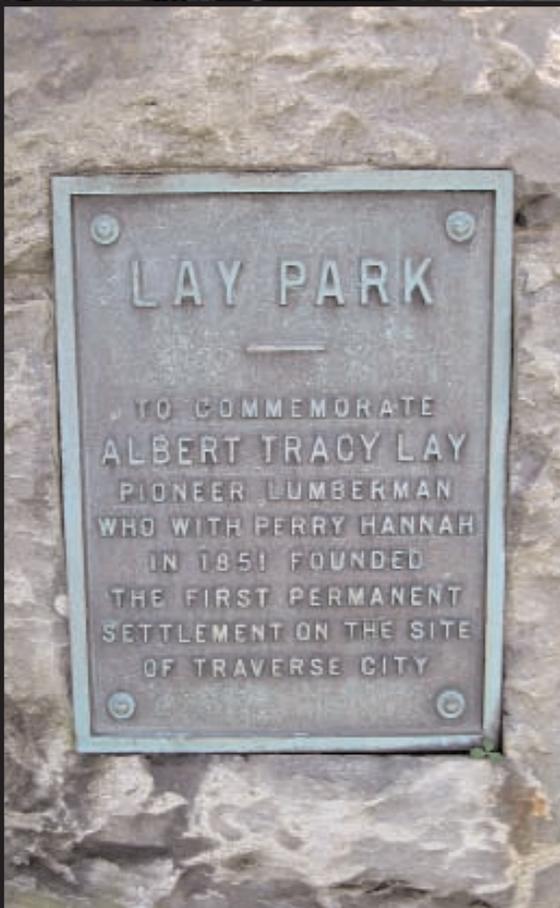


City of Traverse City Michigan  
Master Plan

# Historic Resources Element



*“To be rooted is perhaps the most important but  
least understood need of the human soul”*

*Simone Weil*

# Historic Resources Element

## History of Traverse City 1852-1955

### Historical happenings in Traverse City's first 103 years



Nam-qua-chi-quaming  
Head Chief of the  
Chippewas, died  
October 26, 1874  
at a very old age.



Indian encampment at  
the mouth of the  
Boardman River during  
blueberry season, 1860.



Hannah, Lay sawmill in  
the early days.



Slab Houses in "Bagdad"

