 17, 2005. On the 15th, a visual preference survey was held on design styles. September 16th was a walking tour with Dan Burden from "Walkable Communities". A public design process was held on September 17th. After these meetings, the MSU students divided into teams and prepared design proposals that were presented in an interactive telecast from MSU to Traverse City on November 10, 2005.

After opportunities for the public to view the design boards at various locations around Traverse City, a meeting was held on January 19, 2006 where people were able to rate their favorite parts of all designs. Those comments were then taken back to MSU where a final design was produced and presented at a public meeting on June 8, 2006.

The University of Michigan Downtown Character Study was presented at a public meeting on May 11, 2006 after a series of pubic sessions to prepare the study.

At the conclusion of the MSU and U of M processes, a Request for Proposals was issued for a private consulting firm to take the results of the two college groups along with additional public input and work them further into a conceptual master plan for the entire Bayfront. The RFP deadline was in late July of 2006 and interviews of the top three firms were held on September 14, 2006. After the contract was awarded to JJR/Wade Trim, work began on the master plan.

During this phase of the planning for the Bayfront, public meetings were held on January 25 and April 24, 2007 to gather public input on proposed designs. The presentation of the results of the design process, "Key Recommendations - Traverse City's Waterfront Plan", was held in a public meeting on June 21, 2007. The plan, with some slight modifications, was accepted and adopted in September of 2007 by the City of Traverse City.

FURTHER PLANNING STEPS FOR THE BAYFRONT PLAN

In February 2010, proposals were received to take the Master Plan to the preliminary engineering level. URS Corporation was selected and began their duties in March. The public was highly involved with this process including a three day charette where a great number of civic, business, educational and other groups were present to listen to a short presentation and then to provide input. There were also sessions for the general public to observe and give input during the planning and design days. Representatives from

URS gave summary presentations to local neighborhood groups, boards and commissions and civic organizations, then answered questions and received feedback.

Their final product was presented to the City Commission on July 19 which was followed by approvals of various boards and commissions before the City Commission formally adopted the plan on September 7, 2010.

In 2011, proposals were received for the Clinch Park – Phase One Final Design and Construction Documents. The contact was awarded to Hamilton – Anderson. After these documents were completed, proposals were received in 2012 from construction contractors with the contract awarded to Hallmark Construction of Traverse City. Construction began in early September of 2012 and the park was reopened to the public in late June of 2013.

PUBLIC PIER PLANNING PROCESS

In 2014, the City received a Great Lakes Fishery Trust Grant for $232,000 to complete the design, preliminary engineering, studies, and construction drawings and details to build an approximately 550 foot, universally accessible fishing pier at the mouth of the Boardman River on West Grand Traverse Bay. The pier will provide unique, outstanding access for people of all ages, needs and abilities to fish for migratory and other species, and to learn about the Great Lakes, the importance of stewardship, and the value, challenges and opportunities involving the fishery.

The City retained the professional services of SmithGroupJJR, of Ann Arbor, to complete the design study of a new public pier. The project included a design process which engaged the community, and completed studies that assessed the feasibility, impacts, costs, and benefits of a new public pier.

The Schematic Design Phase of the project included a thorough consideration of potential sites and design options, and an extensive public involvement process. The planning and design also assessed the basic feasibility of a fishing pier at the proposed location on the west side of the mouth of the Boardman River. The resulting proposal to build a fishing pier at this location includes the construction of a publicly accessible pier with amenities and features to encourage fishing, as well as many landside improvements to support the pier and connect it to the downtown and larger community.

The Design Development Phase of the project was based on input from the public, City staff, and the Study Group which resulted in the features of the pier being designed with a focus on creating an interesting place that is unique to Traverse City, and that is constructed with materials and resilience to withstand heavy use by the public and the marine conditions expected in this environment.

Construction-ready drawings have been completed as part of this effort. The opinion of probable costs states that the pier would cost approximately $5.5 million. Currently, the City is not actively fundraising for this project.

“PUBLIC WORKSHOP FOR THE FUTURE OF PARKS AND RECREATION”

On November 12, 2015, the Parks and Recreation Commission hosted the “Public Workshop for the Future of Parks and Recreation” to gather insight from the community on needs and desires for parks, recreation facilities, and recreation programs. An informational briefing was followed by small group input on goals and objectives from the 2011-2016 plan. The last project of the evening was for those in attendance to look at park maps and then make design and operational suggestions for future consideration

The workshop was publicized in the local Record-Eagle newspaper, on the City’s website, The Ticker, a local daily electronic news and events emailing, and other media outlets including WTCM Radio. Although the workshop was lightly attended, there was a good cross-section of the community represented. Participants from many parts of town were present along with a varied age range.

