



RECAUTHORITY

TRAVERSE CITY / GARFIELD TOWNSHIP

2021 5-Year Recreation Plan





RECA AUTHORITY
TRAVERSE CITY / GARFIELD TOWNSHIP

**The City of Traverse City &
Charter Township of Garfield
Recreational Authority
2021 5-Year Recreation Plan**

January 2021 - December 2025



acknowledgments

This 5-year planning effort was sponsored by The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority and administered by the Rec Authority Board of Directors.

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January 6, 2021

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“We want a ground to which people may easily go after their day’s work is done, and where they may stroll for an hour, seeing, hearing, and feeling nothing of the bustle and jar of the street”.

-Frederick Law Olmsted in *Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns*



executive summary

The Grand Traverse region has changed significantly in the 21st century. Known for its scenic views of Lake Michigan, pristine forests and rolling hills, the area has built a strong sense of place around nature and recreation. In doing so, the area has drawn consistent four-season tourism, creating a vibrant downtown at the center of myriad opportunities for outdoor exploration.

In recent years, more people have chosen the area as their permanent residence. This has driven demand for development as housing, commercial buildings and additional infrastructure are needed to service a growing population. Though this development is ultimately necessary for a region experiencing growth, it also raises the importance of maintaining many of the natural and historic amenities that created the community's draw in the first place.

This 5-year Plan serves four key purposes. First, in order to apply for funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), a recreation entity must have an approved 5-year plan on file with the State. Second, the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority* manages recreational properties that greatly contribute to the area's culture of outdoor recreation and intends to have future initiatives at these properties designed with public input included. Third, this Plan provides a framework to guide the Rec Authority's planning in conjunction with recreational planning in the City of Traverse City, Garfield Township and Grand Traverse County. Finally, the Rec Authority intends to use this Plan as a community-supported document to further promote the preservation of the cultural and natural assets that make the area a unique place where people want to live, work and play.

**Hereafter referred to as "the Rec Authority"*



introduction



The 2021 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan was adopted by the Recreational Authority Board to serve as a guide and a decision-making document for future recreation facilities and programs. The Plan presents an inventory of existing facilities and programs managed by the Rec Authority and its community partners, as well as an evaluation of opportunities and needs. The Plan describes the existing properties managed by the joint authority, as well as the anticipated demand for additional or improved facilities and programs. The Plan also includes goals, objectives and a 5-Year Action Plan.

This 2021 5-Year Plan represents the first 5-year Parks and Recreation Plan completed by the Rec Authority. While the Rec Authority operates independently from the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield, this Plan was developed in consideration of the short- and long-term planning efforts of these two municipalities. The goals and action steps developed in this 5-year Plan are intended to complement the 5-year Parks and Recreation Plans and the Master Plans of both Traverse City and Garfield Township, while also considering the unique features of the properties managed by the Rec Authority. The Plan is also intended to enable the Rec Authority to begin applying for funding assistance from various agencies and to work toward implementing the documented recommendations. This Plan specifically provides for five years of grant eligibility with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR).



chapter 1.

community description

Traverse City and Garfield Township are contiguous municipalities in beautiful Grand Traverse County, located in Michigan's northwest Lower Peninsula. The community is set along the western arm of Lake Michigan's Grand Traverse Bay, making it a year-round destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

Traverse City and Garfield Township are bordered by Elmwood Township (Leelanau County) to the northwest; Long Lake Township and Green Lake Township to the west; Blair Township to the south; East Bay Township to the east; and Peninsula Township to the north.

The community is intersected by the US-31 highway system and is connected to the scenic M-22 state highway, which features picturesque views of Lake Michigan and connects to the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

The greater community offers abundant programming and facilities for year-round outdoor recreation and opportunities to experience the local culture. 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 various sporting events including sail boat races, boat and car shows, golf championships, disc golf tournaments, skiing events, running races and off-road bicycle events.

The three properties currently managed by the Rec Authority uniquely contribute to the area's outdoor recreation culture. This Plan details how these community assets can be preserved and improved in order to continue serving the area's residents as well as visitors.



Population

The Grande Traverse area has been growing in population steadily over the past 20 years, and is expected to continue on this trend (see Table 1). In Grand Traverse County, population increased by 22 percent from 2000 to 2019. The total is projected to increase by another 5,371 people by 2024. One can observe similar trends for Traverse City and Garfield Township, which grew by 8.5 percent and 36.9 percent, respectively.

As more people choose the area as their permanent residence, the community is projected to see significant increases in median household income and median home value (see Table 2). The median age has remained relatively the same over the past 10 years. This consistency is likely a result of the age demographics the area has traditionally appealed to, a combination of lifelong residents, young professionals and retired workers.

While Traverse City has a relatively dense urban center, many of the nearby townships experiencing significant growth will see their built environment change and adapt to social, economic and environmental needs. As a growing population creates increased demand for recreational assets, the community will need to respond by planning for and maintaining recreational amenities.

Table 1.

	Grand Traverse County	City of Traverse City	Garfield Charter Township
2000 Total Population	77,654	14,760	13,332
2010 Total Population	86,986	14,705	16,256
2019 Total Population	94,795	16,018	18,255
2024 Total Population	100,166	16,793	19,359

Table 2.

	Grand Traverse County	City of Traverse City	Garfield Charter Township
Median Household Income			
2019	\$61,467	\$57,606	\$47,053
2024	\$71,477	\$66,439	\$52,938
Median Home Value			
2019	\$197,981	\$224,676	\$180,795
2024	\$220,57	\$241,374	\$194,821
Median Age			
2010	41.3	40.9	42.9
2019	43.5	44.2	43.5
2024	44.1	44.9	43.8

Local Spending on Recreation

Tables 3 and 4 provide a snapshot of the extent to which area residents spend resources on recreational activities and goods. Table 3 shows how much area residents spend on recreation equipment using the Spending Potential Index (SPI). The SPI is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Based on this information, one can see that local spending on recreation equipment is close to national averages for nearly every category. In addition, Grand Traverse residents spend more on hunting and fishing equipment, while Traverse City residents spend more on bicycles.

Table 4 also uses the SPI. However, it additionally notes the total average spent per household on activities outside of the household. Grand Traverse residents spend about the same as national averages on entertainment, recreation and food away from home. A community that emphasizes strong connections between neighborhoods, parks, trails and the downtown places itself in a better position to leverage the economic benefits that come from a well-designed built environment.

Grand Traverse County households spend on average \$3,194.67 on entertainment/recreation and \$3,528.77 on food away from home. These averages are similar to national averages, which is impressive considering the largely rural character of Grand Traverse County.

The findings from Tables 3 and 4 are important for two main reasons. First, they demonstrate that the community is highly active in recreational activities based on household spending. Second, they highlight the importance of the Rec Authority's commitment to providing quality recreation opportunities. This commitment supports the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the community.

Table 3.

Spending Potential Index	Grand Traverse County	City of Traverse City	Garfield Charter Township
Exercise Equipment and Gear, Game Tables	99	96	80
Bicycles	96	102	79
Camping Equipment	68	98	79
Hunting and Fishing Equipment	101	96	77
Winter Sports Equipment	98	93	74
Water Sports Equipment	100	94	76

Table 4.

2019 Consumer Spending, Average Spent	Grand Traverse County	City of Traverse City	Garfield Charter Township
Entertainment/Recreation	\$3,194.67 (98)	\$3,206.95 (98)	\$2,587.70 (79)
Food Away from Home	\$3,528.77 (96)	\$3,631.97(99)	\$2,927.84 (80)



Recreation Assets

Table 5 lists parks managed by the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield, respectively. This list does not include the many parks and recreation areas in the region that are operated at the federal, state or county level, nor those managed by other entities such as land conservancies and non-profits. The nearly 50 parks in Traverse City and Garfield Township serve a wide variety of interests and geographic areas. Grand Traverse County features parklands that range from major tourism destinations to small neighborhood parks. One goal for the Rec Authority is to help facilitate safe non-motorized connections between these local amenities and the properties the Recreation Authority manages.

Table 5.

	Parks	Acres	Primary Service Area
Traverse City Parks	American Legion Park	0.47	Downtown employees and residents
	Arbutus Court Park	0.13	Traverse Heights neighborhood
	Ashton Park	4.7	Slabtown neighborhood and Willow Hill School
	Boon Street Park	0.34	Traverse Heights neighborhood
	Brown Bridge Quiet Area	1,310	Entire region and tourists
	Bryant Park	3.32	Entire City, community and tourists
	Clancy Park	3	Orchard Heights neighborhood
	Clinch Park	6.72	Entire City, community and tourists
	Darrow Park	1.11	Slabtown neighborhood and tourists
	East Bay Park	3.23	Entire City, community and tourists
	F & M Park	3.5	Boardman and Oak Park neighborhoods and community
	Fulton Park	9.19	Entire community and TART trail users
	Grand Traverse Commons	129.8	Entire region and tourists
	Hannah Park	2.29	Central neighborhood and community
	Hickory Hills	122.5	Entire region and tourists
	Highland Park	1.35	Local neighborhood
	Hull Park	6.4	Entire community
Huron Hills Park	1.71	Local neighborhood	

	Parks	Acres	Primary Service Area
Traverse City Parks	Indian Woods Park	0.62	Indian Woods neighborhood
	Lay Park	0.79	Downtown employees, residents and tourists
	Meijer's Silverbrook Acres	58.89	Entire community
	Mini Park	0.3	Downtown and Boardman neighborhoods and tourists
	Open Space	7.19	Entire region and tourists
	Park A	1.2	Local neighborhood
	Park C	0.1	Local neighborhood
	Senior Citizen Park	3.7	Entire community and tourists
	Slabtown Corner	2.24	Entire community and tourists
	J. Smith Walkway	0.06	Downtown employees, shoppers and tourists
	Sunset Park	2.22	Entire community and tourists
	Triangle Park (Jupiter Gardens)	0.14	North Traverse Heights neighborhood and TART trail users
	Union Street Dam Park	0.93	Entire community
	Volleyball Courts (West End)	2.79	Entire region and tourists
	Wellington Street Plaza	0.07	Downtown employees, shoppers and tourists
West End Beach	4.06	Entire region and tourists	
Garfield Charter Township Parks	Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area	185	Entire township and surrounding areas
	Boardman Valley Nature Preserve	125	Entire township and surrounding areas
	Silver Lake Recreation Area	85	Less than 3 miles
	Miller Creek Nature Reserve	94	Less than 3 miles
	Kids Creek Park	21	Less than 3 miles
	Hughes Drive Natural Area	9	Less than 1/2 mile
	River East Recreation Area	71	Entire township and surrounding areas



chapter 2. administrative structure



The Rec Authority was formed in 2003 as a partnership between the citizens of Traverse City and Garfield Township "for the purpose of the acquisition, construction, operation, maintenance or improvement of public recreation centers, public parks, and public conference centers as may be acquired by the Authority or as may be transferred to it by a participating municipality." (Articles of Incorporation, adopted June 30, 2003).

In 2004, voters in both jurisdictions approved ballot measures for the Rec Authority to purchase and operate three properties as public parks, known today as Historic Barns Park, Hickory Meadows, and part of the Open Space on West Grand Traverse Bay. On November 3, 2020, voters approved a new 20-year operating millage for the Authority.

Creation of the Authority was provided for under the provisions of Michigan's Recreational Authorities Act (Public Act No. 321 of 2000). The Rec Authority is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors consisting of seven members; those members are appointed as follows:

- Three are appointed by the City Commission, with one of those

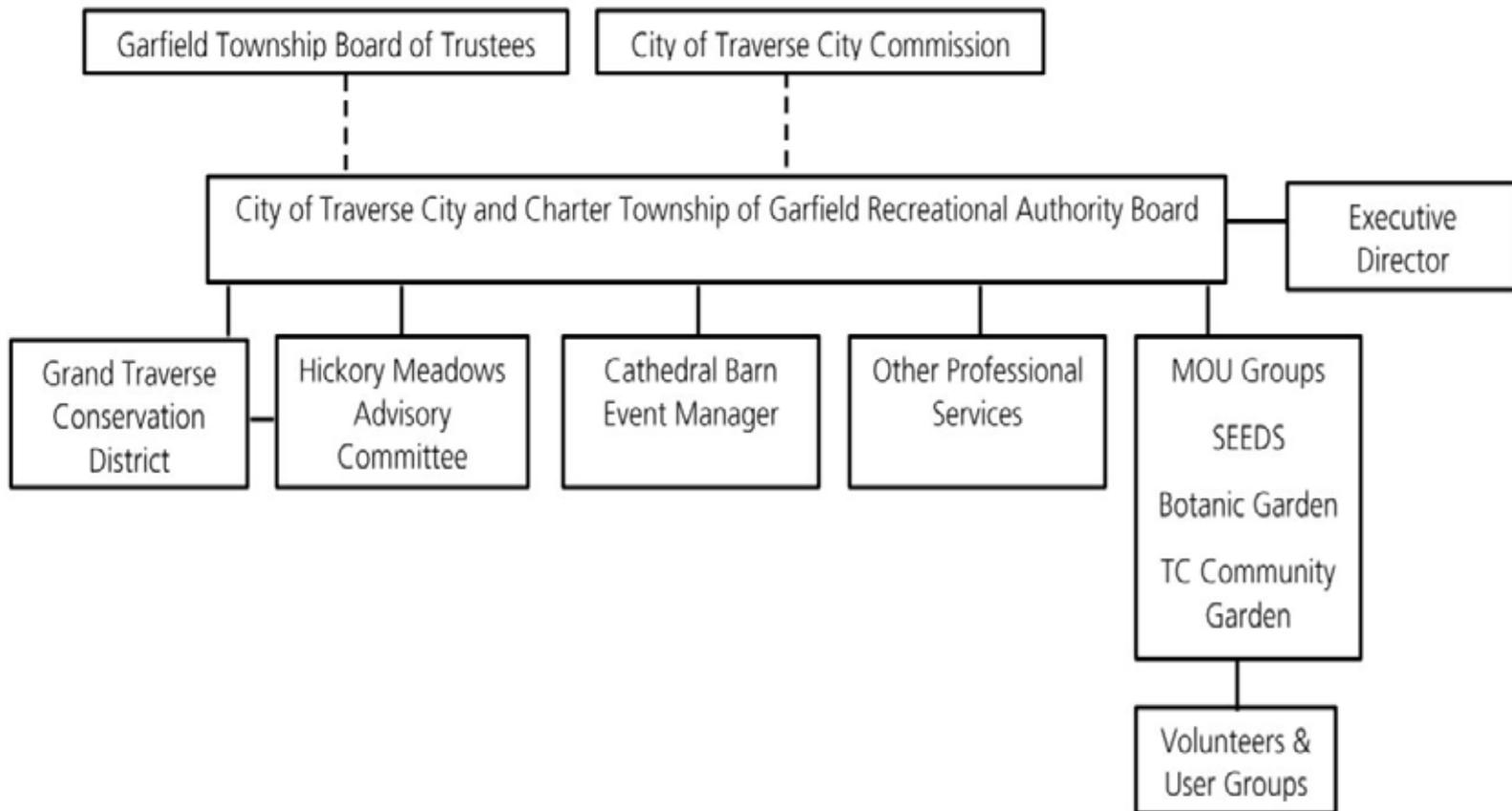
three being an elected City Commissioner.

- Three are appointed by the Garfield Township Board of Trustees, with one of those three being an elected Garfield Township Trustee.
- One is appointed by the Board of Directors of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (this appointee must be a resident of the City of Traverse City or Garfield Township).
- All board appointments are for three years, and expire 6/30.

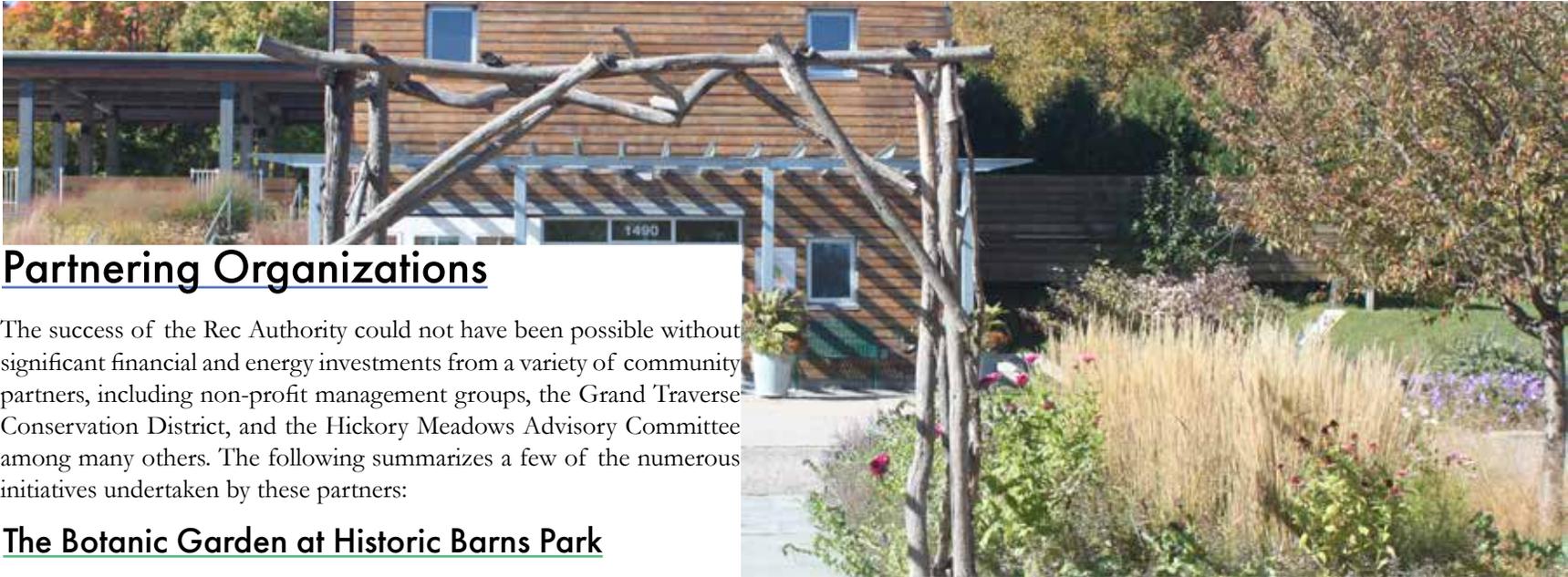
Regular board meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. and alternate between the Garfield Township Hall (3848 Veterans Drive), the Governmental Center (400 Boardman Avenue), and Historic Barns Park. Study sessions and special meetings are held as needed.