- 1852** First steamer to enter Traverse City: side wheeler Michigan.
- 1852** First steam sawmill: Hannah & Lay mill on the waterfront.
- 1853** Post office established in Traverse City.
- 1860** Steamer Allegheny began weekly service from TC to Chicago.
- 1867** January 12 First Congregational Church dedicated at 302 Washington.
- 1869** Hannah, Lay built gristmill on river near Union Street.
- 1871** Steamer City of Traverse begins regular runs to Chicago.
- 1872** November 15 first railroad, Grand Rapids & Indiana arrives in TC
- 1873** Campbell House built later called the Park Place Hotel.
- 1876** Ladies Library moves to the Leach Building at 202 W. Front.
- 1878** Fire station built on corner of Union and 7th Street.
- 1883** Hannah, Lay big general store opens at Front and Union. A basement generator provides the first electricity in town.
- 1884** New jail on courthouse square replaces log jailhouse.
- 1885** "Northern Michigan Asylum for the Insane" (later called the Traverse City Regional Psychiatric Hospital).
- 1887** Street numbers established with Front and Union streets as baseline. Odd numbers on north and east sides.
- 1888** New St. Francis church built on corner on Cass and Tenth Street.
- 1889** First brick residence for Christian Peterson built at south-east corner of 7th and Elmwood.
- 1890** Civil War Soldier's Monument erected near county jail.
- 1892** February 4 City Opera House opened.
- 1894** Whiting hotel opened on 150-154 E. Front.
- 1894** November, Boardman River Light & Power company opened.
- 1896** 12th. Street Park opens for first football game on land donated by Ed Thirlby
- 1899** First golf course opened on land donated by Perry Hannah, west of St. Francis church.
- 1902** First canning factory built on Hall Street.
- 1903** First brick paved streets, Sixth St. between Union and Division.
- 1904** City Library built on Sixth St. with grant from Andrew Carnegie.
- 1904** Palace Theatre movie house opened at 128 E. Front.
- 1909** October 17, first flight of glider in TC by Charles Augustine.
- 1911** Ford dealership established by Ford's brother-in-law, M.D. Bryant at 132-134 W. Front
- 1916** First Chamber of Commerce organized.
- 1918** Rennie Oil Company opens first gas station at northwest corner of Union and State. They display one of Traverse City's first Napoleon autos
- 1925** May 22 First Cherry Blossom Festival
- 1926** First traffic lights installed on Front Street at Park, Cass and Union
- 1928** July 19 First Michigan Cherry Festival
- 1929** Ransom Field, first airport open on Rennie Hill south of city
- 1930** January 14 First air passenger service from Grand Rapids lands at Ransom field on skis
- 1933** Sewage disposal plant built on Boardman Lake
- 1934** Con Foster museum built
- 1934** Miniature City placed on display at City zoo
- 1934** New Thirlby Field dedicated-first lighted football stadium in the north.
- 1936** New city airport established on Garfield road
- 1941** WTCM established as first radio station by Les Biederman
- 1947** Traverse City Centennial, Traverse City Osteopathic hospital built on Munson Ave.
- 1952** Northwestern Michigan College sets up in old Coast Guard building
- 1953** Grandview Parkway opened and dedicated
- 1955** Front and State streets become one way streets

*Time line courtesy of History Center of Traverse City.*

Physical essence still exists today.

Some form or activity is active today.

# Historic Resources Element

## INTRODUCTION

*To understand the present and forecast a future we need to recognize the past. Therefore it is essential to preserve, share and celebrate our historical resources. As we bear the responsibility to safeguard our heritage we must take every opportunity to promote the responsibilities of stewardship, stabilize and improve property values and foster civic beauty. Successful preservation is a collaborative effort of public and private organizations using a variety of tools and programs. The Historic Resource Element suggests developing programs to promote preserve and protect, while striking a balance that harmonizes contemporary needs, balances property rights and preserves the culture of the City's substance and form.*



Private Residence, Bay Street  
ca 1885

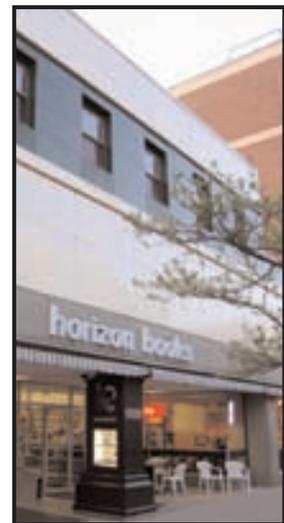


Private Residence, Washington Street  
ca 1920

## Historical Resources Element Definitions

**A Historical Resource is;** A public or privately owned; building, structure, site, object, feature, or open-space that is significant in; character, history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, works of art, or cultural heritage and at least 50 years of age.

**Historic Districts are;** Areas that have a common period of development of more than 50 years, a cultural identification with early residents, business and industry, a prevalent architectural style and a limited geographical area. In addition, areas designated as historic should have played a major role in the growth of Traverse City. They should have a sufficient concentration of original character and easily recognizable buildings to minimally suggest the original character of the area.



Business, 243 East Front Street  
1927

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Consider City and area history as a prominent value in land-use planning and development decisions.
- Take measures to protect designated Historic Districts against destruction or inappropriate change through private or public action.



Private Residence, Sixth Street  
ca 1900

Key; For photo dates  
ca, Stands for "Circa".