SECTION 6

COMMUNITY GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Recreation surveys, citizen comments, and the recreation facility planning process provide a wide variety of ideas and priorities to guide staff and City efforts. The goals stated below provide a basis in the development of the objectives. The objectives in turn provide guidance in the development of an action plan to improve recreation for the citizens of Traverse City while at the same time enhancing the City's image as a vacationland. Understanding that values and priorities are ever changing in the community, this set of goals will be continually refined and expanded to reflect new attitudes and ideas.

GOAL 1: HICKORY HILLS MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Build a stronger recreation facility at Hickory Hills that provides year round recreation opportunities.

Objectives:

a. Work together with the Grand Traverse Ski Club, Preserve Hickory, and Garfield Township to implement the Hickory Hills Multi-Season Recreation Master Plan.
b. Coordinate Phase 1 design plans with fundraising efforts so that construction can begin in a timely manner as listed below:
    1. Winter 2015-16, prepare RFP for infrastructure and maintenance facility design services leading to 2016 to 2017 construction.
    2. Develop RFP for lodge construction and slope improvements tentatively planned for the 2018 construction season.
c. Work with various user groups, including TART and the City of Traverse City / Garfield Township Recreational Authority, to collaborate in connecting recreation and Nordic trails to create an integrated trail systems between the trail systems at Hickory Hills, Hickory Meadows, and the Historic Barns property at the Grand Traverse Commons. This would accommodate four seasons of uses including cross country skiing, snowshoeing, biking, hiking, and running.
d. Continue to work with the Northern Michigan Disc Sports Organization to maintain and improve the disc golf course in concert with other Hickory Hills improvements.
e. Continue to explore funding sources for further phases of the Master Plan implementation including summer uses.

GOAL 2: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE EXISTING PARKS

Strengthen communications and relationships with neighborhood associations and other community groups and individuals, to develop new parks, recreational amenities and park enhancements.

Objectives for all parks:

a. Work together with neighborhood associations and community groups to facilitate discussion and planning for park improvements including safe access to all parks.
b. Encourage the public to use the Park Planning Process to present and develop ideas for park improvement.
c. Work together with foundations and organizations for building or replacing aging playground structures.
d. Provide facilities to allow all parks to encourage multi-generational recreation.
e. Embrace the area's agricultural heritage in programming and facilities.

Objectives for certain parks with various planning stages in process:

a. Clancy Park (Successful MNRTF Project for 2016 construction season)
    1. Develop RFP package for design and construction services to complete the scope items of the grant application and site plan.
    2. Award contract and complete construction during the fall of 2016.
    3. Work together with the Orchard Heights Neighborhood group to continue to maintain and improve Clancy Park.
b. Hannah Park
    1. Now that work on the Perry Hannah sculpture plaza is complete, work with the Central Neighborhood Association and other interested citizens to continue to improve Hannah Park and develop a site plan that will lead toward construction during 2017. The funds donated for the entire construction costs of the sculpture plaza can be used as a match for Brown Bridge Trust Fund monies to be used to fund these improvements.
c. Lay Park
    1. Develop a revised site plan that supports recreational opportunities in Old Town.
    2. Continue to work with park neighbors and others to raise the matching funding so that the Brown Bridge Trust Fund can be used to fund improvements as early as 2016 or 2017.
d. Jupiter Gardens (Rose and Boyd Streets)
    1. Work with neighborhood group and other interested citizens to develop a site plan that will lead toward improvements including perennial gardens, walkways and a small trailside shelter.
e. Sunset Park
    1. Work with community to make improvements to Sunset Park and encourage its use as a multi-generational park.

GOAL 3: BOARDMAN LAKE & RIVER

Develop Boardman Lake and River and adjoining properties as a natural resource promoting active, passive and water related recreational opportunities.

Objectives:

a. Continue to provide a mixed-use recreation environment that promotes active and passive activities.
b. Work with the appropriate agencies and local non-profits (TART) to complete the final phase (west side) of non-motorized trail around Boardman Lake by 2018.
c. Develop activities that connect downtown to the south end of Boardman Lake and future non-motorized access to the south of S. Airport Road.
d. Continue to support Traverse Area Community Sailing (TACS), Traverse Area Community Rowing (TACR), TC Whitewater and other non-profit organizations that encourage water-related recreational use of Boardman Lake and River.
e. Design a riverwalk that will provide connection from downtown to Boardman Lake and pursue recreation development along this corridor.

GOAL 4: ACTIVE MULTIMODAL RECREATION & TRANSPORTATION

Complete the active transportation plan that would support future trails, pathways and transportation improvements in and around the community to increase and encourage more recreational opportunities.