The seven-person board has the authority to commit funds for parks and recreation, accept grants, and purchase land on behalf of the multi-jurisdictional authority. The Rec Authority's organizational chart can be seen on the next page, along with descriptions of the community entities that the Authority has formed relationships with.

Recreational Authority Organizational Chart



Note: The City and Township do not provide direction or oversight of the Rec Authority Board, except in special circumstances provided for in the Authority's Articles of Incorporation.



Partnering Organizations

The success of the Rec Authority could not have been possible without significant financial and energy investments from a variety of community partners, including non-profit management groups, the Grand Traverse Conservation District, and the Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee among many others. The following summarizes a few of the numerous initiatives undertaken by these partners:

The Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park

The non-profit Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park broke ground on this public garden in 2013, and in just seven years has generated considerable success, including restoration of the 1885 Granary as a visitor center, classroom and event space, built to high efficiency LEED standards. Nine impressive accessible gardens, with an emphasis on native plants and the roles of plants and gardens in health, are available for the public to enjoy at no charge, and additional gardens are under development. Since 2015, the Botanic Garden has averaged 30,000 visitors a year from all over the world.

The Botanic Garden has cultivated a mighty force of 300 volunteers who maintain the grounds, provide free daily tours from April through October, operate the Visitor Center and gift shop and, most importantly, offer dozens of classes and workshops for children and adults at little or no cost. The Garden's board of directors has raised over \$3 million in grants and donations which have been invested in capital improvements for The Garden and Historic Barns Park and, in turn, in the economic development of the region.

Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee & Grand Traverse Conservation District (GTCD)

Starting in 2006, these partners helped the Rec Authority develop a mission statement, goals, and a management plan to guide long-term management of Hickory Meadows. This plan is based on public input as well as a Floristic and Natural Features Inventory. The GTCD and volunteers have made improvements to a pond area, including installation of steps and benches. They have also installed an ADA crushed gravel pathway from the Randolph Street Trailhead to the Wayne Street Trailhead through grants from Grainger and the Traverse City Track Club Endowment. With leadership from the GTCD, the Hickory Meadows Invasive Species Management Plan was developed. GTCD actively manages invasive species and fosters native trees, plants, and grasses.

TC Community Garden

TC Community Garden provides space at Historic Barns Park for over 250 members to grow produce and flowers for personal consumption. Its volunteers have led over 120 hours of educational classes on sustainable gardening practices; donated nearly 10,000 pounds of organic produce; donated 60 organic bouquets; invested nearly \$128,000 in infrastructure improvements to approximately 1.6 acres of management area including fencing, irrigation, hose hangers, and a green-roof shed; and invested immeasurable hours of sweat equity in daily maintenance and minor improvements.



SEEDS Ecology & Education Centers

SEEDS has hosted a Farmer Residency program at Historic Barns Park since 2010, providing encouragement and exposure to organic farming for the next generation.

SEEDS Energy & Environment staff authored the white paper, Historic Barns Park Conceptual Design for Energy Action Planning. This report offers a quantified road map of the top 10 Clean Energy strategies for the entire campus, including energy efficiency standards, renewable generation goals, and carbon sequestration technologies that would position the Park as a premier showcase of smart energy and carbon management technologies. SEEDS EcoCorps helped to install the Park's first solar array, a 2.5 kW system used to power irrigation pumps for the SEEDS Farm and TC Community Garden.

Over the years, SEEDS staff and volunteers have introduced the Park to thousands of individuals. Focusing especially on learners age 6-26, SEEDS has offered regional community members well over 15,000 hours of on-the-job training, field trips, and events focused on ecological literacy, organic farming, green building, and clean energy.



budget and funding mechanisms

Current Finances

The 2004 millage to purchase Historic Barns Park and two other properties was dedicated almost wholly to the costs associated with the property purchases themselves. Beyond funding the initial Barns stabilization project in 2005, the millage only provided the Recreational Authority with a very modest operating levy of 0.1 mill to be spread across all three Rec Authority properties. It has always been the intent that the Rec Authority would have to seek additional sources of funding to improve and maintain the three parks.

No fees are charged to enter any of the parks; they are free and open to all visitors. A facilities rental enterprise focused on a restored barn (the Cathedral Barn at Historic Barns Park) has been developed as a source of self-generated funding focused on the preservation of that building, wherein fees are charged for special events, classes, etc. An \$850,000 renovation of the Cathedral Barn was made possible by a community fundraising campaign.

The new operating millage approved in November of 2020 stabilizes the Authority's operations for the coming 20 years. Beyond operations, revenues from the new millage will be used to leverage grants to purchase an additional 76 acres of parkland. The voter-approved operating levy was increased from 0.1 mill to 0.3 mill. The Rec Authority Board has committed to only levy up to 0.15 mill of the new millage until the 2004 debt millage is retired in 2024. The current levy to pay down the original debt millage sits at 0.33 mill.

Table 6. Rec Authority Budget

	FY 16/17 actual	FY 17/18 actual	FY 18/19 actual	FY 19/20 budget	FY 19/20 projected	FY 20/21 budget
REVENUES						
property taxes	\$164,960	\$169,379	\$174,929	\$178,000	\$182,200	\$289,000
PPT reimbursement	\$12,510	\$28,889	\$10,788	-	\$9,920	-
interest income	\$476	\$913	\$1,013	\$1,000	\$1,580	\$1,000
grants and contributions	\$28,203	\$8,053	\$4,999	\$11,000	\$17,000	\$260,119
Barns Park rental revenues	\$107,318	\$139,083	\$113,749	\$130,000	\$102,900	\$90,000
other income	-	-	\$14,303	-	-	-
total revenues	\$313,467	\$346,317	\$319,781	\$320,000	\$313,600	\$640,119

	FY 16/17 actual	FY 17/18 actual	FY 18/19 actual	FY 19/20 budget	FY 19/20 projected	FY 20/21 budget
EXPENDITURES						
office expenses	\$1,186	\$1,135	\$1,727	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$2,000
professional services	\$177,034	\$188,487	\$230,395	\$211,000	\$212,250	\$846,500
insurance & bonds	\$3,347	\$3,360	\$3,399	\$4,000	\$3,420	\$4,000
facility/property expenses	\$34,299	\$64,211	\$77,026	\$85,000	\$62,865	\$70,200
transportation	\$1	-	\$6	\$1,000	\$2	\$500
capital outlay	\$9,919	-	-	-	-	-
total expenditures	\$225,786	\$257,193	\$312,553	\$303,000	\$280,037	\$923,200

transfer (to) from capital projects fund						
excess of revenues over/ (under) expenditures	\$87,681	\$89,124	\$7,228	\$17,000	\$33,563	(\$283,081)
beginning fund balance	\$305,295	\$392,976	\$482,100	\$489,328	\$489,328	\$522,891
ending fund balance	\$392,976	\$482,100	\$489,328	\$506,328	\$522,891	\$239,810
2020/21 millage rate	0.1500					



chapter 3.

history of the recreational authority



seventeen years of success

The Rec Authority has enjoyed considerable success since its inception. Listed below is a summary of some of the key accomplishments by the Authority and its partners to date:

The Early Years: Setting the Stage (2003-2007)

2003: The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority is officially incorporated in July. It is formed through joint action by the City and Township governments to investigate potential parkland preservation efforts in the two jurisdictions.

2004: After more than a year of research, public input, and grassroots campaigning, the Rec Authority completes a successful millage and capital bond campaign in November, supported by voters in both Traverse City and Garfield Township by a 3-to-1 margin. The campaign secures minimum funding for acquisition and permanent preservation of three properties: the former Smith-Barney property on West Grand Traverse Bay; the former Oleson farm, now Hickory Meadows; and the barns and surrounding property at the south end of the former State Psychiatric Hospital, now known as Historic Barns Park.

2005: Shortly after acquiring the West Bay Waterfront property, the Authority demolishes the Smith-Barney Building and completes environmental cleanup on the parcel. The parcel is the last link in what is now over one mile of contiguous public open space along beautiful West Bay in downtown Traverse City.

2005: An urgent stabilization project is undertaken at Historic Barns Park to preserve and protect the two largest buildings on the site, the majestic dairy barns known as the Cathedral Barn (c. 1934) and the Historic Barn (c. 1900). The project includes new roofing for both barns to stop leaks, ceiling insulation for the Cathedral Barn, the installation of a French drain to protect both foundations, and the installation of secure window coverings.

2005: Environmental work also begins at Historic Barns Park, with extensive testing of soils and buildings to determine any cleanup needs from the past farming operations of the State Hospital.

2005: A management plan is created for Hickory Meadows in cooperation with the Grand Traverse Conservation District (GTCD) and the Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee (HMAC), a volunteer citizen committee. Accomplishments in the early years include the addition of bridges, benches, trailheads, and informational kiosks to the property; the removal of trash and barbed wire; and efforts to control and remove invasive species.

2007: The Authority leads a comprehensive public input process titled “Brainstorming the Barns” to create a community vision for the Barns and surrounding property.

Bringing Back the Barns (2008-2013)

2008: Modern sewer and water infrastructure is brought to Historic Barns Park to ready the buildings for redevelopment.

2008: The Rec Authority solicits proposals from community organizations to help execute the public's vision at Historic Barns Park, leading to today's on-site partnerships with The Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park, SEEDS, and TC Community Garden.



2009: Modern electric and natural gas service is brought to Historic Barns Park to ready the buildings for redevelopment.

2009: A Master Site Plan is developed and adopted for Historic Barns Park that includes land allocations and guiding principles for the site based on the public vision. The new partners in the park enter into a formal Management Agreement with the Rec Authority.

2010: In line with the public vision for the site, a Business Plan is developed for Historic Barns Park centered on a facility rental enterprise based in the Cathedral Barn. The Business Plan also introduces the “Energy Farm” concept to the site, in which the Authority and its partners on the site will pursue energy efficiency and renewable energy demonstrations on the site.

2010: After years of planning, the Rec Authority launches a three-year capital fundraising campaign in cooperation with The Botanic Garden and the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation. The campaign sets a target of \$1.5 million for the initial phase of capital improvements at Historic Barns Park, with major goals of opening the Cathedral Barn to event use and the launch of the Botanic Garden Visitor Center in the old farm granary building.

2011: Through considerable public input and a contribution of \$130,000 from the Authority, the South Campus Entrance to the old State Hospital grounds is constructed and opened. The new roadway connects Franke Road to Silver Drive near the entrance of Historic Barns Park, improving public access to the park and immediately boosting usership of the site.

2012: The first Energy Farm project, a geothermal heating and cooling field, is installed at Historic Barns Park. The project is largely funded by contributions from three utility providers, including Consumers Energy, Cherryland Electric Cooperative, and Traverse City Light and Power.

2012: In cooperation with the Grand Traverse County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, the Minervini Group (developers of the Village at Grand Traverse Commons) and several other stakeholders, the Authority secures \$200,000 in brownfield cleanup funds from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The funding is used to begin the removal of lead paint and asbestos from buildings at Historic Barns Park, to demolish two obsolete structures, and to prepare the Pavilion and the Walled Garden structures for public use.

2013: In partnership with Garfield Township, a \$300,000 grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund helps to build a commuter trail across Historic Barns Park, filling a critical gap in pedestrian infrastructure and connecting Garfield Township's most populous neighborhoods with downtown Traverse City.

2013: On its second try, the Authority secures a \$200,000 Brownfield Cleanup Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to continue brownfield cleanup work at Historic Barns Park. This funding will pave the way for public reuse of the remaining buildings on the site.

2013: The Phase I Capital Campaign exceeds its goal and raises \$1.6 million for improvements at Historic Barns Park.



From Aspirations to Operations (2014-present)

2014: These years kick off with a flurry of construction at Historic Barns Park, preparing the Cathedral Barn and the Botanic Garden Visitor Center for public use.

2015: The Rec Authority contracts with an event facility manager and the Cathedral Barn opens for events in February of 2015. Thanks to many donors and countless volunteer hours, the Barn has been transformed into a fiscally self-sufficient venue, which was a goal of the public vision for the building established in 2007. The Cathedral Barn has now hosted hundreds of events including weddings, fundraisers, festivals, proms, corporate retreats, corporate dinners, barn dances, concerts, annual meetings, event showcases, birthday celebrations, high school sports banquets, school band concerts and yoga classes. The venue has earned numerous awards, including 2016 Best New Wedding Venue from Michigan Meetings + Events Magazine and several Red Hot Best Wedding/Event Venue awards from MyNorth Magazine.

2016: Remaining environmental cleanup on all of the buildings is completed at Historic Barns Park.

2017: The Recreational Authority begins to look to its future, with its initial operating millage and bond debt both set to retire in 2024. In addition to strategic planning and branding efforts, user surveys and trail counters are instituted at Hickory Meadows. The Authority engages both the City and Township in contingency planning for the three parklands.

2018: The Authority works with the City on collaborative stormwater and wastewater plans for the redevelopment of the City-owned Hickory Hills Ski Area next to Hickory Meadows. Collaboration extends to winter grooming of multi-use trails at the Meadows.

2019: The Authority conducts its first major public visioning effort since

2007, seeking citizen input on the preferred future for the Rec Authority, its parklands and its projects, and the potential for a millage renewal.

2020: The Rec Authority works with private landowners and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy to investigate ways to preserve an additional 76 acres of pristine forest next to Hickory Hills for public recreational use.

2020: After a decade of fundraising, planning and engineering, modern road and stormwater infrastructure is built at Historic Barns Park, dramatically improving universal access to the park and protections for the historic buildings from storm damage and recurring flooding.

2020: The Rec Authority places a new operating millage request on the ballot for the November 3, 2020 general election. The millage is intended to provide for 20 more years of Rec Authority operations and to provide matching dollars for the purchase and preservation of the new recreational property, tentatively dubbed Hickory Forest. Voters in both jurisdictions overwhelmingly approve the millage request, with 72 percent voting in favor.

2020: Fundraising continues for major capital projects remaining at Historic Barns Park, including universal access for both barns.

Other Recent Projects

Contingency Planning

The Rec Authority recently completed a succession plan and long-term agreements for continued recreational use of Rec Authority properties in the event that the Rec Authority were ever to cease operations (current operational millage expires in 2039). The City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield approved both the succession plan and long-term management agreements in May 2019.

Branding Plan

The Rec Authority has largely operated in a low-profile manner throughout its existence, focusing more on the park properties and less on outreach. However, in both the public visioning process and in joint meetings with the City Commission and Township Board, the Authority has been encouraged to do a better job of “telling its story” and existing in the public mind. As a first step, the Authority completed a brand identity to add to signage, publications, meeting materials, etc.



Energy Farm

Additional Energy Farm projects and installations are underway at Historic Barns Park. Outdoor solar lighting is the current priority, utilizing a grant received from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians to make some pilot installations on the site.

Additional Brownfield Cleanup

Asbestos-containing materials were identified in an old steam pipe near the boundary of Historic Barns Park. The Rec Authority secured cleanup funding through the Grand Traverse County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and conducted cleanup in May 2019, making way for the installation of a new labyrinth feature by the Botanic Garden.

New Trails

Additional trails were recently added to Hickory Meadows, including a new loop off of M-72.

Hickory Hills Renovations

The Rec Authority has been collaborating with the City on a multi-million-dollar reinvention of city-owned Hickory Hills, a ski hill and parkland adjacent to Authority-owned Hickory Meadows. A cooperative agreement developed between the City and the Authority allows a septic field on Meadows property in exchange for reforestation projects and public access to new parking and restrooms. The Authority has also collaborated with the City to groom cross-country ski paths through the open meadows, which proved very popular last winter and will continue this coming season.

Beach Demo

The Rec Authority worked with the Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay and the Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network to improve the Authority's West Bay Waterfront property as a public demonstration of shoreline stewardship strategies for landowners. Grant funds allowed for a phytoremediation demonstration on the site, resulting in the planting of several trees and replacing invasive species with native beach grass.



chapter 4.

recreation assets inventory

Hickory Meadows

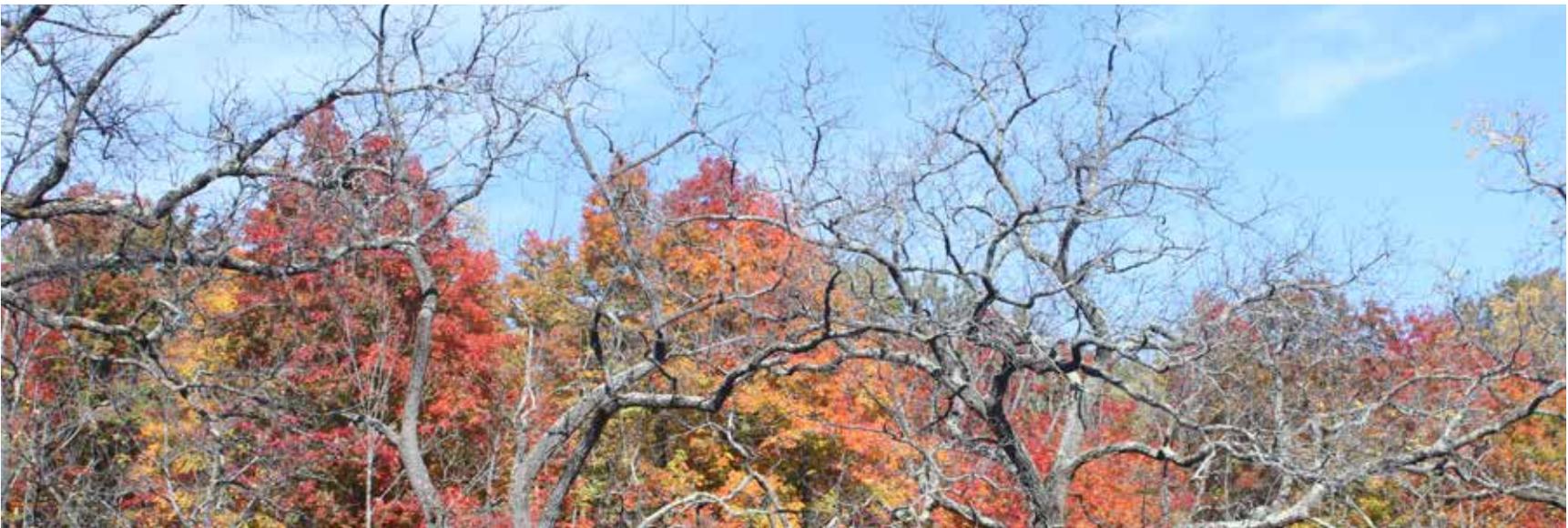
Hickory Meadows is a 112-acre parcel adjacent to the city-owned Hickory Hills ski area. Purchase of this property protected the area from private development and preserved it as a popular destination for hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, bird watching and other passive recreational pursuits. A citizen volunteer Advisory Committee provides recommendations to the Rec Authority regarding the park's management.