# Historic Resources Element



Private Residence, West Fifteenth Street  
ca 1895



Private Residence, Barlow Street  
ca 1940



Multiple Use, Elmwood Avenue  
ca 1898



Business, E. Front Street  
ca pre- 1900

- Establish historic districts, landmarks and site lists that identify key historic resources to be protected.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of the historic structures and initiate appropriate restorative and protective measures. Where structures must be removed for redevelopment, encourage relocation when feasible.
- Establish a culture of historic preservation throughout the community.
- Assist property owners within the City to identify heritage values and implement desired programs.
- Promote the preservation of historic landscapes such as the Grand Traverse Commons, Hannah Park, etc.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION POLICY (RELATIVE TO LAND USE)

- Formally expand existing Historic Districts over time to reflect the natural historic boundaries and possibly add new ones.
- Generally encourage architecture and site planning that is reflective of the City's historical context.
- Develop incentives for new construction and exterior remodeling of existing buildings within designated historical areas, to be reflective of and sensitive to historic area architectural forms and patterns.
- Discourage removal of historically significant buildings or building facades within designated Historic Districts.
- Facilitate the rehabilitation, preservation, restoration and adaptive re-use of historically significant structures in designated Historic Districts and Landmarks.
- Repair and restore existing brick streets where feasible.
- Develop historic district guidelines for residential and commercial buildings.
- Encourage the use of Secretary of the Interior's Standards when rehabilitating historic buildings.

# Historic Resources Element

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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- Recognize the City of Traverse City Historic Districts Commission and the History Center as the City's heritage preservation agents.
- Promote and encourage the adaptive re-use of historic structures.
- Assist the City's Historic Districts, City residents and geographical areas outside designated historic districts in identifying heritage values.
- Promote existing Historic Districts and encourage the expansion of more to ensure the integrity of the City's substance and form.
- Protect locally designated landmarks and buildings within designated Historic Districts through the implementation and expansion of incentive programs designed to encourage rehabilitation and preservation.
- Develop programs that create awareness of the economic and cultural benefits of historic preservation.
- Create a wayfinding system to promote the listing of historic structures, landmarks and neighborhoods.
- Develop a recognition program for historic and new developments that embody the intent of the resource.
- Prepare a manual showing techniques of rehabilitation and examples to help property owners understand what to expect during remodeling / restoration process.
- Develop additional recommendations for designated Historic Districts that reinforce established building patterns.
- Develop a process to create a comprehensive inventory of the City's cultural resources.
- Document lifecycle histories of buildings, structures and sites



Private Residence, Second Street  
ca 1848



Private Residence, Milliken Court  
ca 1956



Public Art, Washington Street  
ca 1890



Business, East Eighth Street  
ca 1955

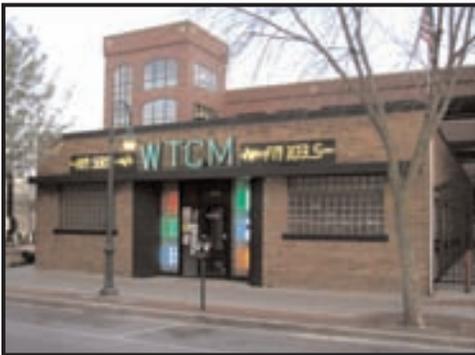
# Historic Resources Element



Private Residence, Third Street  
ca 1941



Private Residence, Sixth Street  
ca 1890



Business, Front Street  
1948



Private Residence, South Union Street  
ca 1886

## HISTORIC DISTRICTS

### Historic Districts Today Section One

The current recognized districts were designated through education and cooperation of owners and neighbors by identifying the uniqueness of the structures, location and the historical attributes in relation to an era in the timeline of the city. Owners of historic homes and buildings not only have a responsibility for maintaining the historical character and can share in benefits and resources from the Federal, State and City government. This fosters pride in ownership by giving people incentives to remain active in the community as citizens and caretakers of a shared historical experience.

These areas have active Historic Districts.