Objectives:

a. Advocate for implementation of a complete streets ordinance.
b. Complete the comprehensive multimodal transportation plan for the City working with appropriate City staff, local agencies and the Planning Commission.
c. Consider developing standards and locations for the development of bicycle facilities and pedestrian walkways.
d. Evaluate existing and future transportation corridors in the City for improved multimodal options in conjunction with ongoing trail and streetscape planning efforts.
e. Build sidewalks adjacent to, and where appropriate, within all parks located within a neighborhood setting to make then safer and more accessible.
f. Improve overall transportation choices that would also improve recreational opportunities by connecting recreational facilities together.
g. Utilize existing and past trail planning efforts that have been completed by TART Trails, City Planning and neighboring townships.

h. Work with local non-governmental organizations (NGO's) such as the Grand

Traverse Regional Land Conservancy and trail advocacy groups including the NW Michigan Council of Governments and the Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails (TART).

i. Implement universal accessibility design principles as a design standard for all new facilities.
j. Support Safe Routes to Schools Program
k. Utilize Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) & Green Building Standards on all site and building solutions.
l. Work together with the Downtown Development Authority to increase active transportation in the DDA District.
m. Continue to partner with user groups, local schools, Bay Area Transportation Authority, and non-profit groups to provide after school transportation to Hickory Hills to increase student utilization of the park.

GOAL 5: TRAVERSE CITY BAYFRONT REVITALIZATION

Design and implement the next phases of the Bayfront Revitalization Plan as means to care for our public waterfront as a recreational resource for use by all, with care and attention given for preserving and enhancing the natural and environmental qualities.

Objectives:

a. Prioritize the remaining elements of the Traverse City Bayfront 2010 Plan, for next phase implementation projects.
b. Continue to leverage local dollars and apply for local, state and federal grants.
c. Utilize the Traverse City Bayfront 2010 Plan, preliminary engineering, cost projections, and recommendations as a guide to move forward with implementation.
d. Utilize Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) & Green Building Standards on all site and building solutions where possible.

GOAL 6: SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

Develop consistent wayfinding signage system to improve overall identity and name recognition of the City parks as well as improve access and increase use of the parks.

As the City moves forward with developing its park facilities, signage and wayfinding will be an important aspect of this growth. Quality, universally understood and a well thought out array of signs will increase the sense of ownership, increase name recognition and increase park usage.

Objectives:

a. Develop wayfinding analysis and recommendations including sign concepts and sign array for park entrance signs, internal circulation and directional

signs, interpretive signs that include educational and historical components, administrative and policy signs, and wayfinding signs.

b. Review City ordinance for signage requirements and restrictions.
c. Consider permit requirements for sign construction and placement within the MDOT and Grand Traverse County Road Commission rights-of-way.
d. Consider funding and phasing plan for implementation of signs.
e. Develop signage program and design intent drawings (construction details and specifications) for bidding.
f. Place signs to identify each park, regardless of size or location.

GOAL 7: BROWN BRIDGE QUIET AREA

Continue to maintain the Brown Bridge Quiet Area as an active recreational resource for the residents of Traverse City and surrounding region.

Objectives:

a. To enhance recreational opportunities, continue to make improvements to the trail system and other recreation facilities including pedestrian bridges across the Boardman River.
b. Work with the Grand Traverse County Road Commission and TART to develop a bike route from Traverse City to the Brown Bridge Quiet Area.
c. Now that the dam has been removed, make the necessary changes in facilities and programs to embrace the changes as opportunities to further new educational and recreational programming.

GOAL 8: RECREATION PROGRAMS

Develop strong and dynamic recreation programming affording a variety of recreational activities and experiences for a wide range of users.

Objectives:

a. Conduct annual analysis and efficiency review of programs.
b. Partner with local non-profits, schools, and community organizations that are providing recreation programs.
c. Survey community to ascertain their opinion on ways to continually improve the recreation programs.
d. Recreation programs need to be affordable and fulfill a community value.
e. Adjust user fees for programs and entrance fees (including Hickory Hills) on an as needed basis.

GOAL 9: SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER

Continue to support the Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation Commission to provide recreation programs, education and assistance for mature adults, age 50 and over.

Objectives:

a. Work cooperatively with the Grand Traverse Senior Center Network to maintain and improve the park surrounding the Senior Center.
b. Continue to support development of innovative programming.
c. Continue to enhance the working relationship with the Senior Center.

GOAL 10: DEVELOP MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR GRAND TRAVERSE COMMONS AND MEIJER'S SILVERBROOK ACRES

Develop management plans for the Grand Traverse Commons and Meijer's Silverbrook Acres Parks to outline a systematic approach to improving the landscaping and usability of the two parks.

Objectives:

a. Make plans for removing invasive vegetation.
b. Enhance trail systems to showcase the scenic and unique areas of the parks.
c. Develop appropriate use areas for low impact recreation opportunities at the Commons.
d. Maintain the unique character of habitat types in certain designated areas.