Property History

The Hickory Meadows property originally contained upland forest and wooded swamp wetlands before European settlement. The vegetation was unspoiled until the mid-1800s when settlers began clearing the land. This clearing consisted of logging, burning of slash, and stump removal. Logging occurred in all areas of the property with any tree species of

several inches in diameter or larger being harvested. This harvest included the removal of all trees in areas with level topography (in preparation of agriculture) and most trees on sloped grades. Following this period of logging, the nonsloping areas were extensively used for traditional agriculture, which included grazing, crop cultivation, and orchard establishment. This led to, along with the removal of forest cover, an erosion and depletion of topsoil that in many areas can still be seen to this day. In addition, limited logging of some secondary-growth forest trees has occurred, most notably in the mesic hardwood forest areas.

Interpretation of aerial photographs and Plat maps show farmstead homes present as early as 1905. Historical records for Grand Traverse County shows the land, which includes the present-day Hickory Meadows property, was owned by several individuals. Plat maps from 1905 show that a T. A. Hitchcock owned a large parcel that included the lower half of the Hickory Meadows property (though only that portion



which is found in present-day Garfield Township). The northern half of the Hickory Meadows property was contained in a parcel owned by the Cherry Valley Fruit farm (Charles Manville, owner). The portion of the present-day property located within the current Traverse City city limits was owned (in 1905), separately, by G. W. McWethey, G. Pubus, and Anna Koenig. Aerial photograph interpretation reveals that the property was used for agriculture up until its purchase by the Rec Authority. Aerial photos from 1938, 1952, and 1971 all show the presence of orchards in various and changing locations within the presently defined field areas. In addition, stream channelization appears in photos from 1971 and an artificially constructed cattail marsh area appears in the 1952 and subsequent photos. Finally, vegetative cover has returned to many areas since the 1980s (LaCross, 2006).

Property Acquisition

In February of 2004, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy acquired an option from G.D.O. Investments for the Hickory Meadows property. As part of the option G.D.O. Investments reserved a 25-year right to grow and harvest hay on the property in locations historically used for this purpose. However, the agricultural use is subordinate to public recreation.

In November of 2004 an Open Space and Natural Area Preservation Bond Proposal was passed by voters in Traverse City. This allowed the Recreational Authority to execute the option and acquire Hickory Meadows for public recreation.



Rules at Hickory Meadows

1. Camping and fires are prohibited at Hickory Meadows.
2. All trail users must stay on designated improved trails, and must respect any special access restrictions.
3. Off-road or other motorized vehicles shall be prohibited in Hickory Meadows except for directly authorized management purposes.
4. Dogs are permitted within Hickory Meadows, but must be kept on leash in accordance with State law. Pet owners are required to clean up after their pets.
5. Hunting and trapping is not allowed on the property. Fishing is allowed in accordance with the laws of the State and the rules of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.
6. No plants or other specimens are to be removed from Hickory Meadows unless authorized by management.
7. Littering is strictly forbidden. This includes dumping of yard waste and household trash.
8. No person shall damage, deface, or destroy any public owned property within Hickory Meadows.
9. Glass containers and alcoholic beverages are prohibited at Hickory Meadows.



Recreation Management at Hickory Meadows

User Groups

The grounds and trails of Hickory Meadows are intended to provide for those activities that are considered as “passive recreation.” Passive recreation, in this case, is defined as non-consumptive of the resource and non-organized. The opposite of passive is active recreation, which includes improvements such as soccer and baseball fields. Because Hickory Hills, adjacent to Hickory Meadows, offers a more active recreation experience, the Authority has historically sought to maintain the Hickory Meadows as a place of passive recreation. Typical users include:

- Hikers
- Nature Enthusiasts
- Trail Runners
- Dog Owners
- Mountain Bikers
- Cross Country Skiers

No fees will be assessed to individual users of Hickory Meadows. Fees may be charge for commercial or organized group use of the property. Motorized bike, ORV, and horse traffic is not allowed within the Hickory Meadows unless required for management/maintenance activities. Paintball is also prohibited at Hickory Meadows.

In order to ensure that user needs are being met, it is important that the managers of Hickory Meadows stay abreast of the numbers and types of users on the property. A survey of users was completed during the 2019 Public Visioning process. This data should be periodically updated.

Current Trails

The current trail system is well established and winds through most of the cover types present on the property. There are three primary trails currently used at Hickory Meadows. The first runs from east to west across the large meadow, roughly paralleling Randolph Street at the southern end of the property. The second trail runs along the north edge of the pine plantation, then turns north and leads to the barn on M-72. There is also a loop trail that runs around the perimeter of the large meadow at the west end of the property.

Future Trail Construction

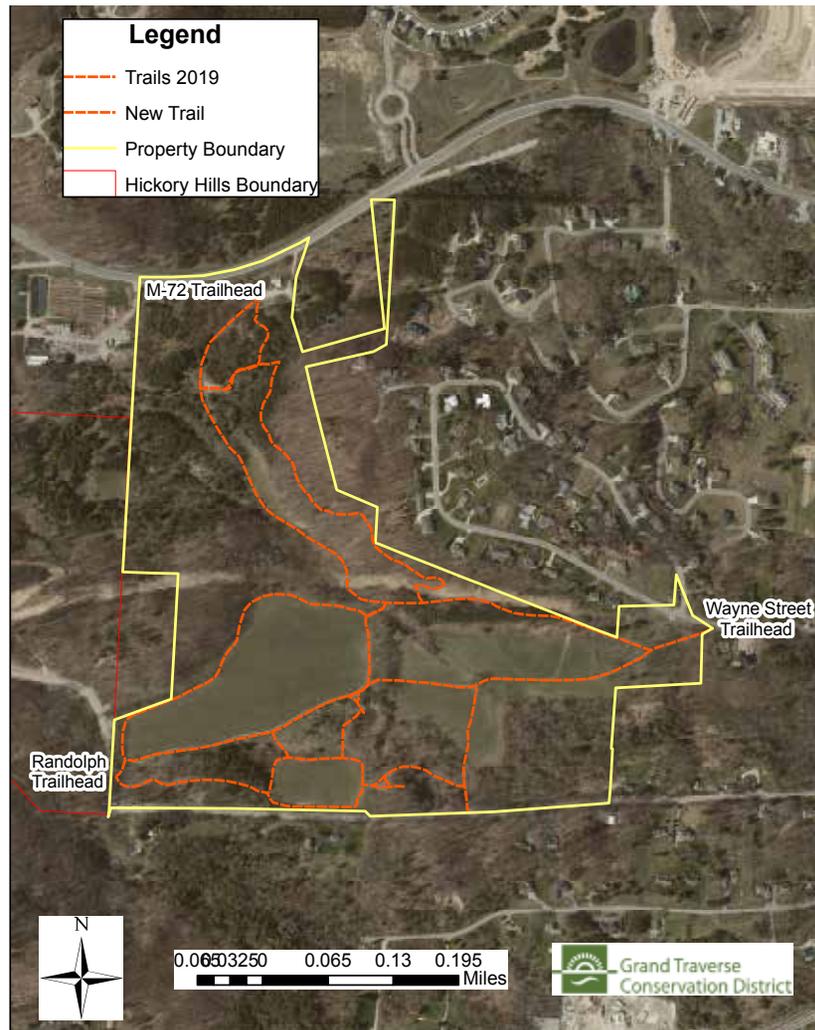
Future trail construction should be done in manner that minimizes environmental impact and disruption to user activities. If new trails become established by frequent visitor use, these new trails should either be blocked or properly marked and maintained to prevent erosion and provide a safe user experience.

Trail Surfaces

Trail surfaces at Hickory Meadows are designed first and foremost to limit erosion. Secondly, they are intended to be easily maintained and provide an enjoyable experience for all user groups. Woodchips are an easily renewable and inexpensive way to surface trails. Wood chips should be used where necessary to prevent erosion, and trail surfaces should be left “natural” when practical. However, when practical, ADA compliant trails with improved surfaces should be constructed in order to make the property more accessible to those with limited mobility.

Adjacent Lands and Trail Considerations

Trail connections between Hickory Meadows, Hickory Hills and the newly-targeted Hickory Forest acquisition will be desired by the public



and will need to be coordinated between the Authority, the City and the public. Continued collaboration with Traverse City Parks and Recreation will help ensure that recreational opportunities and management efficiencies are maximized.

It is possible that in the future the Hickory complex could be connected to other trail systems. These connections should be encouraged, as they will add valuable recreation opportunities for users. Partnerships with other organizations such as Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation (TART) Trails may help to support such efforts.

Trailheads and Parking

Parking areas and corresponding trailheads have been established at the following locations in Hickory Meadows.

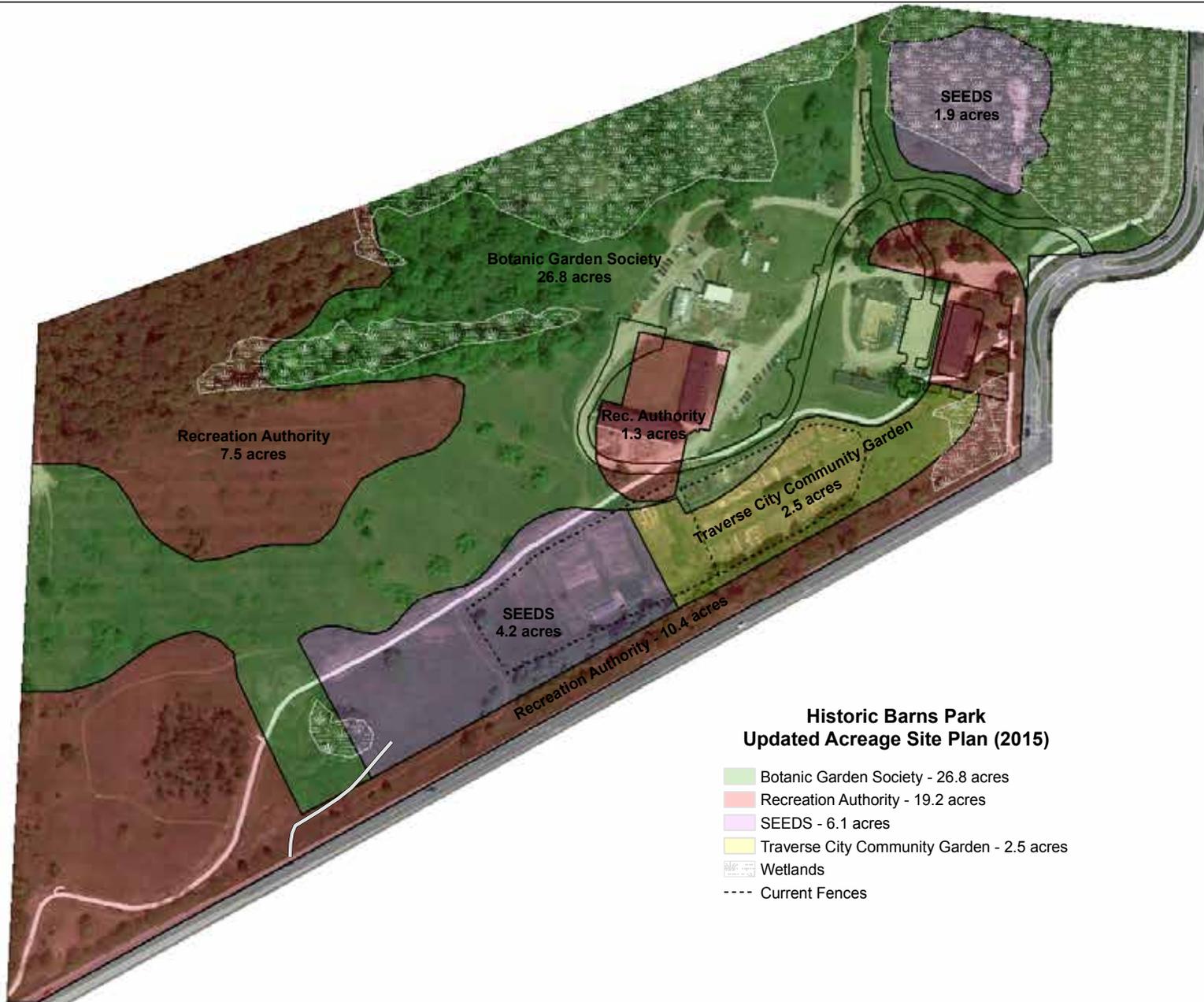
1. Randolph Street at the southwest corner of the property.
2. Wayne Street along the east side of the property (on-street parking only)
3. At the barn on M-72 on the north end of the property.

Each trailhead/parking area has a garbage bin, as well as an information station/kiosk. The parking areas are bordered by fencing or large rocks to clearly delineate their bounds and prevent vehicles from entering the Meadows.

Restrooms and Other Facilities

Restrooms installed by the City as part of the redevelopment of Hickory Hills are also available to users of Hickory Meadows. Portable facilities may be used for special events with the Rec Authority's permission.





Historic Barns Park

Historic Barns Park is a 56-acre parcel at the southern end of the Grand Traverse Commons, once the heart of an extensive agricultural production area for the former Traverse City State Hospital. Guided by extensive public input, the park is being redeveloped as a public space to promote agriculture, arts, community events, recreation, and environmental sustainability with on-site partners including the Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park, TC Community Garden, and SEEDS. The majestic Cathedral Barn offers an event space for weddings and other public events.

Site History

In 2004, with the assistance of the Friends for Recreational Lands, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, the Traverse City Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Rotary Charities of Traverse City, the National Cherry Festival, the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce and the Biederman Foundation, voters in Traverse City and Garfield Charter Township overwhelmingly approved a millage request (by a 3 to 1 margin) to acquire three properties, including the 56 acres that now are known as Historic Barns Park.

The property had long been known as “the Barns” because of two large and beautiful structures — the Cathedral Barn and the Historic Barn — that form the centerpiece for rolling meadows, woodlots, wetlands, trails, and a cluster of other historic outbuildings. Located in the heart of northern Michigan's most heavily populated area, this urban park is only blocks away from downtown Traverse City. An island of green, Historic Barns Park is becoming the region's “Central Park” and a community touchstone for residents and visitors alike. The park adjoins the region's largest employer, Munson Medical Center, and is nestled in one of the nation's largest historical redevelopment projects, the Grand Traverse Commons.

The Grand Traverse Commons is the site of the former Traverse City State Psychiatric Hospital, owned and operated by the State of Michigan to treat individuals with mental illness. Originally opened in 1885, the State Hospital housed 50,000 patients, hired 20,000 employees, and accepted 250,000 visitors before its closure in 1988. The Barns property was the agricultural production area for the State Hospital. Largely a self-sufficient community, almost 84,000 pounds of food and almost 103,000 pounds of milk were produced annually at its peak to feed 3,500 patients and staff.

The legacy of the old State Hospital and the agricultural heritage of the Barns area were driving factors behind the popularity of the 2004 millage. As part of the purchase, the Rec Authority promised to stabilize the Cathedral and Historic Barns, which were falling into disrepair after years of abandonment. The Barns stabilization was undertaken in August 2005 and included reroofing of both barns, repair and painting of masonry and woodwork, installation of a French drain to protect the foundations from water damage, and securing doors and windows against unauthorized entry. Vandalism was reduced with the improvements to the buildings and deterioration of the buildings was halted. The stabilization also included the installation of insulation on the roof of the Cathedral Barn, the largest of the two main structures. The insulation was added to the exterior of the roof under the shingles to preserve the beauty of the interior beams. Other early property improvements included the installation of electrical service (underground to preserve the natural character of the property), a sewer and water extension, and a gas line.

In 2007, several community meetings were held to gather public input on a vision for the Barns property. These sessions, called “Brainstorming the Barns,” provided the Rec Authority with four consistent themes for use of the property: Agriculture/Horticulture, Arts, Community (community event centers, small festivals), and Recreation.

Based on the public vision articulated in the “Brainstorming the Barns”



process, the Rec Authority developed a Master Site Plan for Historic Barns Park in 2008 and 2009. The Master Site Plan is used to guide principles, collaboration and the creation of a public park with activities on the property that encourage agriculture, art, community and recreation. These themes have become the guiding vision for the property, including the participation of community nonprofit organizations to aid in providing these experiences. Examples of current nonprofit partners include:

The Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park (BGHBP), a nonprofit organization that has been working to create a regional botanic garden in northwest Michigan since 2000. Their goal is to build and maintain a public botanic garden that will enhance Historic Barns Park, creating a garden that is beautiful, accessible, sustainable and enjoyable. BGHBP voluntarily maintains many of the public grounds on the site and is working to raise funds for further development.

SEEDS Ecology & Education Centers, a nonprofit research, design and educational institution whose mission is to seek the development of socially and ecologically sustainable environments. SEEDS conducts

agricultural projects, youth workforce training, and renewable energy projects at the park.

TC Community Garden is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide a place for members of the community to gather and share a common interest in organic gardening in an urban setting, provide educational opportunities to the community that foster an appreciation for sustainable growing practices, and grow fresh produce for charitable purposes. The Community Garden has more than 80 plots available for use at the park.

The Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, which served as fiduciary for a three-year, \$1.5 million joint capital fundraising campaign between the Recreational Authority and BGHBP. Completed in 2013, this campaign funded Phase I improvements to the Cathedral Barn and Botanic Garden. The Cathedral Barn received fire suppression, restrooms, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, making it available for year-round public use. Completion of the first phase of the Botanic Garden provided the park with a visitors' center and classroom, a walled



wildflower garden, and two display gardens.

These and other organizations are cooperating with the Rec Authority and with each other to improve the buildings and grounds of the park and provide educational and recreational opportunities to the community. These unique partnerships of public and non-profit institutions continue to reflect the broad community support for Historic Barns Park.

On the heels of the Master Site Plan and the formation of the capital campaign, the Rec Authority completed a four-year Business Plan. The plan guided the development of a facilities rental enterprise based around the Cathedral Barn and an adjoining outdoor amphitheater, as well as a unique “Energy Farm” component of innovative energy generation and conservation demonstrations on the site. The goal is to make the ongoing use and preservation of the Cathedral Barn financially self-sustaining. Uses include public events, concerts and other performances, conferences, weddings and classes.

Recreational uses of the park include hiking, biking, running, bird

watching, skiing and snowshoeing.

Health Benefits

Historic Barns Park is a popular destination for recreational activities, especially as a hub for a network of recreational trails that traverse over 200 acres of adjacent natural lands. Garfield Township secured a 2011 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant to fill a prominent gap in our regional trail network with a commuter trail section through the park. The Master Site Plan places an emphasis on non-motorized access to the park, encouraging visitors to “get out of their cars” to enjoy the park. It is hoped that this “active” access model will promote healthful exercise in the park and help to preserve its rural nature in the midst of its urban setting.

An equally healthful emphasis has been placed on the programming activities at the park. Sustainable use of our land, water, and energy resources is one of the prime challenges of the 21st century, one that is directly related to human health, welfare, and social equity. The Rec

Authority requires that environmentally sustainable strategies be used in all activities on the site. Farming and gardening practices are based on organic methods and integrated pest management (IPM) strategies. Native trees, shrubs and perennials are being restored throughout the site for the support of indigenous insect and bird populations, as well as for the preservation and reintroduction of these species. Sustainable strategies are also being implemented for water and soil conservation on the site. As part of the Business Plan, an Energy Farm is slated for the site, both to help power the park with renewable/alternative energy and to serve as a public model to demonstrate these techniques and other energy-saving technologies. Prominent Energy Farm projects to date include a closed-loop geothermal system that heats and cools the massive Cathedral Barn, a solar array that powers the irrigation pump for the agricultural and community garden areas of the park, and outdoor solar lighting fixtures.

Public Engagement

The Rec Authority has a long and consistent history of extensive public participation and engagement, beginning with its founding millage campaign in 2004. With the assistance of the Friends for Recreational Lands, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, the Traverse City Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Rotary Charities of Traverse City, the National Cherry Festival, the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce and the Biederman Foundation, voters in Traverse City and Garfield Charter Township overwhelmingly approved the Recreational Authority millage request by a 3 to 1 margin.

In 2007, the Recreational Authority held an intensive public engagement process to gather public input on the vision for the Barns property. This series of public meetings, called "Brainstorming the Barns," articulated the public vision for the park and led to the development of a citizen-driven Master Site Plan for the Historic Barns Park. The Master Site Plan is a guide for carrying out the public's vision, including agriculture, art, community and recreational activities.





Progress and results of all Rec Authority projects are reported at monthly public meetings of the Rec Authority Board of Directors. Special meetings are also held as necessary. Meeting agendas, informational packets and approved minutes are posted on the Rec Authority website at www.recauthority.org. Press releases and paid advertising are used to publicize special events or processes.

Economic Benefits

The goal of managing a facilities rental enterprise as an economic engine for the park is twofold. First, it helps to make the park itself more of a self-sufficient entity. It also serves as an economic engine for the region, drawing countless visitors from within and outside the area to enjoy the park's unique amenities and events.

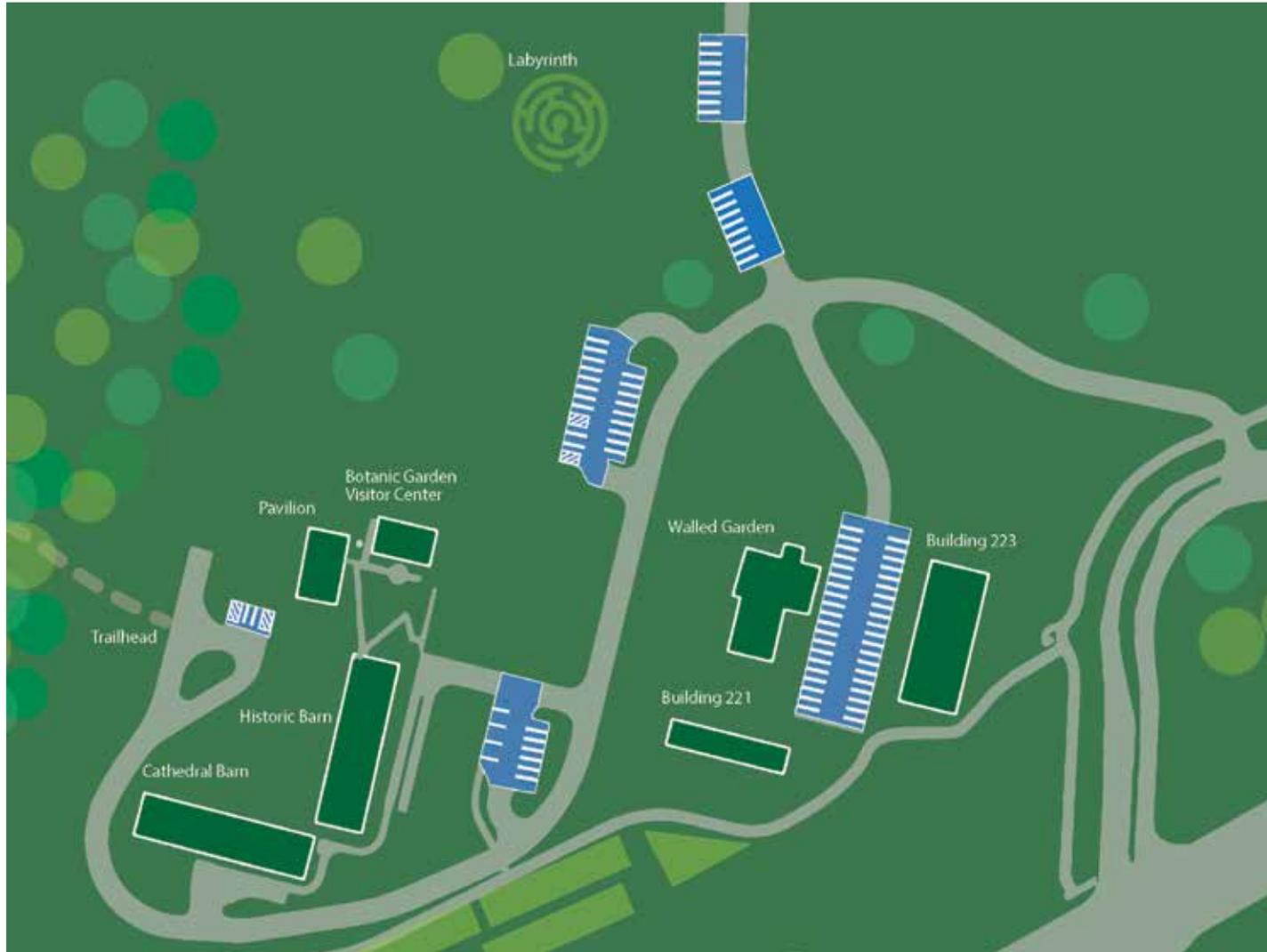
Related benefits include all the advantages of having a world-class historic, recreational and educational retreat within walking distance of

an urban center. From schools to senior centers, nearby users are able to attend a concert, stroll the gardens, and learn about the latest advances in energy and agriculture only minutes from their homes and offices. Visitors to the region get to experience something distinctly and uniquely of this place, and local businesses benefit from this increased activity.

Environmental Benefits

Historic Barns Park is adjacent to over 282 acres of protected parkland that straddles the municipal boundary of Traverse City and Garfield Charter Township. Historic Barns Park serves as a wildlife corridor between these parklands, home for deer, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and over 114 species of birds. The park provides ample opportunities for wildlife viewing and habitat protection in an otherwise urban setting.







Inventory of Buildings at Historic Barns Park

The defining centerpieces and namesakes of Historic Barns Park are two large old barns that were once part of the farming operations of the former Traverse City State Hospital (1885-1988). These and five other buildings remain on the site and are in various states of adaptive public reuse. Ownership is retained by the Rec Authority, though various structures have been placed under the management auspices of the nonprofit partners at the park as a way to share resources and expenses, as the renovation and upkeep of the buildings is the dominant expense on any of the Rec Authority properties. The vast majority of renovation work on the buildings to date has been accomplished through grants and fundraising by the Rec Authority and the partners. A building inventory follows.

Building 204, The Cathedral Barn – Constructed circa 1932, this is a massive two-story, wood-framed barn with brick walls and a stone and block foundation, approximately 5,750 square feet per floor. During its farming days, the upper level was used for hay storage and the lower level was used for young cattle stock, calving and milking. The open, soaring upper level is now used as an event space, the revenues from which support the operation and upkeep of the building itself. Utility services include electricity, water and sewer, and a closed-loop geothermal heating and cooling system. Renovation of the lower level for modern reuse and the installation of a shared elevator system with the adjacent Historic Barn are among the main capital improvement priorities for the building at this time. This barn is under the direct management auspices of the Rec Authority.

Building 206, The Historic Barn – Constructed circa 1900. It is also a two-story, wood-framed building with brick walls and a stone and block foundation, approximately 5,700 square feet per floor. Like the Cathedral Barn, the upper level was used for hay storage and the lower level was used for cattle, calving and milking. Unlike the Cathedral Barn, a fire wall bisects the northern and southern halves of the building, which were built a few years apart. The building has been environmentally remediated but is not yet renovated for modern reuse and does not have any utility services at this time. This barn is under the direct management auspices of the Rec Authority.

Building 211, Botanic Garden Visitor Center – A former root cellar and granary that has been adapted for reuse as a Visitor Center by the Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park. The building consists of two levels, approximately 1,380 square feet per floor. The block walls and concrete floors date to 1951, though a stone foundation is much older. Utilities include electricity, water and sewer, HVAC, and phone/internet. The lower level now houses a gift shop and information center; the upper level is used as meeting and event space. The lower level is connected to the lower level of the Pavilion via an original tunnel built by the State Hospital.

Building 221, Wagon House – A one-story concrete block structure with a concrete floor and a small attic space, approximately 2,020 square feet in total. The 10 stalls in the building were used by the State Hospital as storage for wagons and sleighs, originally built circa 1915. The building is under the management auspices of the Botanic Garden and is currently



used as storage. The roof has been replaced with accommodations for a green roof and solar panels in the future. The building does not yet have utility services.

Building 222, Walled Garden – The 6,000 square-foot stone foundation of a former horse barn (constructed circa 1900) has been adapted by the Botanic Garden as a unique open-air walled garden feature.

Building 223, Blacksmith Shop – A one-story main floor (approximately 5,760 square feet) with a partial basement (approximately 1,440 square feet) constructed of block walls, a reinforced concrete frame, concrete floors and wood-framed roof. It was built circa 1920 to house the State Hospital's blacksmith shop. The building is subdivided under the management auspices of SEEDS, TC Community Garden and the Botanic Garden and has primarily been used as storage. Parts of

the building have electric service and internet service, and SEEDS is progressing toward the installation of water and sewer service to its area of the building.

Building 226, The Pavilion – Another former crop storage building for the State Hospital consisting of a main floor and a cellar, approximately 2,000 square feet per floor. Constructed circa 1930, with block walls, concrete floors and a concrete roof slab, though the stone foundation may be older than that. Now under the management auspices of the Botanic Garden. The above-ground main floor of the building has been adapted into an open-air pavilion, and the lower cellar level has yet to be renovated. The lower level is connected to the lower level of the Visitor Center via an original tunnel built by the State Hospital. Both levels are served by electricity.



West Bay Waterfront Property

This small parcel had outsized importance for the community and the evolution of the Traverse City waterfront. The City and a wide variety of partners (including the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, the Les and Anne Biederman Foundation, the National Cherry Festival, Rotary Charities of Traverse City, the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Traverse City Convention and Visitors Bureau, among others) had worked for years to reclaim the historically industrialized Lake Michigan waterfront for public recreational purposes. This 0.5-acre parcel was the last privately-held property in what had become a long stretch of otherwise public parkland.

The Rec Authority's voter-approved millage in 2004 and the Rec Authority's subsequent purchase of the site completed today's contiguous public open space along West Grand Traverse Bay. The Rec Authority performed brownfield cleanup activities on the site in 2005, including the demolition of an office building and parking lot. Other than some vegetation plantings, the site has remained largely in the same state since then, an open, grassy spot set against the beautiful bay.

Based on feedback from the 2019 Public Visioning process, people are generally satisfied with the West Bay Waterfront property as is. Some believe it should be given to the City, which provides basic maintenance (e.g., mowing) on the area; some think not. Many feel that the Authority continues to have a role and responsibility to ensure this property is maintained in its natural state.

Public Feedback: How should this property be managed in the future?

- Open space/picnic location. Keep the view and the trees.
- Maintain property to keep invasive species at bay.
- Public Restroom
- Low impact and keep it natural
- No change
- Improve lighting and visibility. Secluded are scary. I love the easy access to the water.
- I like it open and undeveloped. TART reroutes & its not a sharp turn and offer free play a bit more.
- Join with City to put signage. Police keeping dogs off the beach.
- Keep it like it is.
- Leave as is.
- Open Space.
- Keep it open.
- Keep hammocks out of trees and keep tents and homeless better controlled/supervised.
- No change.
- Erosion control, picnic area, smoke free area.
- Plant more trees and keep as is.
- Picnic space, signage
- Leave it alone.
- Leave it as is.
- Small permanent sign identifying it as a Rec Authority property. For name recognition. Possibly naming opportunity.
- Keep it simple, but add two picnic tables.

Accessibility Assessment

The accessibility evaluations for the Rec Authority's properties have been conducted by the Rec Authority's Executive Director as part of the recreation planning process.

The evaluations were based loosely on the United States Access Board's Section 15 – Recreation Facilities, the Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities, Americans with Disabilities Act, and used the ranking criteria suggested by MDNR's Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans (2016). These criteria are based on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

The criteria are as follows: ADA Ranking System Rank Interpretation

1. None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
2. Some of the facilities/parks meet accessibility guidelines.
3. Most of the facilities/parks meet accessibility guidelines.
4. All the facilities/park meets accessibility guidelines.
5. The entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design.

Table 7. ADA Assessment

Public Facility	Asset Type	Rating
Historic Barns Park	Park	3
Hickory Meadows	Park	2
West Bay Waterfront	Conservation	1





chapter 5.

planning for the future

Engaging the Community

The realization of this 5-Year Recreation Plan was several years in the making. In 2018 and 2019, 700 people made their voices heard through a five-month inclusive public visioning effort that directly informed this Plan. The purpose of the visioning effort was to help the Rec Authority chart a path forward to ensure continued success for years to come. Based on public input, the vision for the Authority is to serve as a regional entity that facilitates collaboration among stakeholders, local governments, and non-profits; serves as a convener for fundraising and project implementation; and pursues projects that foster connectivity and protect natural and cultural assets for generations to come.

In 2020, the Recreational Authority worked with the public and key stakeholder groups in the Grand Traverse area to review the public input findings from 2019 to identify additional goals and objectives for this Plan. Consideration of the Plan was a formal agenda item for Rec Authority Board public meetings in June, September, November and December of 2020, with a public hearing and final adoption of the Plan conducted at the Board's public meeting in January of 2021.

Formal comments on the draft Plan were submitted by the Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park, the Charter Township of Garfield, and Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails, Inc. (TART Trails). These comments are included in the Appendices and were incorporated into the final Plan.

In addition to the planning effort, the Rec Authority received press coverage and public attention throughout 2020 related to the ballot measure that was ultimately approved by voters in November of that year.



