

Transportation Element

INTRODUCTION

Transportation choices are crucial to the economic, social, and environmental vitality of our community and neighborhoods. Traverse City will design and maintain its transportation networks and public rights-of-way to maintain safe, convenient, inviting and efficient conditions for all who use them to improve the quality of life for its residents and visitors alike. Being cognizant of the importance of placemaking when planning, constructing and maintaining our streets, the Urban Design Element must be consulted when considering transportation investments. To provide safe and efficient access to people and goods, all modes of travel and how these modes connect to one another need to be evaluated. In making evaluations of streets, bridges, public transit, bicycle facilities, pedestrian ways, freight facilities and routes, ports and railroads, all legal users of the public rights-of way need to be considered. In addition, transportation projects need to reflect and contribute to the character of the neighborhood they traverse.

To accomplish this, Traverse City will:

STREET FORM AND FUNCTION

- Provide well-planned connections within and throughout the transportation network improving the efficient distribution of travel throughout the network and promoting reduced motorized vehicular trips and lengths. Identify a framework of major streets providing connectivity throughout the City and region with a focus on the access to goods, services, and people. Routinely promote the use of alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle in both trip planning and cost related comparisons to the general public.
 - Objectives:
 - Use design elements to increase mobility and decrease speed (i.e. Front Street downtown)
 - Fewer emissions (fumes, noise, road pollution, etc.)
 - Fewer single-occupancy motor vehicle miles traveled
 - Increased accessibility and use of mass transit, carpools, and non-motorized modes of transportation
 - Achieve appropriate operating characteristics (i.e. traffic volume, speed, types of vehicles) for all streets

CONNECTIVITY AND VEHICLE HIERARCHY

- All components of the City's transportation system and its inter-connectivity will be designed and maintained to provide safe, convenient, inviting and efficient movement of people and goods in a manner that is appropriate to the context of the community and neighborhood through which it passes. The City shall consider all legal users of the public rights-of-way in its designs. When planning and designing new or reconstructed streets the City will give consideration to the following: (1) public safety, (2) pedestrians, (3) public transit users, (4) bicyclists, (5) commercial vehicles, (6) car-pooling vehicles, and (7) single occupancy vehicles.
 - Objectives:
 - Redesign street rights-of-way to reflect the planned character and context of the neighborhood type.
 - Increased use on "framework" streets through designation of a well-connected commercial network. Framework streets serve as regular emergency routes.
 - More efficient distribution of all types of trips
 - Increased use of non-motorized transportation options

- Develop and refine traffic calming policies and implementation schedules
- Support regional transportation planning efforts

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

- Develop an active transportation network providing safe, convenient, inviting and efficient infrastructure serving people of all abilities, on bicycles or on foot both within the City and throughout the region focusing on expanding active transportation as a viable transportation option.
 - Objectives:
 - Improve and expand the active transportation network including bicycle lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, multi-use trails, etc.
 - Focus investment for infrastructure around activity centers. Major nodes shall be represented by activity centers such as significant job hubs, major shopping destinations, primary medical facilities, leisure activity facilities, schools, park and ride lots, major residential developments, other static and intermittent major traffic generators, etc.
 - Expansion of maintenance activities focused on four season use of active transportation elements
 - Reduction in street maintenance costs

PUBLIC TRANSIT

- Develop and promote reliable, efficient fixed-route transit services connecting major nodes within the City and throughout the region.
 - Objectives:
 - Increase transit ridership
 - Cooperation and promotion by major employers, retailers, schools, and tourism vendors for the use of mass transit by employees, residents and visitors
 - Strategically locate park-and-ride facilities
 - Timely routes that are convenient and direct
 - Installation of facilities for public transit patrons (all-season bus shelters, route signs at bus shelters depicting services, bicycle racks on buses, reduced headway times, frequency of buses, etc.)
 - Support regional collaboration

COMMERCIAL AND FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION

- The City will promote and facilitate high occupancy regional transportation systems including water, air, rail, and private bus and taxi services. It shall be the policy of the City to connect the inter-regional and regional transportation modes to the existing and planned services provided to meet the goals and strategies of this plan. The plan supports enhanced mobility that is beneficial to community livability and the businesses that are directly served.
 - Objectives:
 - Support regional transportation planning efforts
 - Support and provide input on strategic policies for air transportation that recognizes the economic impact of the Cherry Capital Airport to the local economy. Support the location of the airport within the city limits and the integration of air transportation with multi-modal transportation options.
 - Develop strategic plan for the integration and support of rail and water transport including employees, passengers, and goods. This plan will outline specific cooperative support for the integration of local mass transit, taxi, commercial, and shuttle support for employees, passengers and goods arriving and departing rail and water transport facilities.

PARKING

- The City will maintain a comprehensive parking policy that determines decisions on the placement, regulation, and investment in parking.
 - Objectives:
 - Adopt a comprehensive parking strategy
 - Reduce land dedicated to the use and investment of parking associated with private uses
 - Increase use of mass transit and active transportation options
 - Increase siting and number of bicycle parking
 - Increase ratio of commercial space to public surface parking

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