GOAL 11: PARKS AND RECREATION AWARENESS

Develop a marketing plan that focuses on increasing awareness of City parks and recreation programs.

Objectives:

a. Utilize existing promotional material and continue to develop more.
b. Utilize local community events to pass out promotional material including Park Guide and Map and recreational program information.
c. Recognize July as National Park and Recreation Month and celebrate by holding special events in the month of July.
d. Promote awareness of health, education, social, and environmental benefits of recreation.
e. Encourage family participation programs.

GOAL 12: SCHOOLS

Work with schools to make recreation facilities and programs part of the education system.

Objectives:

a. Develop educational programs for recreational skills and environmental understanding.
b. Investigate summer neighborhood programs using school playgrounds and gyms.
c. Develop programs with area schools to promote the utilization of Hickory Hills.
d. Investigate with Traverse City Area Public Schools, the possibility of developing a City park on a lease or use agreement, in the wooded area adjacent to Traverse Heights Elementary School.

GOAL 13: LAND ACQUISITION

Purchase additional property on an as-needed basis that will help grow and diversify the City's recreational facilities.

Objectives:

a. Consider feasibility of acquiring property near parks to provide future land for expansion of recreational activities.
b. Consider feasibility of acquiring easements or full purchase of property with Boardman River Property Owners for the future extension of a riverwalk.
c. Consider purchase or lease of property in areas of the City that are deficient in parks.

GOAL 14: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

Develop a capital improvement fund for improvements to City parkland.

Objectives:

a. Survey the community to gauge interest and support for funding parks and recreational programming.
b. Consider a recreational millage.
c. Seek to direct revenue from park usage fees, donations and fundraisers to a dedicated capital improvement fund.
d. Earmark specified donations and apply them to capital improvements for the specific park facility.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT SUMMARY

The following Capital Improvement Schedule is provided for planning purposes and is subject to change depending on many factors. These include; budget restrictions, the availability of lack thereof for private or grant funding, and changes in thought of citizens or City officials on the priority of projects..

FISCAL YEAR	PROJECT NAME	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	COST ESTIMATE	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES
2016 – 2017				
1	Hickory Hills Maintenance Building	Maintenance building is needed for storage and care of snow groomers, snow guns and other ski area equipment	$250,000.00	City Funds Brown Bridge Trust Grants Donations
2	Clancy Park Improvements	Project will include replacing play equipment and adding an accessible picnic shelter and walking paths within the park.	$137,000.00	MNRTF City Funds Brown Bridge Trust Neighborhood
3	Hannah Park Improvements	Improve dirt trail through park, add grass pavers to service drive, add irrigation and replace lighting.	$80,000.00	TIF Funds City Funds Brown Bridge Trust Donations
4	Brown Bridge – Upper Trail Connector Bridge (East End)	Pedestrian bridge across the Boardman River using donated bridge and new abutments.	$50,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Donations Grant
5	Brown Bridge – Overlook and Access Steps (5 sets total)	Will provide viewing and limit stream bank erosion along restored river section.	$35,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Grant
2017 - 2018				
1	Lay Park Improvements	Will give this Old Town park a more formal look and improve usability. Will include brick & concrete seating areas, landscaping, and walkways.	$60,000.00	Donations Brown Bridge Trust City Funds
2	Hickory Hills Lodge Replacement	Replaces aging lodge with facility with improved accessibility, functionality, and four season use.	$1,700,000.00	Donations Brown Bridge Trust Grants
3	Hickory Hills Infrastructure and Ski Area Improvements	Includes parking lot, utilities, new ski lift, lighting, new ski terrain, and additional snow making well and equipment.	$1,700,000.00	Donations Brown Bridge Trust Grants
4	Indian Woods Playground	Old play equipment needs to be replaced to meet current standards and increase play value.	$30,000.00	Donations City Funds Grants