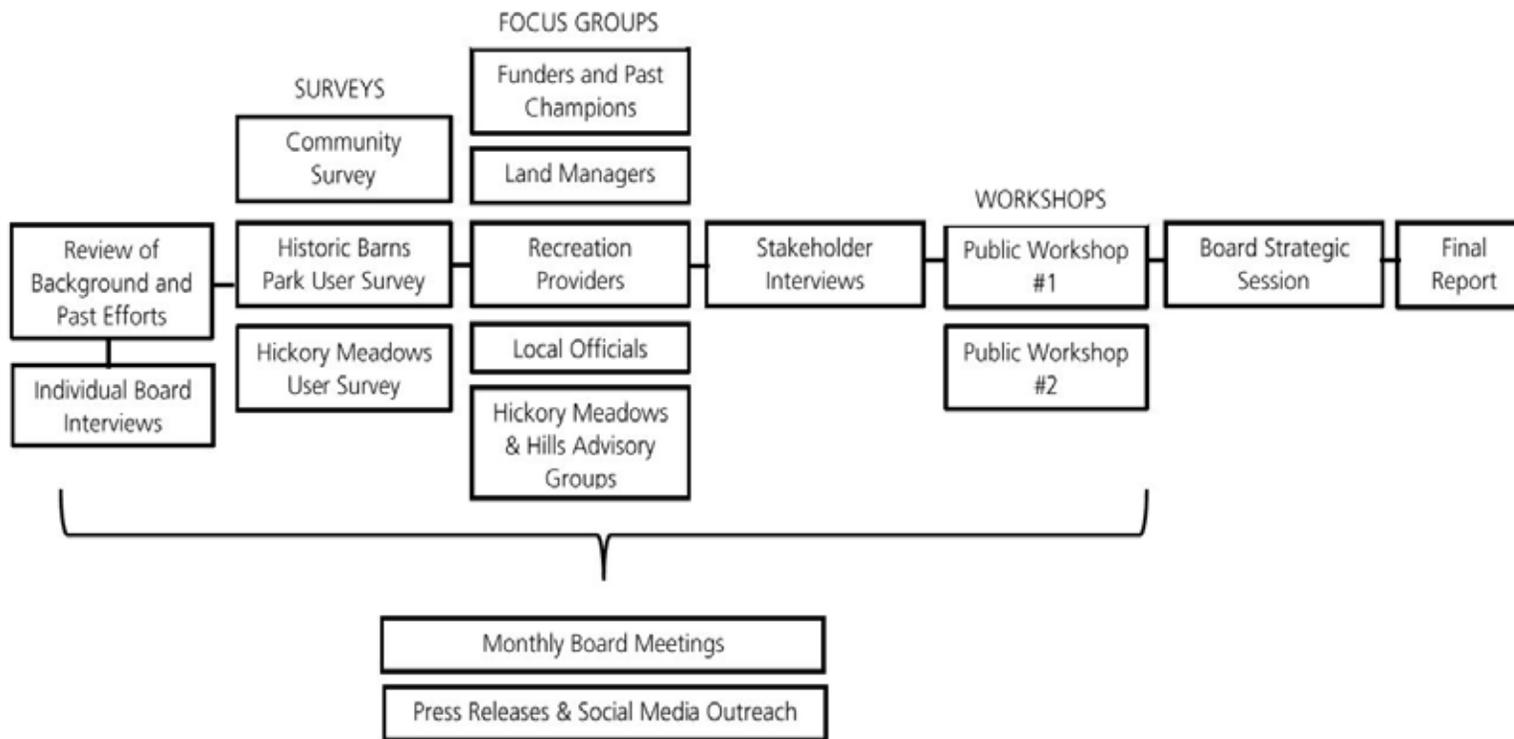
2019 Public Visioning Process

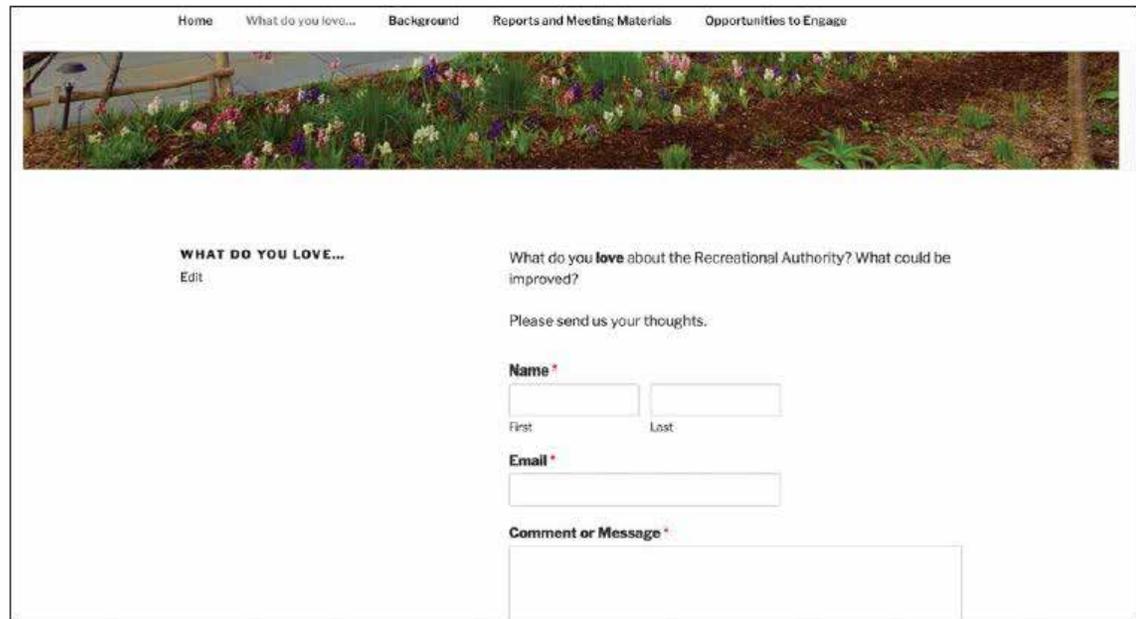
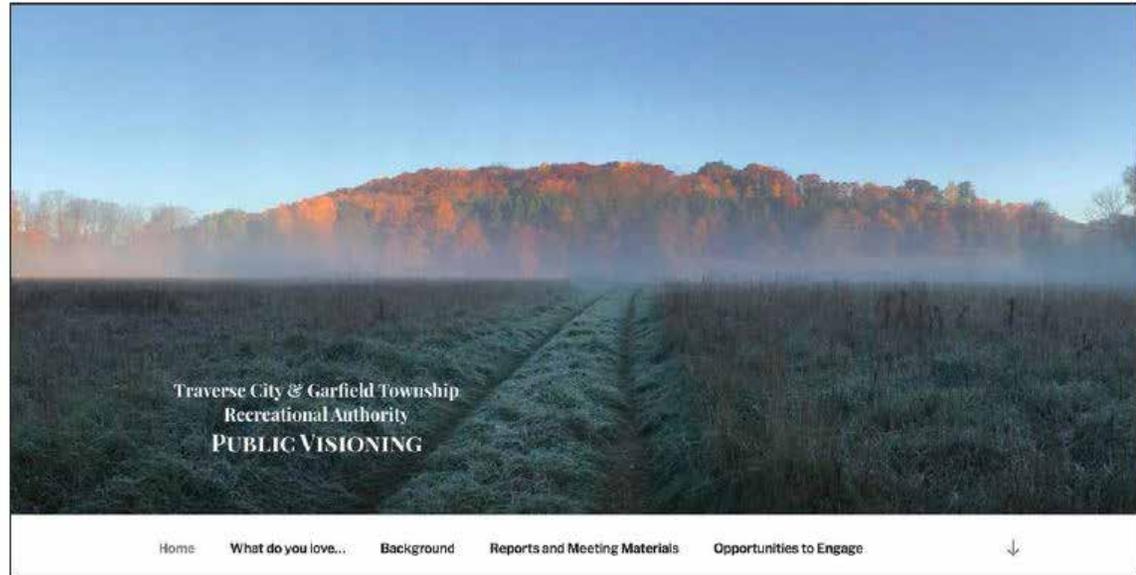
Input collected from residents, recreation users, and Rec Authority stakeholders formed the foundation for the recommendations presented in this report. Through a series of surveys, focus group discussions, stakeholder interviews, and public visioning workshops, the project team gathered feedback to craft a series of recommendations for the Authority.

A project website was developed to serve as a two-way communication tool between the public and the Authority Board. The website housed

background documents, preliminary recommendations, survey results, and provided a place for input to be submitted. Extensive media outreach was conducted through press releases, paid media outlets, and social media.

A number of different engagement methods were used to solicit input and ideas from a diverse representation of community members. This chapter summarizes the themes and priorities identified through the various outreach methods.





The project website was used to communicate with stakeholders, host the community survey, and gather input on the future of the Rec Authority from residents.

Survey Results

The purpose of the surveys was to help the Rec Authority understand who is using the park properties and how the properties are being used, as well as to serve as an educational tool to inform citizens about the properties administered by the Authority.

Two surveys were conducted as a part of this visioning effort: (1) an online community-wide survey targeted toward all residents of Garfield Township and Traverse City; and (2) an on-site user survey targeted toward parks users at Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows.

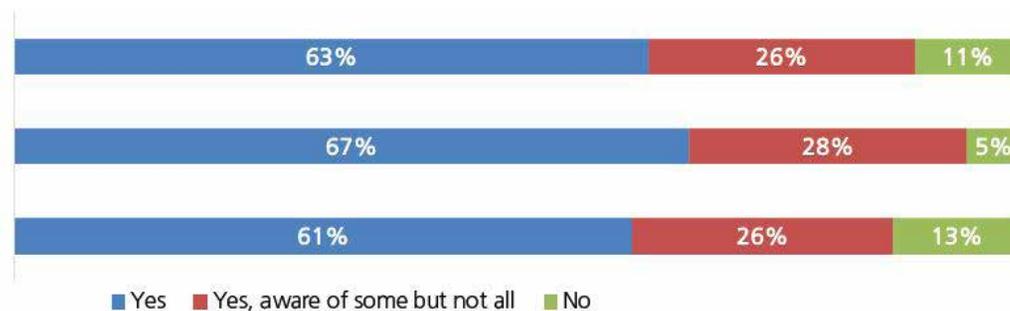
Community Survey

A total of 625 people responded to the online community survey for the Rec Authority visioning process, 232 of whom reside Traverse City and 95 of whom reside in Garfield Township. One hundred ninety six (196) respondents live in other communities; the majority are within Grand Traverse County. The survey remained open for two months.

Most survey respondents were aware of the Rec Authority but were a little unclear about the exact details of the properties and management structure. At both Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows, the most popular activities were hiking. When asked about the prospect of expanding services and amenities, there was general support for maintenance of local non-motorized trails, implementation of local recreation plans, and exploring the purchase of additional land for recreation and preservation.

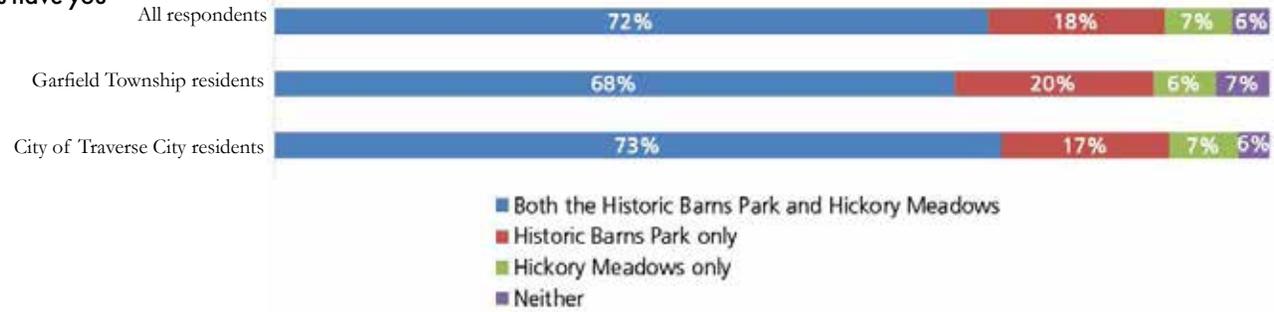
Survey respondents were also asked to provide feedback on broad recreation-related goals for their community. Goals that rose to the top in importance include an accessible and interconnected trail network, public access to water, and passive recreation opportunities. Natural spaces, connected trails, and accessible environmentally friendly spaces are the key attributes of parks and recreational amenities ranked in the highest importance amongst survey respondents. The following graphics summarize the community survey results.

Are you aware of the three public park properties owned and managed by the Authority?





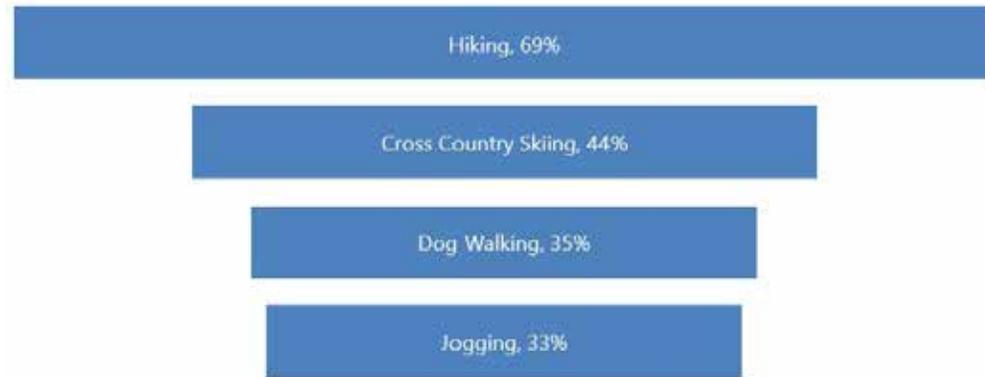
Which of the following parks have you visited in the past 5 years?



Of the people who visit Historic Barns Park, we asked, "What activities do you enjoy at the Historic Barns Park?"

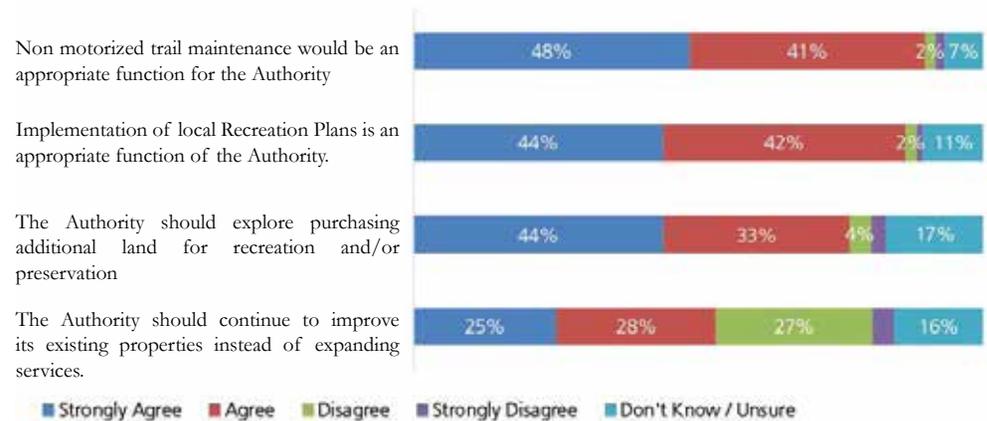


Of the people who visit Hickory Meadows, we asked "What activities do you enjoy at Hickory Meadows?"

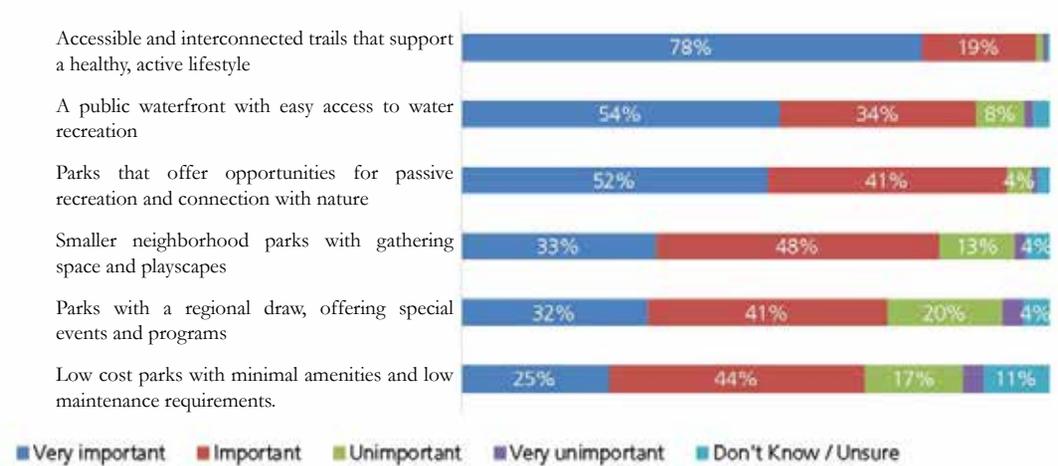




The Recreational Authority is exploring the possibility of expanding its focus to other areas in Traverse City and/or Garfield Township. Thinking about existing recreational amenities and services in the city and township, please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

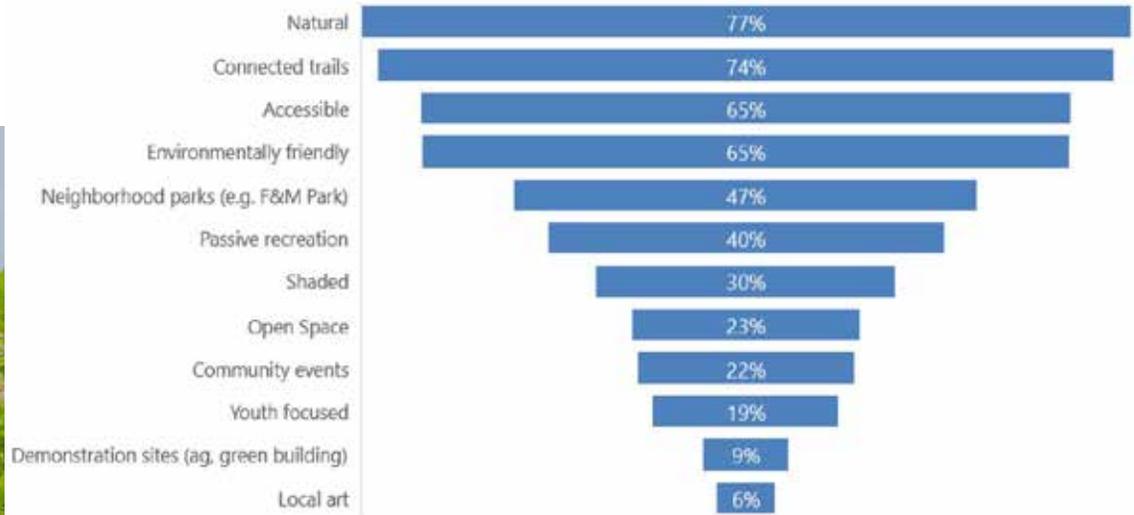


The following goal statements have been developed after reviewing the City and Township's Recreation Plans. Please rate the overall importance of the following.





In your opinion, what are the most important attributes of parks and recreation amenities in Traverse City and Garfield Township? Please select 5.



Historic Barns Park User Survey

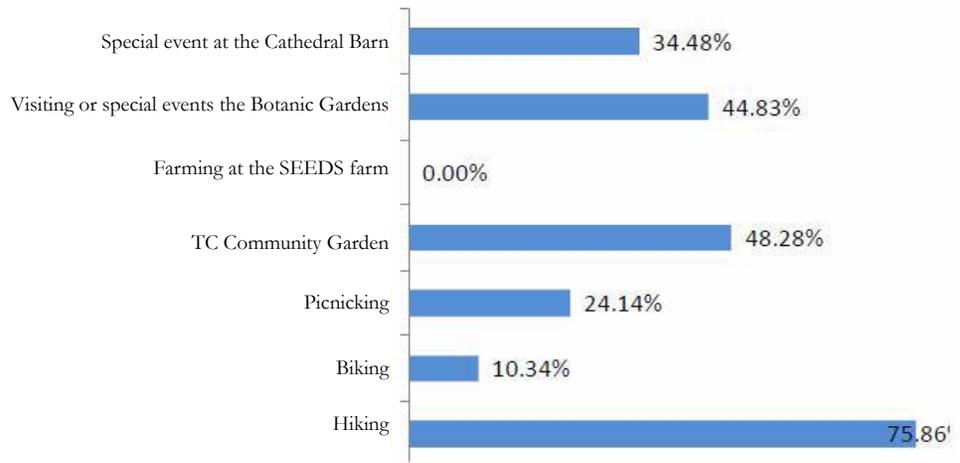
To better understand how both Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows are used, on-site intercept surveys were conducted at each location to survey park users. Because a concurrent effort to survey park users spearheaded by the Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee was already underway at Hickory Meadows, the project team has incorporated those survey results into this report to eliminate duplication of efforts.