- Central Neighborhood
- Downtown
- Boardman Neighborhood
- Grand Traverse Commons

### Potential Historic Districts Section Two

These are not formally designated areas and their mention as “historic” in this element implies no restrictive inference of any kind. These designated areas are intended to stimulate awareness that historic values exist in such areas.

If it is determined that the City should establish additional or extend historic districts and sites, the following areas may serve as the basis from which to make a decision.

- Slabtown Neighborhood
- Kids Creek Neighborhood
- Old Towne Neighborhood
- Oak Park Neighborhood

## Historic Districts Today Section One Details

### CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD

The classic 1891 Hannah House at Sixth and Pine Streets is an excellent example of the fine historic architecturally significant buildings in this neighborhood. With Perry Hannah's encouragement, a series of late Victorian homes, all crafted with extensive use of fine woodwork, spread out along Sixth Street and onto nearby streets. Over time, the neighborhood has retained a surprising degree of appeal and unity. Even some of the brick streets have endured. The Hannah House itself is recognized as one of the finest Queen Anne homes in Michigan, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

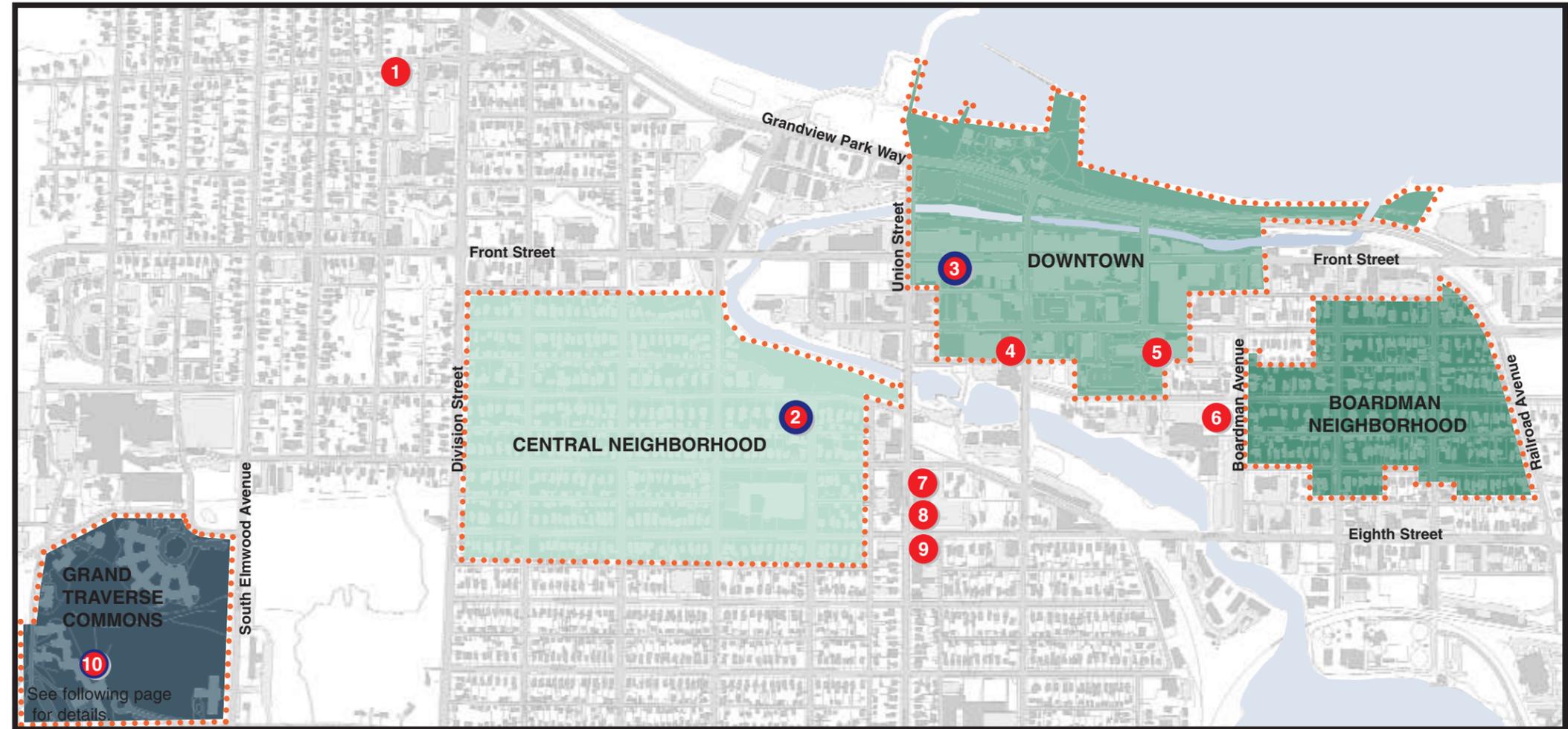
### DOWNTOWN

Beginning with an area where Captain Horace Boardman had his sawmill in 1847, the City grew along the Boardman River, Front and Union Streets. The City later expanded along Washington and State Streets. Buildings that housed businesses like the Hannah Lay Mercantile and the City Opera House still stand on Front Street and together from the core of the historic Front Street commercial area. Appropriate renovations to storefronts and other buildings are encouraged, along with a continuation of the sensitive lighting plan for this historic area. Preservation of historic bridges is also encouraged.

### BOARDMAN NEIGHBORHOOD

Washington Street was the choicest, and one of the earliest, residential streets in Traverse City. Along it, grew a neighborhood of elegant Queen Anne Victorian-style homes. These exquisite homes remain largely unchanged by time and the modern world. Except perhaps for the mature tree-shaded streets, they remain an excellent example of the prosperous American small town that proudly existed at the turn of the century.