5	Park Sign Replacement	Current park signs are becoming unsightly. New sign array will improve overall aesthetics and usability of parks.	$50,000.00	City Funds TIF Funds
6	"City Lot" Park Creation (West Front Street)	2015/16 public process suggested changes to this downtown City property including seating areas, small event space, and landscaping.	$75,000.00	City Funds Grants Donations
7	Triangle Park (Jupiter Gardens) Improvements	To include small trailside shelter, perennial gardens, and irrigation.	$60,000.00	Donations Brown Bridge Trust Grants
8	Boardman Lake Trail (West)	This would complete the trail around the entire Boardman Lake for community enjoyment.	$2,800,000.00	Brownfield Funds Grants Other Jurisdictions
9	Brown Bridge - Historic Brown's Bridge (West end)	Replacement of historic bridge to provide recreational trail connection across the Boardman River.	$195,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Rotary Charities Donations
10	Brown Bridge – Interpretive and Navigational Signage	Design and install new signs to improve way-finding and educational opportunities on the trails.	$10.000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Grant Donations
11	Brown Bridge – Invasive Species Survey and Treatment	Ongoing program to monitor and remove invasive species.	$65,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Grants Donations
2018 – 2019				
1	Sunset Park Improvements	Would include new fitness and playground equipment, picnic shelter, restrooms and retaining wall.	$200,000.00	Donations Brown Bridge Trust Grants City Funds
2	Senior Center Park Improvements	Will include, adult "playground", irrigation, walkways, and parking improvements.	$75,000.00	City Funds Donations Grants
3	Ashton Park Playground	Replacement of old play equipment with younger children's play structure	$15,000.00	City Funds Donations
4	Mini Park Upgrade and Public Art	Add public art, seating areas, landscaping, and lighting.	$200,000.00	Donations Grants TIF Funds
5	Farmer's Market Improvements	Installation of new covered vendor pavilions, landscaping, gathering and event areas, and repaving.	$1,100.000.00	TIF Funds Grants Parking Funds
6	Brown Bridge – Southside ADA Trail	Establish an accessible trail from Buck's Landing to overlook of the new river channel and bottomlands.	$20,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Grant Donations
7	Brown Bridge – Wildlife Habitat Improvements	Native species plantings to improve wildlife benefits and bank stabilization.	$20,000.00	Grant Donations
8	Brown Bridge – Overlook and Historical Display	At site of former Powerhouse create an overlook and historical display of former hydro power site.	$15,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Grant Donations

9	Brown Bridge – Crushed limestone for new trails.	Install crushed and compacted limestone on new bottomlands trail to improve accessibility.	$75,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Grants Donations
2019 - 2020				
1	Senior Center Building Renovation	Current facility is not adequate in size for needed programs and has constant maintenance issues.	$1,250,000.00	Donations Other Jurisdictions Foundations
2	Hannah Park Boardwalk	Boardwalk to connect to Union Street Dam Park area. Will increase fishing opportunities for all.	$200,000.00	TIF Funds GL Fisheries Trust City Funds Grants
3	Boon Street Park Playground Improvements	Replace old play equipment with that meeting current standards	$25,000.00	City Funds Donations Grants
4	Brown Bridge – North Parking Lot Improvements	Gravel and re-grade North parking lot and replace fencing.	$30,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Grant Donations
2020-2021				
1	Beach Retaining Wall at Bryant Park	The wall and landscaping will help reduce beach drift inland and improve turf area.	$100,000.00	City Funds
2	American Legion Park Improvements	Improvements to this downtown park would include seating areas, landscaping, and a small event space.	$150,000.00	City Funds Grants Donations
3	Bayfront Improvement Implementation	Continue Bayfront revitalization including restroom construction.	$2,000.000.00	Donations Grants Foundations
4	Union Street Dam Betterment Project	Project would change current dam to allow increased river recreation opportunities, and a true sense of place for this area.	$2,000,000.00	City Funds TIF Funds GL Fisheries Trust Grants
5	Boardman River Walk 8th Street to Boardman Lake Trail	Install 840 Feet of elevated boardwalk, lighting, and landscaping.	$515,000.00	Grants Brownfield Funds City Funds
6	Brown Bridge Road Closure – Brown Bridge	Close portion of Brown Bridge Road to create accessible trail and improved access to this property.	$100,000.00	Brown Bridge Trust Grants Donations

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

PROJECT **ESTIMATED PROJECT COST**

2016/17

Hickory Hills Maintenance Facility $250,000.00

For many years, the snow groomers and snow making equipment have been kept outside during the ski season and has been kept in the small pole barn at Hickory Hills and other locations around the City during the off season. This would combine all storage and hill maintenance activities into one building.

Clancy Park Improvements $137,000.00

The City has received a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant for $45,000.00 that will be included with other funding sources to make many improvements to this neighborhood park. These include many accessible features including concrete walking paths, small picnic shelter, new playground pieces, and site furniture.

Hannah Park Improvements $80,000.00

Following the successful fundraising and the construction of the Perry Hannah Statue Plaza, further improvements are desirable to improve the overall character of the park. This would include irrigation, porous pavers to replace the gravel two track maintenance drive, new lighting, and an improved trail surface from Union Street to Wadsworth Street.

Upper Trail Connector Bridge (East End) – Brown Bridge $50,000.00

This bridge would be constructed at the site of a former bridge that was constructed by the Boy Scouts in the 1970s near the outlet of Grasshopper Creek. The bridge was removed in the 1980s due to high water and needed maintenance. A bridge has been donated and needs a site plan, permits, engineering and installation of abutments and the bridge.