The user survey at Historic Barns Park began in early August 2018 and ran through the end of September.

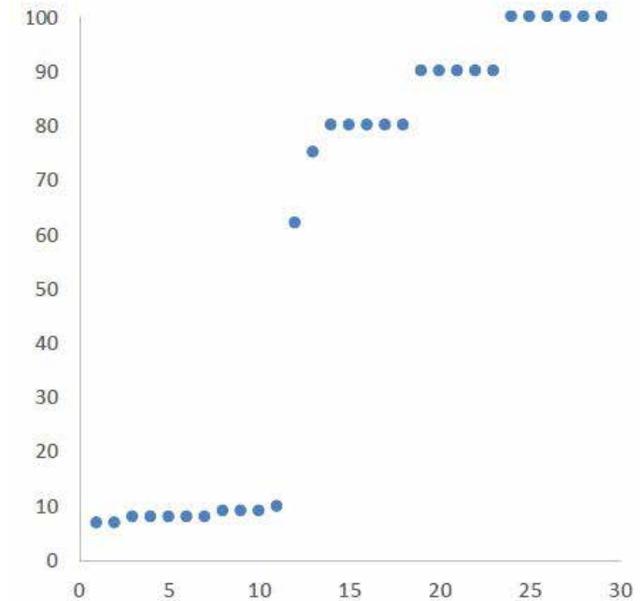
Hard copies of the survey were distributed through the Botanic Garden and Cathedral Barn in Historic Barns Park. Signs were posted with a CMS text message code on the paved Pathway by the Community Garden, at the Botanic Garden Entrance, and at the Trailhead behind the Cathedral Barn. Members of the project team also spent time doing intercept surveys with the trail users. A total of 29 people responded.



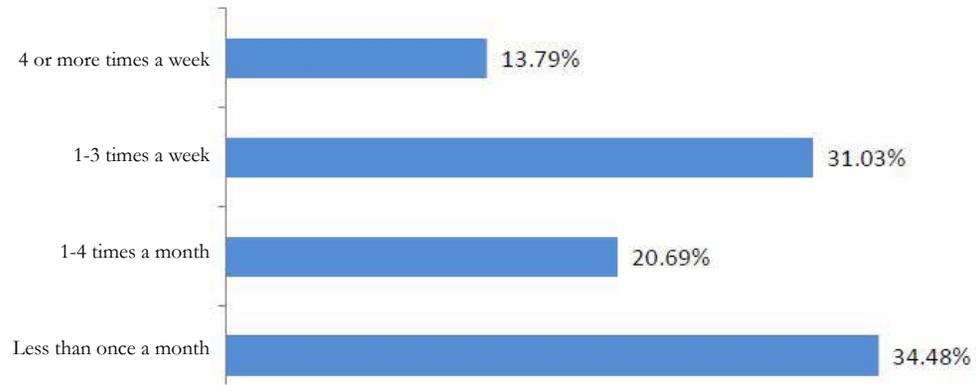
What activities do you enjoy at the Historic Barns Park?



How well do you feel the Historic Barns Park is maintained? (0 meaning poor and 100 meaning great)



How often do you visit this park?



What improvements would you like to see at this park?

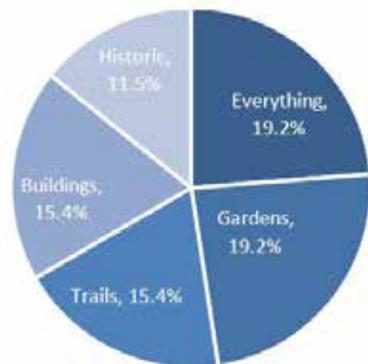


26 individuals answered this question. The word cloud above shows the most prominent responses that were provided. Seven respondents said they would not change a thing, while five individuals noted the need for better roads. Specifically, they stated the need for paving, better parking options, and better stormwater management. Three respondents stated they would like to see trail improvements. A couple people noted support for green infrastructure. Other suggestions are summarized as follows:

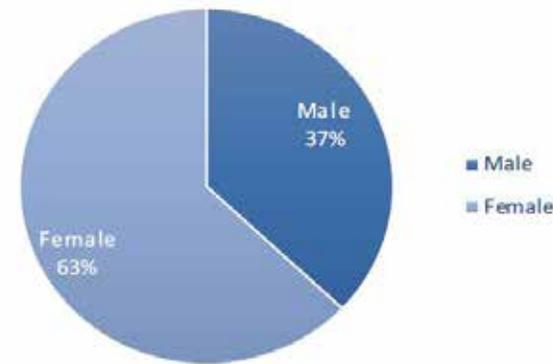
- Bathrooms, better lighting, and more seating areas

- Playground
- Continued development
- Classes on native plants and sustainability
- Improved facilities for Community Gardeners (e.g., storage space)
- More educational signage

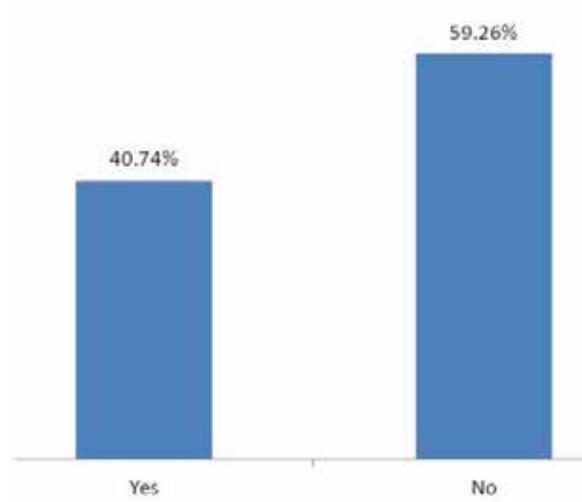
What would you like to see stay the same at this park?



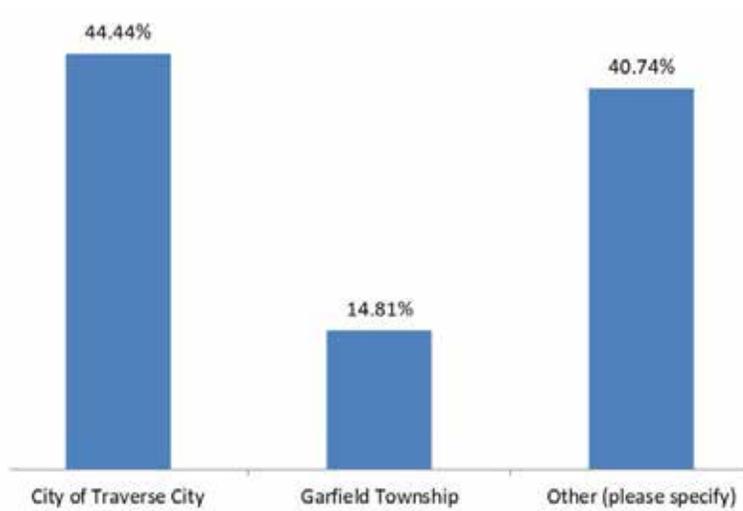
What is your gender?



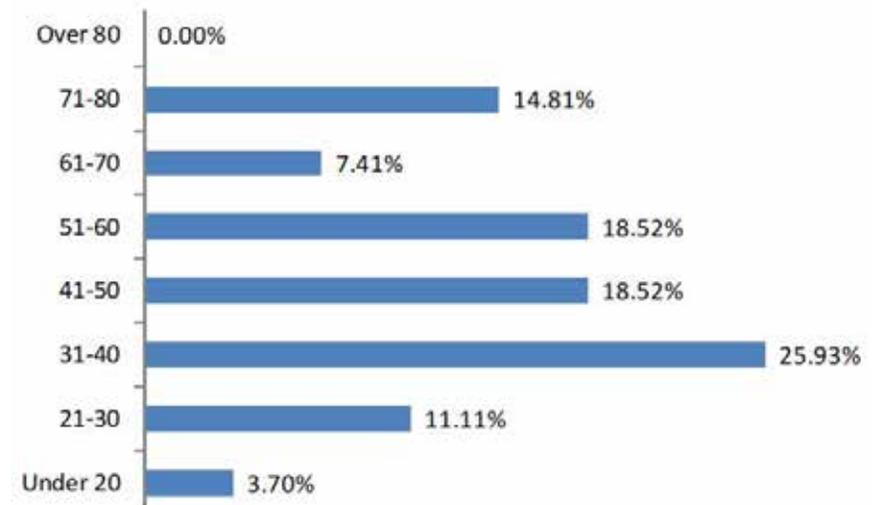
Are you familiar with the Recreational Authority?



Where do you reside?



What is your age?





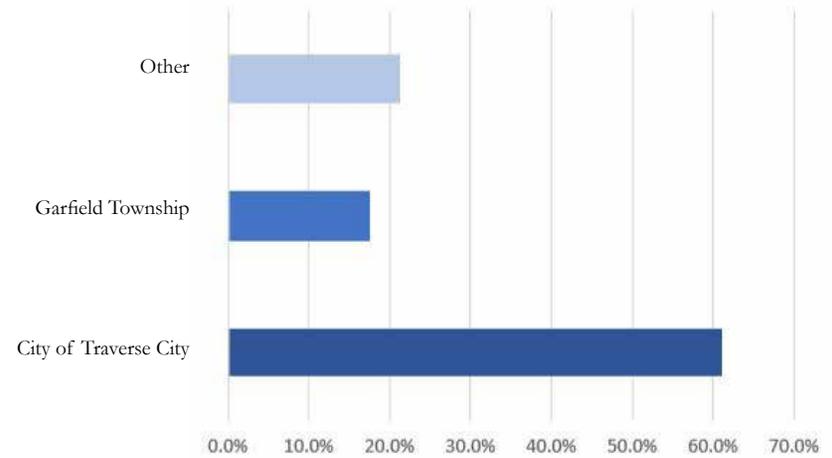
Hickory Meadows User Survey

As noted previously, the Hickory Meadows User Survey was offered in hard copy format and was administered separately from the visioning process. There were collection sites stationed at trailheads in the park where the surveys could be returned.

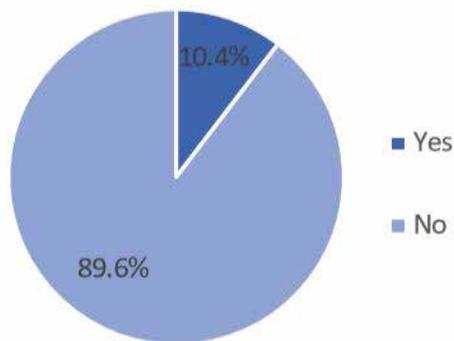
Volunteers also spent time doing intercept surveys with the trail users. Survey collection began before the visioning process and continued through March 2019. The following summarizes 117 preliminary responses received.

Hickory Meadows User Survey Results

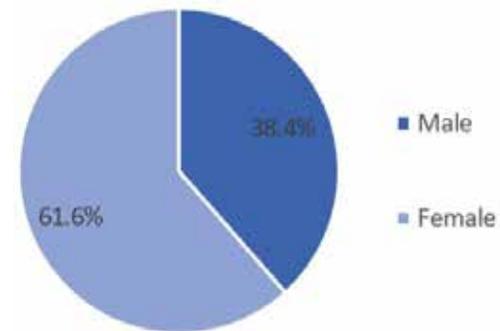
Where do you reside?

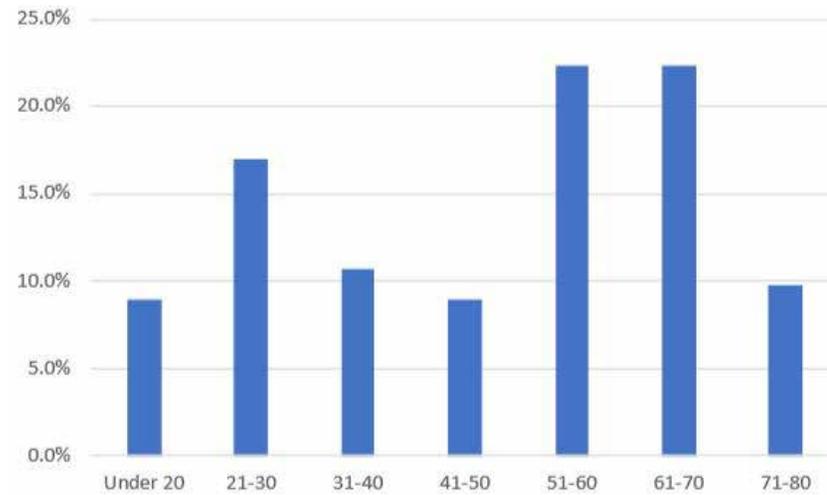
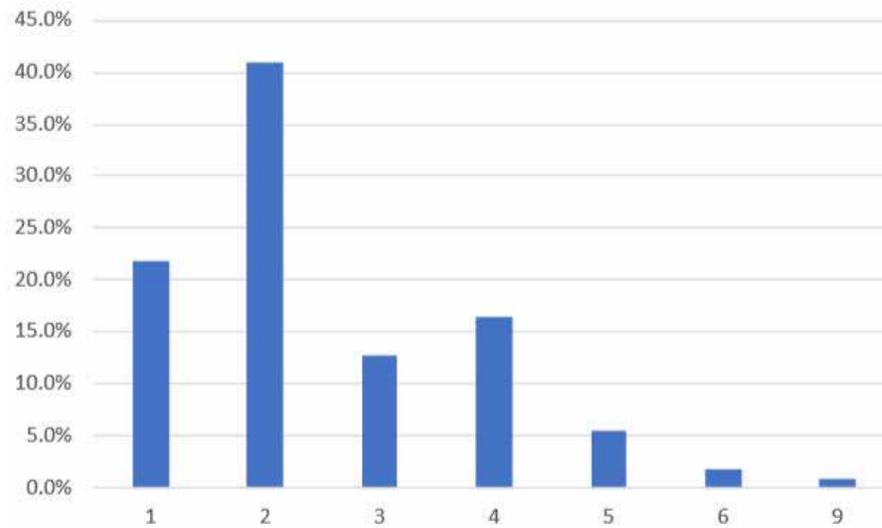


Have you completed this survey in the past 12 months?



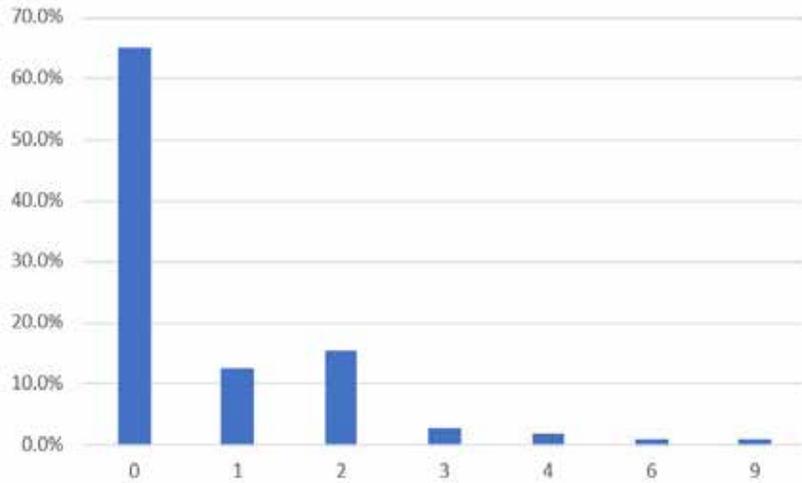
What is your gender?



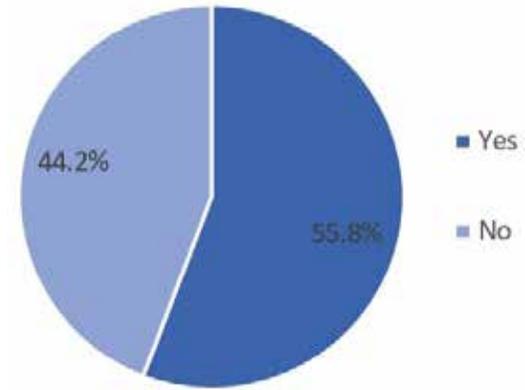
What is your age?**How many members of your household use Hickory Meadows?**



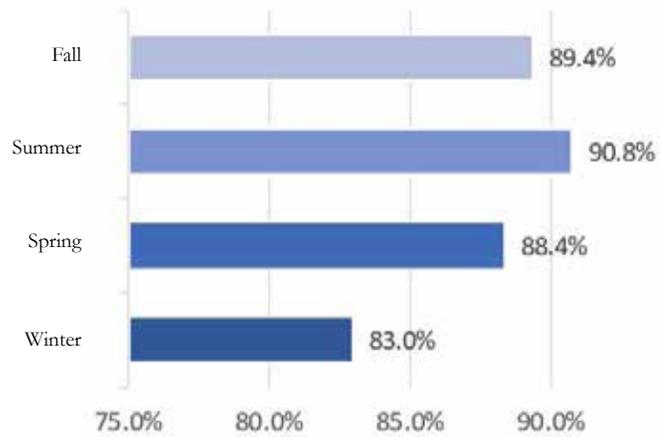
How many of these members are under 18 years of age?