## MAP OF CITY HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND DISTRICTS BOUNDARIES



## HISTORIC LANDMARKS

A historic landmark is a single structure or site which is of particular historic value to the City or region. There are ten state-recognized historic structures within the City, of which, three are on the National Register of Historic Places: the Hannah House, the City Opera House and the Grand Traverse Commons.



1 Sleder's Tavern,  
717 Randolph Street

ca 1882



2 Hannah House,  
305 Sixth Street

1893



3 City Opera House,  
112 East Front Street

ca 1892



4 Ladies Library,  
Building, 216 Cass  
Street.

1910



5 Park Place Hotel,  
300 East State Street

1930



6 Grand Traverse  
County Courthouse,  
208 Washington  
Street.

1899



7 Novotny's Saloon  
(Dills Olde Towne  
Saloon), 423 South  
Union Street  
Original saloon built in 1886.  
Rebuilt in 1978 after fire.



8 Wilhelm Brothers  
Store, 427 South  
Union Street

ca 1886



9 Max's Super Service  
Station, 501 South  
Union Street

ca 1935

Key: State-recognized historic structures, 1 National Register of Historic Places 2

Section One Historical Landmarks continued on the next page.

# Historic Resources Element

## HISTORIC LANDMARKS Continuation from previous page.



Building 50 on West Eleventh Street  
ca 1885



Offices / Condo's on Cottageview Drive  
ca 1892



Munson Manor Hospitality House / Medical  
Campus Drive  
ca1900

### GRAND TRAVERSE COMMONS

The Grand Traverse Commons buildings and grounds produce a distinctive historic setting, and reflect the architecture and philosophical concepts that shaped the 19th Century approach to mental illness. Opened as a state hospital in 1885, the Victorian architectural details of the buildings are some of Michigan's best surviving institutional examples from this area. During the 1900's to 1950's, the population swelled to more than 3000 patients which included a general public hospital facility (forerunner to present Munson Medical Center) and the grounds expanded to include more than 50 buildings on the 484-acre site. Since that time, the population gradually decreased, and the hospital eventually closed in 1989. Today the area is experiencing a massive redevelopment which was guided by the Grand Traverse Commons District Plan, adopted in 1994 and the Grand Traverse Commons Master Plan, which was adopted in January 2010. The previous plan and the current plan both recommend that the historic campus with its grand open spaces be preserved for community, medical services, housing and a mix of commercial uses.