Overlook and Access Steps (5 sets total) – Brown Bridge $35,000.00

Will provide viewing opportunities and river access points to the “new” channel of the river to limit stream bank erosion caused by recreational foot traffic.

2017/18

Lay Park Improvements $60,000.00

A brick and concrete seating plaza will be the focal point in this downtown park. The project will also include landscaping, walkways, lighting and site furniture and will make this small park very inviting.

Hickory Hills Lodge Replacement $1,700,000.00

The current lodge was built in the early 1950s on a shoestring budget with volunteers and City staff, without many of the building requirements that are necessary today. In addition, there are no facilities for rental operations or retail and only a very minimal food service area. The new lodge would combine all of these operations along with lift ticket sales, National Ski Patrol and modern accessible features. The lodge would become a four season operation with events and rentals available during the non-snow sport season which will improve revenue producing potential. The location will be such that events happening on the adjacent Hickory Meadows property operated by the City of Traverse City – Garfield Township Recreational Authority would benefit from the facilities at Hickory Hills.

Hickory Hills Infrastructure and Ski Area Improvements $1,700,000.00

In conjunction with the lodge construction, many of the items in this project would be necessary prior to or concurrently with lodge construction. These items would include the utilities, roads and parking. Other items that could follow slightly behind but prior to the next ski season would be ski terrain and trail installation, lighting, snow making system expansion, and installation of a new ski lift.

Indian Woods Playground $30,000.00

Much of the play equipment in this park is 50 plus years old and in need of replacement. Using the natural elevation changes in the two halves of the park, a hill slide would be installed along with other play elements that would improve access and play value.

Park Sign Replacement $50,000.00

All of the main park entrance signs would be replaced with new signs that would be more harmonious with their park settings. In addition, wayfinding and park policy signs would be added to increase park user's satisfaction with the parks.

"City Lot" Park Creation $75,000.00

This West Front Street, City owned parcel, was the focus of a 2015/2016 MEDC PlacePlan public input process to decide what should be developed on this great spot at

the west end of downtown, with Kid's Creek running through it. Seating, picnic, and small event spaces were some of the items to come out of the public process.

Triangle Park (Jupiter Gardens) Improvements $60,000.00

Residents near this park have expressed an interest in being involved with the process to improve this small triangular parcel along the TART trail. Features would include a small trail side shelter, native/edible perennial gardens, water and bike repair stations, walkways, site furniture, and possible natural playscape items.

Boardman Lake Trail (West) $2,800,000.00

With completion of this project, the trail would be complete around Boardman Lake. This would be the fourth and final trail section. This trail, like the East Boardman Lake Trail would involve Garfield Township as more than half of the remaining trail is in their jurisdiction. Coordination with Garfield Township and the Grand Traverse County Brownfield Development Department would be required. The trail would encourage economic development which would result in private investment near the trail.

Historic Brown's Bridge Construction – Brown Bridge $195,000.00

In the 1870s, William Walter Brown and some of his neighbors constructed a bridge across the Boardman River in the location near the west end of the property. This bridge became one of the area's first State roads. Creating a foot bridge in this location would complete a 9 mile loop around the Brown Bridge Quiet Area and also will connect this spot to the historic bridge location.

Interpretive and Navigational Signage – Brown Bridge $10,000.00

Design and install interpretive and navigational signage to improve way-finding and educational opportunities on the trails.

Invasive Species Survey and Treatment – Brown Bridge $65,000.00

An ongoing program to monitor and remove invasive species in the new bottomlands along the new Boardman River Channel.

2018/19

Sunset Park Improvements $200,000.00

Sunset Park is in a prime location on West Bay but is underutilized and in need of several improvements. This project would include a small picnic shelter/restroom combination, a short fitness trail with equipment stations, new play structure, retaining wall at the sand/grass interface, and site furniture.

Senior Center Park Improvements $75,000.00

Features to be added are an adult “playground” to assist the older park users with strength, balance and mobility, a walking path with an accessible beach access walkway, and parking improvements.

Ashton Park Playground $15,000.00

With proximity to Willow Hill School and the playground equipment there, a small play structure designed for the under six year old crowd would be installed at Ashton Park.

Mini Park Upgrade and Public Art $200,000.00

This small park that is bisected by the Grandview Parkway serves tacitly as an entrance to downtown. Traverse City is a Coast Guard City and there is a desire to place a sculpture honoring the Coast Guard’s involvement in Traverse City at the apex of this triangular park. In addition, other improvements to formalize and invite more use to this underutilized park would include seating areas, landscaping, lighting, and Site furnishings.