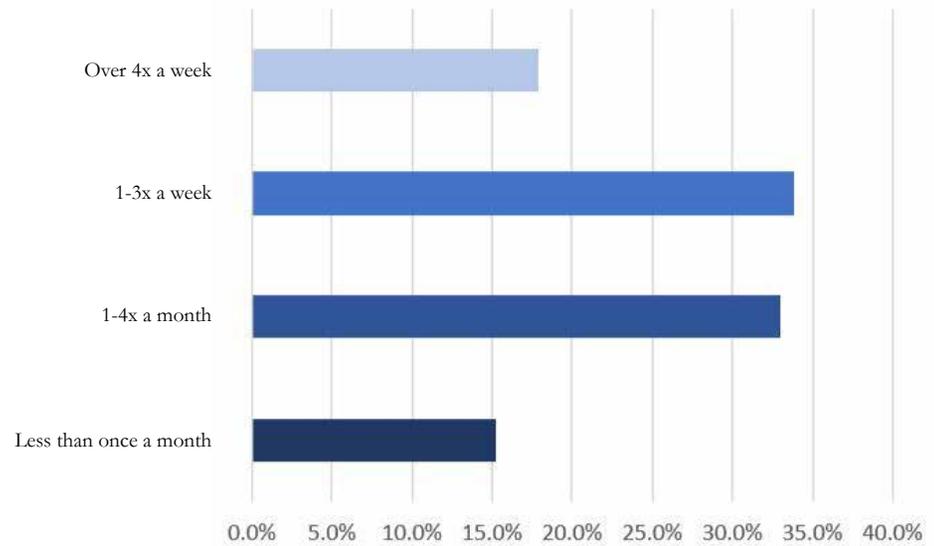
Were you aware before this survey that Hickory Meadows and Hickory Hills are owned and operated by two separate entities?



Which seasons do you use Hickory Meadows?



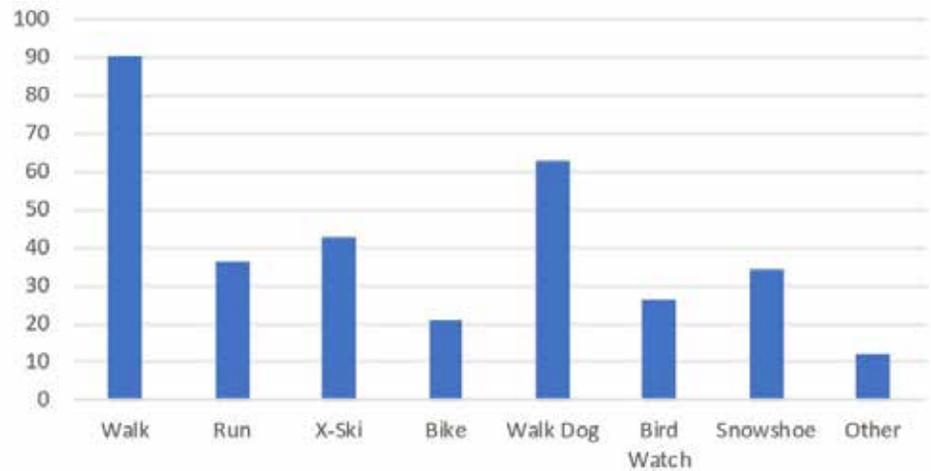
How often do you visit Hickory Meadows?



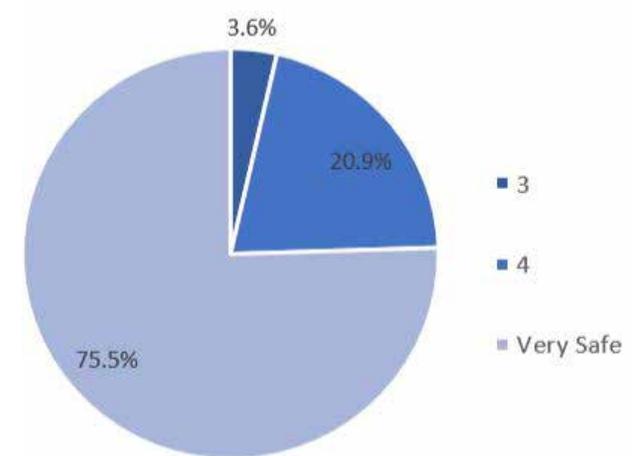


What activities do you enjoy at Hickory Meadows?

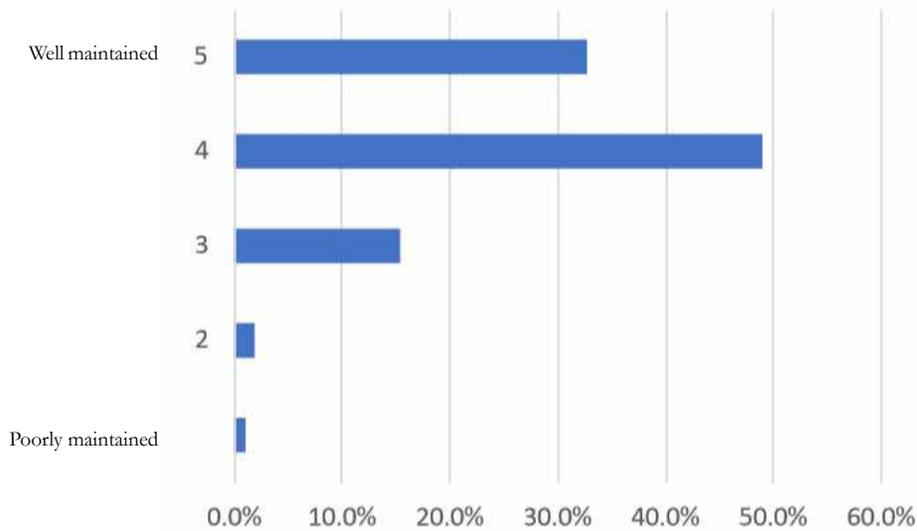
Hickory Meadows User Survey Results



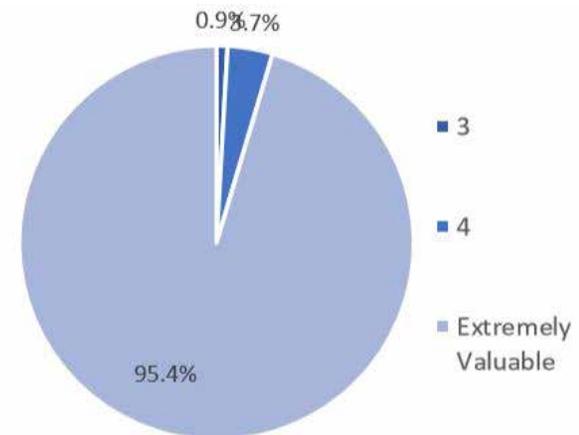
How safe do you feel when using the Hickory Meadows property?



How well do you feel the Hickory Meadows trails are maintained?



In your opinion, how valuable is Hickory Meadows to the community?



“There is no logic that can be superimposed on the city; people make it, and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans.”

– Jane Jacobs in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*



Focus Groups and Stakeholder Interviews

Eight focus group meetings were held in September through December of 2018. The project team also met separately with key stakeholders who were unable to attend the focus group meetings. A total of 42 individuals participated in a focus group and/or stakeholder interview. Representatives from the following groups were invited to participate: (1) Funders and Past Champions; (2) Land Managers and Land Management Organizations; (3) Community Recreation Providers; and (4) Local Officials. The purpose of these discussions was to secure input from various interests about the vision, mission, and role of the Authority in anticipation of a future millage request for capital and operating resources. Two additional focus group meetings were added to the scope halfway through the process with representatives of Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows to identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination.

In response to the vision of the Rec Authority, the most common response was that the Authority should stay the course and complete the original goals of the Authority. However, many participants also shared the sentiment that the Authority should consider a carefully planned and managed expansion in its scope to spread the benefits of recreational

development and management, provided that the original intent and goals are not compromised. Respondents who supported staying the course felt this could include leadership in alternative energy demonstrations; improving and expanding trails at Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows; completing the roads, restorations, and improvements at both barns; and having the Authority serve as a convener to support the success of the community groups at each park.

There were some individuals who supported a significant expansion. With this potential expansion came the caveat of completing what was initially started and being sure not to expand beyond the capacity of the organization. Ideas for a significant expansion included responsibilities such as:

1. The facilitation and implementation of updates to five-year recreation plans in the surrounding communities
2. Acquiring, developing, and managing new park properties that connect with existing properties
3. Assuming responsibility for maintenance of the Boardman Lake Trail
4. County-wide or regional geographic expansion of the Authority to preserve and protect key undeveloped areas in the community. The



individuals who supported a significant expansion for the Authority noted that a key benefit would be streamlined and efficient recreational services for the region. This coordinated approach to recreational service provision could reduce overlap of services and amenities; reduce the impacts associated with turnover resulting from local elections; create a consistent look, feel, and management of recreational facilities; and create economies of scale to optimize productivity in expending operating funds.

Public Workshops

Approximately 40 community members came together in October and November 2018 to contribute their ideas and insight to help define the future of the Rec Authority. These public visioning workshops were held on-site at the Cathedral Barn.

The purpose of the first workshop was three-fold: to educate community members about the Rec Authority; to better understand values related to recreation in the city and township; and to identify

possible projects and initiatives for the Authority to undertake in the future. This meeting began with a short educational presentation about the history of the Authority and a summary of survey input received to date. Following the presentation, workshop attendees had the opportunity to participate in a real-time voting activity to help the project team better understand recreational values and preferences. After the voting activity, attendees circled around the barn to a number of different input stations to answer questions about projects and priorities at each of the three properties.

The purpose of the second visioning workshop was: to educate community members about the Rec Authority; to gather input on a series of alternatives; and to identify a feasible, preferred alternative model for the Rec Authority. This workshop built on the first workshop and provided the opportunity for attendees to develop a vision statement for the Authority 20 years in the future, identify positive and negatives associated with expansion of the Authority, and provide guidance on a future millage campaign.



chapter 6.

goals & objectives

Continuing Towards Excellence

The recreational goals and objectives were developed through evaluation of current facilities and programs, community input, and planning initiatives noted in other documents developed by the Rec Authority. The goals and objectives therefore reflect the preferences of the Traverse City/Garfield community in addressing the management, programming and future initiatives for the properties managed by the

Authority. These goals are also intended to complement the recreational goals of both the neighboring jurisdictions and Grand Traverse County. While general strategies are provided below, specific action items and implementation steps for achieving these goals are detailed further in Chapter 7.

Goal 1: Continue to identify opportunities to preserve land for recreational, educational and environmental preservation purposes.

- Objective 1.1:** Secure a matching grant to acquire the former Kroupa property (“Hickory Forest”), which consists of 76 acres and is adjacent to the west side of Hickory Hills.
- Objective 1.2:** Pursue the acquisition of the Wilson property, which consists of 10 acres and is landlocked between Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows.
- Objective 1.3:** Remain open to opportunities to expand holdings and/or services as opportunities arise, in a manner that is not to the detriment of current Authority operations and responsibilities.

Goal 2: Complete all capital improvement projects outlined in the 2019 Public Visioning for Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows.

- Objective 2.1:** Complete Phase II of the Cathedral Barn (install an entry vestibule, connect the two barns with elevators, install access to the mezzanine, renovate the first floor, and improve the amphitheater area).
- Objective 2.2:** Pursue funds for the renovation and reuse of the Historic Barn adjacent to the Cathedral Barn.
- Objective 2.3:** Continue to collaborate with the City of Traverse City to control stormwater at Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows.
- Objective 2.4:** Add clear and comprehensive signage at each of the parks that offer educational information (plant and wildlife, history); directions and mapping, safety warnings, and park rules and/or expectations.

“Look deep into nature, and then you
will understand everything better.”

-Albert Einstein



Goal 3: Connect Authority-managed properties with non-motorized routes to nearby parks and community amenities.

Objective 3.1: Following completion of the road project at Historic Barns Park, assess the need for additional non-motorized infrastructure to ensure barrier-free access throughout the park.

Objective 3.2: Work with the City of Traverse City to coordinate, plan and facilitate trail connectivity between Hickory Meadows, Hickory Hills and Hickory Forest.

Objective 3.3: Collaborate with regional trail entities, local units of government and residents to develop a trail connection between the Hickory complex and the Grand Traverse Commons.

Objective 3.4: Work with the appropriate entities to develop a circulation plan for the Grand Traverse Commons to help move traffic on and off campus without relying on Historic Barns Park.

Objective 3.5: Consistently collaborate with local and regional entities to identify opportunities for more connections between properties managed by the Authority and other natural areas, neighborhoods and schools.

Objective 3.6: Participate in trail planning activities for the Commons Natural Area.

Objective 3.7: Consider participating in long-term maintenance oversight of non-motorized multi-use trails in the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield.

Goal 4: Continue to improve upon and expand outreach and partnerships.

Objective 4.1: Look for opportunities for the Authority to host more community events at the Cathedral Barn, including but not limited to concerts, on-site education and festivals.

Objective 4.2: Continue to recruit and support public events and programming at Historic Barns Park hosted by outside organizations.

Objective 4.3: Collaborate with Garfield Township, the City of Traverse City, community organizations and the organizations currently operating at the parks to ensure that activities at the parks are consistent with local needs and opportunities.

Objective 4.4: Continue to foster a positive and collaborative relationship with the Botanic Garden, SEEDS and TC Community Garden on activities and programming at Historic Barns Park.

Objective 4.5: Work with the City of Traverse City and other partners to assess the feasibility of a joint management plan for Hickory Meadows, Hickory Hills and Hickory Forest.

Objective 4.6: Participate in trail planning activities for the Commons Natural Area.

Objective 4.7: Continue to collaborate with the City of Traverse City on wastewater, stormwater, cross-country ski grooming and parking at Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows.

Goal 5: Ensure the Authority's operating base as sustainable and diverse as possible.

Objective 5.1: Expand the rental operation at the Cathedral Barn to promote more public and private events.

Objective 5.2: Apply for grants from foundations and state and federal agencies to support project development at the Authority's parks.

Objective 5.3: Foster public/private partnerships with local and regional businesses to support programming at the Authority's parks.



Goal 6: Engage the public and promote the properties as a community-oriented resource.

Objective 6.1: Garner input from park users and members of the public on a regular basis, and employ a variety of outreach methods to do so.

Objective 6.2: Host monthly board meetings in a manner that encourages as much public attendance and participation as possible.

Objective 6.3: Seek opportunities to use additional mediums for communication and informational transparency with the public.

Objective 6.4: Continue to seek input from stakeholders that represent a diverse range of recreational and cultural interests.

Objective 6.5: Upon acquiring Hickory Forest, finalize a management plan and establish access points for the site, informed by public input.

Goal 7: Protect and enhance the physical aspects of all Authority-managed properties so that they are both environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

Objective 7.1: Improve accessibility at each of the properties to promote use for all ages and abilities.

Objective 7.2: Seek opportunities to support activities at the parks during all four seasons.

Objective 7.3: At all Authority-managed properties, protect natural resources and continue to educate the public on the unique cultural and natural features found at each site.

Objective 7.4: At all sites, balance the recreation needs of the public with the need to preserve natural features and animal habitats.

Objective 7.5: At West Bay Waterfront, follow best management practices for the shoreline to protect water quality.

Objective 7.6: Once Hickory Forest is acquired, a management plan is finalized and access points are identified, improve access points as needed to support function and to create a sense of place.



chapter 7.

action program



Steps Toward a Sustainable Future

The following Action Program describes how Rec Authority intends to meet, or advance toward meeting, the aforementioned goals and objectives over the course of the next five years.

Goal 1: Continue to identify opportunities to preserve land for recreational, educational and environmental preservation purposes.

As mentioned previously in this plan, the Grand Traverse region has experienced a rise in population in recent decades. This trend has placed demand on new housing and commercial development in both Traverse City and Garfield Township. Going forward, the Rec Authority will play an important role in helping to preserve significant natural areas from development pressure by remaining open to land acquisition opportunities. However, the Rec Authority will base its level of openness for a new acquisition on its capacity to effectively manage such a property. As of 2020, the Authority has identified two potential land acquisitions that would support the goals and objectives contained in this plan. These are the Kroupa property and the Wilson property.

The Rec Authority intends to apply for a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant to match some of the costs the Authority will incur in purchasing the 76-acre former Kroupa parcel (“Hickory Forest”). The rest of the cost will be supported by the recent millage that passed to support the Rec Authority’s operations. This purchase will protect one of the largest forested parcels within the region’s urban core; provide

high-quality passive recreation to local residents and visitors; safeguard water quality in Kids Creek and Grand Traverse Bay by protecting the natural features that serve to filter surface runoff; and preserve scenic views from Hickory Hills, M-72 and Barney Road.

The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) is in the process of creating a draft management plan that will include recommendations for sustainable trail design. The goal is to protect the property’s natural features and conservation values while allowing users to fully appreciate its gorgeous, rolling topography.

For the Rec Authority, the acquisition of the Kroupa property is a high priority with an estimated cost of around \$650,000.

The Rec Authority will additionally coordinate with the Wilson property owner and the City of Traverse City to assess the feasibility of acquiring the 10-acre parcel. While this opportunity was explored in the past to no avail, the Authority intends to reopen the conversation in the coming years.

More generally, the Rec Authority will coordinate with GTRLC, the City and the Township to periodically assess other potential property acquisitions. A collaborative effort in this regard will be important to ensure that decisions complement the aspirational goals of other park entities in the community. This may consist of an annual meeting with the jurisdictions, GTRLC and the public to review the services provided at the area’s parks. The Rec Authority should formalize these meetings to ensure its strategic planning is addressing local needs.

Goal 2: Complete all capital improvement projects outlined in the 2019 Public Visioning for Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows.

While great strides have been made, the barns at Historic Barns Park remain in need of renovations to serve the public most effectively. The Rec Authority has estimated a cost of \$4,835,329.99 for capital improvement projects for the barns. These improvements include the following:

1. Constructing an entry vestibule for the Cathedral Barn
2. Developing the lower level of the Cathedral Barn to hold offices, storage and a green room/bride's room.
3. Constructing an elevator, stairs and renovated lobby to connect the two barns and make both levels of both barns universally accessible to the public.
4. Rehabilitating the upper and lower floors of the Historic Barn for modern reuse, consistent with the 2007 and 2019 Public Visioning and the master site plan.

Improvements 1-3 are of higher immediate priority for the Rec Authority to complete than improvement 4.