The Barns  
ca1932



Traverse Colantha Walker  
Marker ca1932



Business on Cottageview Drive  
1890; Remodeled, 1928

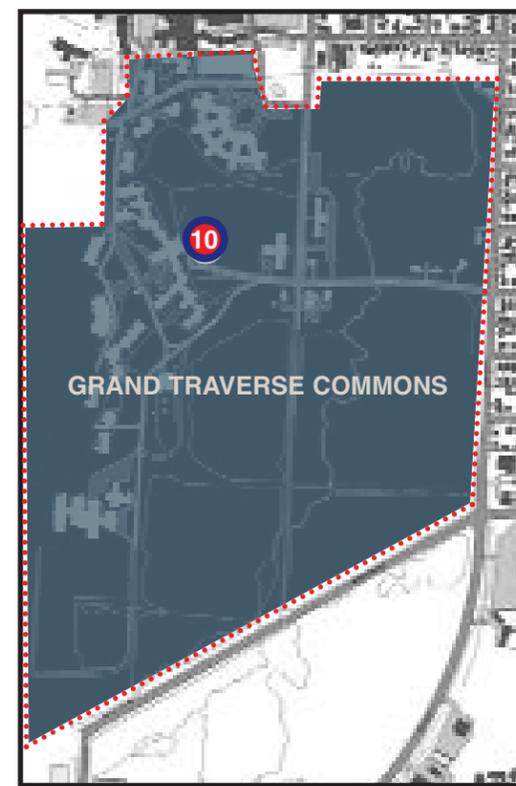


Business on Red Drive  
ca 1956



Business on Gray Drive  
ca 1930

### GRAND TRAVERSE COMMONS HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY



## Potential Historic Districts Section Two Details

### SLABTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

This area of Traverse City developed gradually after the 1850s as a working-class neighborhood whose residents were employed in the lumber industry. Its name is derived from the fact that many of the neighborhood's earliest houses were constructed from slabs of timber discarded by the nearby sawmills. In the 1880s and 1890s many of the original slab homes were replaced by a variety of interesting Victorian homes. Today, this area has a pleasing combination of architectural styles common to northern Michigan. Some homes along West Front Street have been renovated while others have been converted into charming shops intermingled with traditional storefronts.

### KIDS CREEK NEIGHBORHOOD

With its proximity to the Grand Traverse Commons and Munson Medical Center, this neighborhood has a convenient location with walking access to many services. A mix of family homes, apartments and professional offices add to its vitality. With Kids Creek running through it and shaded hiking trails, this neighborhood enjoys the amenities of City living in a historic, natural setting.

### OLD TOWNE NEIGHBORHOOD

St. Francis Church served as the cornerstone from which evolved a neighborhood of pleasant mid-sized homes with differing individualized qualities. Although changes have occurred in the neighborhood, many of the original homes remain. The individual treatment of homes was expressed with fine wood carvings and other small details. Modesty in treatment and size notwithstanding, this area warrants future preservation consideration.

### OAK PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

Once having the Oak Park Elementary School as a focal point, this neighborhood was and still is truly reflective of family life within Traverse City. Welcoming porches and spacious yards are part of the charm found here. With impressive results, many of the homes, dating back to the 1800s, have been restored to beautiful residences reminiscent of olden days.