Farmer’s Market Improvements $1,100,000.00

The current Farmer’s Market and Parking Lot B are constructed on property that is technically park land. It was the original site for the Clinch Park Zoo prior to the construction of the Grandview Parkway (US-31). The changes to the Market would improve the experience for both the vendors and shoppers and make the area much more aesthetically pleasing. It would include new covered vendor pavilions, landscaping, gathering/event areas along the river, repaving the parking lot and improving underground infrastructure.

Southside ADA Trail – Brown Bridge $20,000.00

Access to an area overlooking the new river channel and bottomland would extend from the Buck’s Landing parking area. This trail would increase the enjoyment of the Brown Bridge Quiet Area for those that have mobility challenges.

Wildlife Habitat Improvements – Brown Bridge $20,000.00

Native species would be planted in the bottomlands to provide forage, nesting, and breeding sites for wildlife. Riparian plantings will provide bank stabilization along with habitat benefits.

Overlook and Historical Display – Brown Bridge $15,000.00

The site of the old hydro powerhouse provides an excellent opportunity for history interpretation of the site. An overlook and a turbine from the decommissioned hydro dam would be featured.

Crushed Limestone for New Bottomlands Trails - Brown Bridge $75,000.00

Adding crushed limestone fines along the new bottomlands trails will improve handicap accessibility and walkability for all. This area encourages the public to come see what is happening at Brown Bridge after the dam removal.

2019/20

Senior Center Building Renovation $1,250,000.00

The Grand Traverse County Senior Citizen network is presently housed in the City owned Senior Center Building at 801 E. Front Street. For some years it has been apparent that the facility is inadequate to meeting the numerous uses and needs of our local seniors. The Center has over $200,000.00 in savings originally planned for construction of a new facility but the City Commission has approved releasing these funds for a building remodel instead.

Hannah Park Boardwalk $200,000.00

A boardwalk connecting Hannah Park to the Union Street Dam fishing area would increase opportunities to enjoy the river for fishing or passive recreational viewing.

Boon Street Park Playground Improvements $25,000.00

This small neighborhood park has antiquated play equipment that needs to be replaced. This would improve the quality of play for the neighborhood and improve the overall look of the park.

North Parking Lot Improvements – Brown Bridge $30,000.00

Parking lots on Ranch Rudolph Road would be re-graded and gravel added. The fencing would also be replaced at that time.

2020/2021

Beach Retaining Wall at Bryant Park $100,000.00

The retaining wall and landscaping will greatly reduce the amount of sand that blows up into the turf area of the park during the late fall to early spring storms. It will also help to

stop the encroachment of the sand and shrinking of the turf area. This will be a combination of hardscape and landscaping.

American Legion Park Improvements $150,000.00

Improvements to American Legion Park, located along the Boardman River downtown could include terraced seating and small event spaces, fishing platforms, landscaping around the Veteran's monument, and site furnishings.

Bayfront Implementation Next Phase $2,000,000.00

The Bayfront Plan includes several phase that may take place over the next many years. It is hope that the next phase will include new restrooms near the volleyball courts or at West End Beach and other upgrades to these areas. This project will require large donations and grants to complete.

Union Street Dam Betterment Project $2,000,000.00

This multi-faceted project would involve the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in redesigning the Union Street Dam to maintain lake water levels and allow for adequate fish passage. In addition to the dam redesign, there are hopes to turn this area into a destination for a whitewater park and improved river accessibility for fishing and boating.

Boardman River Walk 8th Street to Boardman Lake Trail $515,000.00

A river walk from 8th Street to join the Boardman Lake Trail includes 840 feet of elevated boardwalk, low-level lighting, fishing and resting platforms, and landscaping. The Traverse City Master Plan envisions a narrow linear park along the banks of the Boardman River and Boardman Lake and encourages pedestrian and bicycle linkages between neighborhoods and parks.

Brown Bridge Road Closure and Trail Development - Brown Bridge $100,000.00

A goal in the management plan for Brown Bridge calls for the closure of Brown Bridge Road through the southern portion of the Quiet Area. This stretch of the road crosses through and divides an environmentally sensitive portion of the Quiet Area and reduces the area available for biking, hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing. In addition, once abandoned, the old road bed will make an excellent wheelchair accessible trail. The Grand Traverse County Road Commission is supportive of the road closure if other associated road improvements are made.

SECTION 7

ACTION PROGRAM

The City of Traverse City is committed to continue making improvements to our Parks and Recreation facilities and programs, even in these challenging economic times. The citizens have spoken freely about the importance they place in Parks and Recreation.

In the fall of 2014, the residents of Traverse City approved a bold ballot proposal to use a portion of the Brown Bridge Trust Fund balance and revenues for the next five years to fund park improvements. Royalties from oil wells on the Brown Bridge property have been place in this trust fund. This fund, depending on oil prices will raise between two and three million dollars to fund various park capital projects in City parks and at Brown Bridge quiet area. To use the money, an equal matching portion must be received from non-City funds.

In June of 2015, the City Commission committed 1.5 million dollars from the Brown Bridge Parks Improvement Fund, contingent on a matching 1.5 million dollars being raised with 24 months, to make much need improvements to Hickory Hills Recreation Area. These improvements will include a new lodge and necessary infrastructure, a maintenance facility, addition of a new ski lift and ski terrain, snow making improvements, and multi-use, four-season trails. Preserve Hickory, a non-profit entity established to preserve affordable recreation at Hickory Hills, is leading the capital campaign to raise outside matching funds for the City's Brown Bridge Parks Improvement Trust Fund pledge of 1.5 million dollars to implement the first phases of the Hickory Hills master plan. In the short time since the launch of the Hickory Hills fundraising campaign, coordinated by Preserve Hickory, one-quarter of the necessary match has been raised within the first 6 months of the 24 month period.

This positive public sentiment was also evidenced during the initial planning steps that have taken place toward the revitalization of the West Grand Traverse Bay shoreline parks from the Senior Center on the east to M-72 on the west. The first phase of the revitalization was completed at Clinch Park in 2013 utilizing many donations from foundations, businesses and individuals and a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. Future phases of this overall project will be coming in the not too distant future.

Another area of emphasis in Traverse City, is making parks and other features in the City easier to reach by non-motorized means. This includes constructing new trails or re-marking and designating portions of streets for non-motorized traffic. Developing the plan to follow will take a good deal of study and thought, to provide a system that works for all modes of transportation. Most of this will be out of the jurisdiction of Parks and

Recreation, but when possible, it will be embraced in new construction and in updating of existing facilities. A project with an extremely strong community desire to be completed, is the West Boardman Lake Trail which will complete a recreational trail around the entire lake. This trail will connects to the TART network that will travel east and west from the north end of the trail at Hull Park and to the south with other planned trails through the Boardman Valley. Eventually it may provide a connection to the Brown Bridge Quiet Area.

One of the most important tasks for the Parks and Recreation Commission and staff is to let people know about what we have to offer them. Some of the traditional methods including newspaper features and advertising, brochures and word of mouth are not reaching the masses. A more active, diverse website and social media are being used to attract many new users. Even though literature has been available for years, many people who live here, some as long as their entire lives, are not familiar with some of our parks and programs. Utilizing these other avenues will make the information available in various ways that will hopefully reach the vast majority of the community.

While looking to Hickory Hills and the Bayfront for exciting changes for the whole community and its guests, the neighborhoods must also be an important portion of the parks and recreation package that must not be neglected. Smaller neighborhood parks like Clancy, Ashton, Indian Woods, Hannah, Lay and others, provide exciting opportunities for neighborhood involvement in development plans for these parks. Working with these groups, the Parks and Recreation Commission and staff can create vibrant hubs for these mini-communities where neighbors can meet, interact and strengthen friendships and cooperation. The Brown Bridge Trust Park Improvement Fund will allow the City to encourage community support of long overdue improvements to these parks.

Partnerships and collaboration with other recreation and education providers will be essential going forward. All of these entities are enduring the same cash challenges, and working together to share facilities, staff, and ideas, can work to benefit all of these pieces of the community. Recreation programming will continually need to be reviewed to make sure that it is serving a need for an evolving community and to investigate new programs as trends change. Local jurisdictions and organizations that provide recreation need not compete with each other by duplicating programs that do not have the participation numbers to warrant multiple entities offering the same programs.

Some parts of the City are deficient in parks. Traverse City must continue to look at property as it becomes available and seek funding so that when such a piece in a park-deficient neighborhood becomes available, it can be purchased. A fund dedicated for this purpose would be a great start in conjunction with donations and grants to make these purchases. The funding could be from a special millage, an earmarked user fee, or other imaginative funding sources for land acquisition. One example is the West Boardman Lake Park concept that would benefit the Old Town neighborhood directly, along with all those that use the complete Boardman Lake Trail system.

We are excited about the potential in the next five years and beyond for Traverse City. There are a great number of challenges, but also a large number of opportunities that should be embraced, to continue to make Traverse City a model for other communities to emulate as they provide programs and facilities for their citizens.

NOTE TO DRAFT PLAN REVIEWERS:

The previous 68 pages is the heart of the plan. There will be various appendices and forms required by the Department of Natural Resources that will be added to the final plan.

Please complete your review and return any comments to Parks and Recreation Superintendent Lauren Vaughn in one of the following ways.

Email to: lvaughn@traversecitymi.gov

Write to:

Lauren Vaughn
City of Traverse City Parks and Recreation
625 Woodmere Ave.
Traverse City, MI 49686

Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on this document.