## STRUCTURES WITHIN THE OLD TOWNE, OAK PARK, SLABTOWN AND KIDS CREEK NEIGHBORHOODS



## MAP OF OTHER CITY HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND PROBABLE DISTRICTS BOUNDARIES



## OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STRUCTURES, STYLES AND LOCATIONS



625 Bay Street

ca 1947

Lay Park  
301 S. Union Street (Historic Site)

ca 1926

Cass Street Bridge  
(Historic Structure)

ca 1930

205 Lake Avenue

ca 1890

311 Beth El Way  
Congregation Beth El

ca 1885

912 S Garfield Street  
Saint Michaels

ca 1955

821 Hastings Street

ca 1956

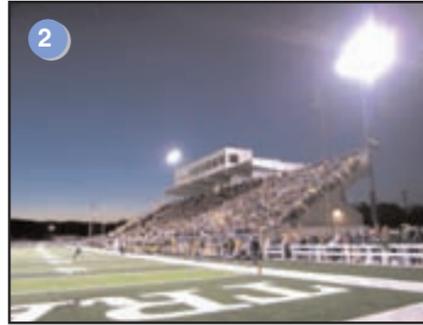
# Historic Resources Element

## OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STRUCTURES, STYLES AND LOCATIONS

Locations are located on the privies page map.



Hickory Hills, 2000 Randolph Street (Historic Site and Viewshed) ca 1950



Thirby Field, 343 W.Thirteenth Street (Historic Site) 1934



Central Grade School, 307 Seventh Street ca1921 and1937



History Center of Traverse City, 322 Sixth Street ca1904 and 1960



Hannah Park, 200 Sixth Street (Historic Site) ca 1902



J&S Hamburg, 302 W. Front Street ca 1938



Shipping Docks / Open Space (Historic Site) 106 W Grandview Parkway. ca1850



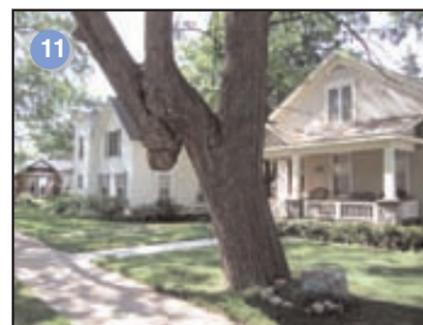
Con Foster 181 E Grandview Parkway. ca 1934



City's Water Pump Station, 429 E. Front Street ca 1962



Boardman School, 412 Webster Street ca 1914



Native American Tree, 427 Washington Street ca 1920



Old Oak Park Library, 873 Washington Street ca 1928

Key: City of Traverse City's, History Center of Traverse City,

4 For more Historical information on general or individual locations, and access over 13,000 photos. Contact (231) 995-0313 or on line at: <http://traversehistory.org/TraverseHistory/Home.html>

## CELEBRATING SUCCESS

These are but a few of the many examples of public and private renovations and respectively both private and public new builds that embody the spirit and intent of this element.

### PRESERVATION



A



B



C



a.



b.

### PRIVATE PRESERVATION

- A 400 Cass Street
- B 161 East Front Street
- C 826 West Front Street

### PUBLIC PRESERVATION

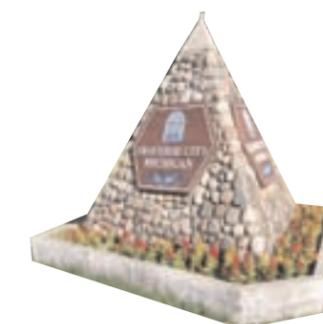
- a. 280 Washington Street
- b. Brick Streets Sixth Street Eighth Street

### PRIVATE NEW BUILDS

- A 101 North Park Street
- B 125 Park Street
- C 600 East Front Street

### PUBLIC NEW BUILDS

- a. 610 Woodmere Avenue
- b. 130 Hall Street
- c. 125 East Eight Street



Original State Hospital Sign ca1885

### NEW BUILDS



A



B



C



a.



b.



c.