The Rec Authority, in meeting the objectives of Goal 2, will also seek further coordination with the City of Traverse City to address the stormwater runoff leaving Hickory Hills and impacting the infrastructure at Hickory Meadows. While the City has done well to respond when infrastructure is affected by runoff, a long-term solution should be identified. The Rec Authority is open to helping the City pursue funding from the State of Michigan and other sources to fund the enhancements.

Additionally, the Rec Authority will work to develop a coordinated signage plan for all three properties. Some signage planning has already been completed and implemented, such as an approved template for information signage deployed by the partner entities at Historic Barns Park. However, there still exists the need to display Rec Authority branded signage (particularly at park entrances) that creates a sense of place for park visitors. Therefore, while the Rec Authority will not seek to replace partner signage, it will work to inventory existing signage to see what is missing. Entrance signage is needed for Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows. Historic Barns Park would benefit from additional historical information signage. Hickory Meadows would benefit from signs that indicate directions, park rules and regulations, history, as well as plant and animal information. The West Bayfront site should have information signage that describes the dynamics of the Great Lakes shoreline. The Rec Authority will support this action item through its operating funds and/or grant funding.



Goal 3: Connect Authority-managed properties with non-motorized routes to nearby parks and community amenities.

At high priority, the Rec Authority will work to implement built features at Historic Barns Park that improve the site's accessibility. To accomplish this, the Rec Authority plans to coordinate with the Disability Network of Traverse City and other experts to identify barriers and opportunities for improved accessibility throughout Historic Barns Park. In addition, it will work with the partners at Historic Barns Park, as well as park users, to gather further input on built features that would supplement the pedestrian experience.

Another aspect of working towards Goal 3's objectives is to recognize the immense value of non-motorized trail connections. First, the Rec Authority will work with City of Traverse City staff, the Hickory Hills Advisory Committee, the Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee and members of the public to identify desirable and sustainable trail routes between Hickory Meadows, Hickory Hills and Hickory Forest. When planning these routes, collaborators should detail how conflicting recreation uses could be segregated to ensure safe and efficient use within the parkland.

The Rec Authority is also interested in pursuing a trail connection between the Hickory complex and the Grand Traverse Commons. This action would support the tenets of a livable community by connecting

natural and cultural sites with residences and local businesses. In the next 1-3 years, the Rec Authority should form a working group with TART Trails, the City of Traverse City, Garfield Charter Township, GTRLC, Munson Hospital, the Minervini Group and property owners. This group's purpose would be to identify viable routes and to estimate construction, easement and maintenance costs.

Another prevailing issue at Historic Barns Park and the Grand Traverse Commons concerns road management tasks. The Grand Traverse Commons Master Plan contains a circulation plan for the campus, but as the campus lacks a singular municipal authority over the road system, tasks such as road planning, construction and maintenance are left to an informal patchwork of public and private owners. The Rec Authority will seek additional collaborative efforts with the City, the Township, the Minervini Group, and neighbors such as Greenspire School and Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District to identify optimum ways to move traffic on and off the southern end of the Commons campus. The group should also plan to assign maintenance responsibilities to roads on the campus so that this work is more formalized and planned for the long term.

Finally, the Rec Authority will remain open to opportunities for regional connectivity. While no specific action steps in this regard are recommended at this time, the Authority should maintain working relationships with organizations such as TART Trails and GTRLC to continually target opportunities for improved non-motorized travel.

Goal 4: Continue to improve upon and expand outreach and partnerships.

The Rec Authority launched the Cathedral Barn as an event rental space in 2015, realizing the public's vision to generate operating funds that would help the maintenance and upkeep of the building to be self-sustaining. Event rental revenues have supported the building since that time, but the majority of rentals have been private or ticketed. The Rec Authority would like to balance the ratio of public and private events to support more activity that is open to the public (beyond the normal tours and other daily activities). The Rec Authority has an interest in hosting more formalized programming such as a concert series. This aspiration would contribute to the notion that the Rec Authority's parkland is meant to serve a wide range of community interests. The first step in accomplishing this task will be for the Authority to conduct a feasibility assessment, answering questions such as:

- What other regional entities are hosting similar events?
- Would the Authority require additional resources or expertise?
- How much would events cost and how could the Authority fund these events?

Second, the Rec Authority will remain open to new approaches for public events. The Authority, in the next year, should draft a "wish list" of potential events at Historic Barns Park and seek advice from other

event organizers in the area. For example, the Authority may explore the feasibility of hosting part of the Cherry Festival, the Film Festival, performers from the Interlochen Center for the Arts or topical educators. It is recommended that the Rec Authority form a subcommittee to develop such an approach.

The remaining action items for Goal 4 are guided by the need to collaborate. The Rec Authority will continue to work with the City and Township to make sure experiences provided at the parks are coordinated and complementary of City and Township parklands to the extent possible. To accomplish this, the Rec Authority will annually review updates to City and Township municipal parks and recreation plans. The Rec Authority should also periodically review organizational activities at municipal sites, quarterly reports and monthly board meeting agendas for the City and Township.

In addition, the Rec Authority will continue to foster a strong positive relationship with the Botanic Garden, SEEDS and the TC Community Garden at Historic Barns Park. The Rec Authority and the partnering entities will continue to abide by the management agreement, updated in 2019. The partnering organizations will regularly participate in meetings of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committee and in monthly board meetings.

Because of their physical proximity and connectivity, Hickory Meadows, Hickory Hills and Hickory Forest will require a coordinated management approach and may benefit from the creation of a joint management plan.

In the near future, the Rec Authority should begin regularly meeting with the City, the Hickory Hills Advisory Committee and the Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee. This working group will need to define and coordinate uses, as many users treat the two parks (Hickory Meadows and Hickory Hills) as one unit. Joint management planning should ensure that trail systems are convenient for users, easy to follow between the two sites, sustainable, and protective of natural features, flora and fauna.

Finally, the Rec Authority will continue to collaborate with the City of Traverse City on stormwater and wastewater management, cross-country ski grooming and parking management at Hickory Meadows. Mentioned in Goal 2, the Rec Authority will support the City's efforts to upgrade its stormwater management system.

Goal 5: Ensure the Authority's operating base is sustainable and diverse.

While the community approved a millage in 2020 that will maintain the Rec Authority's basic operations for the next 20 years, there are still opportunities to expand and diversify funds. First, the Rec Authority will adhere to the action program described for Goal 4, namely to increase educational, recreational and event programming at Historic Barns Park. Second, the Rec Authority will apply for grant opportunities, particularly with the State of Michigan, to finance the Kroupa property acquisition as well as other improvement projects described in this plan. Third, the

Rec Authority should explore additional public/private partnerships with the business community.

Goal 6: Engage the public and promote the properties as a community-oriented resource.

As an organization that provides for public recreation, the Rec Authority will continue to encourage members of the public to participate in decision-making processes. Currently, the Rec Authority communicates its news through press releases, paid advertising and on its web page. Those interested can also easily find meeting agendas and packets in advance of each monthly board meeting. These agendas, packets and minutes are also archived online for later review. In 2021, a key to the Rec Authority's success in engaging the public will rely on its continued ability to adapt. The Rec Authority will be prepared to host meetings in person or remotely, depending on community preferences and regulations.

In addition to what it is already doing, the Rec Authority will also seek opportunities to engage non-traditional civic participants. This could take many forms as the Rec Authority adapts its outreach to satisfy community needs. Examples may include hosting meetings at different times to account for different work shifts, utilizing engagement techniques that consider disabilities, and using both mail and online communication. In the near future, the Rec Authority expects to garner public input on a Hickory Forest management plan throughout the acquisition process.

Goal 7: Protect and improve upon the physical aspects of all Authority-managed properties so that they are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

The Rec Authority will continue to work toward the triple-bottom line of sustainability. Part of a park's social sustainability is dependent on its ability to host users of all abilities. To assess and improve accessibility at each property, the Rec Authority will continue to collaborate with the Disability Network of Traverse City and other stakeholders. The Rec Authority will also coordinate with the partnering organizations at Historic Barns Park, the public and parks users to get input on desired park features. These two initial efforts will help provide a budget for improvements that the Rec Authority can use to begin scheduling projects.

Another important factor that guides the Rec Authority's decisions is the need to balance the public's recreation needs with environmental protections. To support this, the Rec Authority should provide additional signage that denotes the environmental significance of the plant and animal habitats found at each site. In addition, for every infrastructure project, the Rec Authority will strongly consider the project's impact

on the site's natural features. The Rec Authority should continue to coordinate with the Grand Traverse Conservation District to manage invasive species at Hickory Meadows and seek additional funding to support invasive species prevention and management.

At all of its parklands, the Rec Authority should ensure that environmental concerns play a role in determining what (if any) built environment features will be introduced. At all three sites, uses will be, to the extent possible, complementary to the natural features of the site.

The West Bay Waterfront site is intended to remain undeveloped for the foreseeable future. The Rec Authority will follow best shoreline management practices to protect water quality at the site.



“The health of the eye seems to demand a horizon. We are never tired, so long as we can see far enough.”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson in *Nature*

appendix

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
FOR
THE CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD
RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY

These Articles of Incorporation are adopted, signed, and acknowledged by the incorporating units for the purpose of forming a recreational authority under the provisions of Act No. 321, Public Acts of 2000 (the “Recreational Authorities Act”).

ARTICLE I

NAME

This authority shall be known as the CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY, hereafter referred to as the Authority.

ARTICLE II

PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES

The participating municipalities are the City of Traverse City, a Michigan municipal corporation, and the Charter Township of Garfield, a Michigan municipal corporation. They are hereafter referred to as the participating municipalities.

ARTICLE III

PURPOSE

The Authority is incorporated for the purpose of the acquisition, construction, operation, maintenance, or improvement of public recreation centers, public parks, and public conference centers as may be acquired by the Authority or as may be transferred to it by a participating municipality. The Authority may donate, sell, lease or transfer any such facilities so acquired only

to a participating municipality. Other than as limited by these Articles, the Authority is incorporated for all purposes as stated in the Recreational Authorities Act, as limited by these Articles and any subsequent amendments.

ARTICLE IV

DURATION

The Authority shall be automatically dissolved within sixty (60) days from and after the election date if the electors of the Authority fail to approve a public recreation tax on all of the taxable property within the territory of the Authority by November, 2004. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the participating municipalities, acting through their respective governing bodies within such sixty (60) day period, elect to extend its duration, then the Authority shall continue for so long as then specified by the participating municipalities. If the electors so approve such tax, the Authority's duration shall continue for so long as an approved millage remains in effect.

ARTICLE V

TERRITORY

The territory of the Authority shall be the corporate boundaries of the participating municipalities.

ARTICLE VI

POWERS AND DUTIES

Section 1 The Authority shall be an authority under Section 6 of Article IX of the State Constitution of 1963. It shall be a body corporate with power to sue and be sued in any court of the State of Michigan. It shall have the powers and duties as established by the Recreational Authorities Act and incidental thereto. MCL 123.1131.

Section 2 The Authority and the participating municipalities shall have the power to acquire and hold, by purchase, lease, option, grant, gift, devise, land contract, installment purchase contract, bequest, or other legal means, real and personal property inside or outside the territory of the Authority. The property may include franchises, easements, or rights of way on, under, or above any property. The Authority may pay for the property from, or pledge for the payment of the property, revenue of the Authority.

Section 3 The Authority shall have the power to donate, sell, lease or otherwise transfer its property or any part thereof or interest therein to one or both participating municipalities or to any other person or entity upon approval of the participating municipalities.

Section 4 The Authority shall have the power to apply for and accept grants and contributions from individuals, the federal government or any of its agencies, the State of Michigan, a municipality, or other public or private agencies to be used for any of the purposes of the Authority.

Section 5 Before adopting by resolution a proposal for a tax authorized by the Recreational Authority Act, the proposed resolution shall be submitted to the participating municipalities and not less than 45 days be allowed for their consideration and comment.

Section 6 The Authority shall operate on a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year and the annual operating

budgets shall be submitted to the participating municipalities for review and approval.

Section 7 The Authority shall have the power to hire full-time or part-time employees and retain professional services.

Section 8 The Authority shall have the power to provide for the maintenance of all of the real and personal property of the Authority.

Section 9 The Authority shall have the power to assess and collect fees for services provided by and expenses incurred by the Authority.

Section 10 The Authority shall have the power to receive revenue as appropriated by the legislature of the State of Michigan or a participating municipality.

Section 11 The Authority shall have the power to enter into contracts incidental to or necessary for the accomplishment of the purposes of the Authority.

Section 12 The Authority's operation of public facilities shall be limited to only those public facilities and lands that it has acquired or that have been transferred to the Authority by a participating municipality. Nothing in these Articles shall obligate a participating municipality to transfer any park, recreation center, or any land or interest therein to the Authority.

ARTICLE VII

GOVERNING BODY - OFFICERS

Section 1 The Authority shall be directed and governed by a board of directors of seven members known as the "Board", three members to be appointed by the City

Commission of Traverse City, three members to be appointed by the Garfield Township Board, and one member to be appointed by the Board of Directors of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy.

Section 2 Members of the legislative body of a participating municipality are eligible for membership or appointment to the Board. At least one (1) member of each participating municipality's legislative body shall be appointed to the Board. Each member of the Board shall be a resident of the participating municipality that appoints that member. The member appointed by the Grand Traverse Land Conservancy shall be a resident of either the City of Traverse City or Garfield Township.

Section 3 The terms of the directors shall be three years. The initial terms of the directors constituting the first Board shall be staggered as follows:

- a. For the three directors appointed by the City of Traverse City:
One director shall serve a one-year term.
One director shall serve a two-year term.
One director shall serve a three-year term.
- b. For the three directors appointed by the Township of Garfield:
One director shall serve a one-year term.
One director shall serve a two-year term.
One director shall serve a three-year term.
- c. The director appointed by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy shall serve a three-year term.

Section 4 The Board shall designate one of the directors as Chairperson, another of the directors as Secretary, and another as Treasurer.

Section 5 The Board shall adopt and amend by-laws including rules of procedure consistent with the provisions of the Recreational Authorities Act. The by-laws shall provide for regular meetings of the Board, not less frequent than quarterly. The by-laws and any amendment to them shall not be effective until approved by the Traverse City City Manager and the Garfield Township Supervisor.

Section 6 The Chairperson shall preside at meetings of the Board and may sign and execute all Authority-authorized bonds, contracts, and other obligation in the name of the Authority. The Chairperson shall do and perform such other duties as may be fixed by the by-laws and from to time to time assigned by the Board.

Section 7 The Secretary shall perform all the duties fixed by the by-laws. The Secretary shall preside at meetings of the Board in the absence of the Chairperson.

Section 8 The Treasurer shall perform all duties fixed by the by-laws. The Treasurer shall be bonded for the faithful discharge of the duties as Treasurer, the bond to be of such character, form, and in such amount as the Board may require.

Section 9 No member of the Board shall receive compensation for services as a member of the Board but is entitled to reimbursement for reasonable expenses, including expenses for travel authorized by the Board incurred in the discharge of the directors' duties.

Section 10 Vacancies occurring in the office of director shall be filled by the participating municipality or other entity having appointed the vacated director position. Vacancies shall be filled within 30 days of the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 11 A director may be removed from office as provided by and in accordance with the Recreational Authorities Act.

ARTICLE VIII

PUBLIC BODY

The Authority is a public body and shall comply with the requirements of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended, and the Freedom of Information Act, Act 442 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended.

ARTICLE IX

PUBLICATION

A copy of these Articles of Incorporation shall be published once in the *Traverse City Record-Eagle*, being a newspaper circulated within the participating municipalities prior to adoption by the participating municipalities.

ARTICLE X

ADDITION OR WITHDRAWAL OF PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES

Section 1 A municipality may become a participating municipality in the Authority only upon an affirmative vote of the legislative bodies of the existing participating municipalities and the proposed participating municipality. If the Authority has been authorized to levy a tax, the addition of another participating municipality shall be contingent upon approval by the electors of the proposed municipality of a tax equivalent to that which the Authority has been authorized to levy.

Section 2 A participating municipality may withdraw from the Authority on an affirmative vote of the legislative body of each participating municipality. However, in no event shall a participating municipality withdraw from the Authority during the period for which the Authority has been authorized to levy a tax by the electors of the Authority.

ARTICLE XI

AMENDMENT

Amendments to these Articles of Incorporation shall be made only as authorized by the Recreational Authorities Act. Amendments shall be published in the *Traverse City Record-Eagle* before adoption.

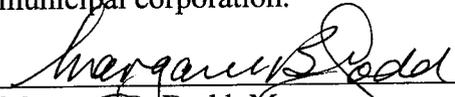
ARTICLE XII

EFFECTIVE DATE

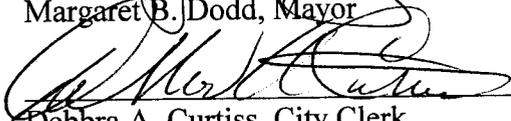
These Articles of Incorporation shall become effective and be in full force and effect upon filing with the Secretary of State.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the participating municipalities have adopted and authorized to be executed these Articles of Incorporation, in behalf of the City of Traverse City, by the Mayor and the City Clerk, and the Charter Township of Garfield, by the Supervisor and the Township Clerk.

CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY, a Michigan
municipal corporation.



Margaret B. Dodd, Mayor

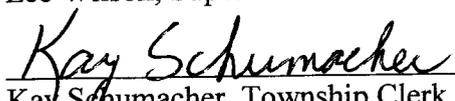


Debra A. Curtiss, City Clerk

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD,
a Michigan municipal corporation.



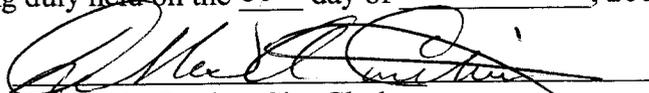
Lee Wilson, Supervisor



Kay Schumacher, Township Clerk

The foregoing Articles of Incorporation were adopted by the City Commission of the City of Traverse City, Michigan, at a special meeting duly held on the 30 day of June, 2003.

Dated: June 30, 2003


Debra A. Curtiss, City Clerk

The foregoing Articles of Incorporation were adopted by the Charter Township of Garfield Board at a special meeting duly held on the 30 day of June, 2003.

Dated: July 8, 2003


Kay Schumacher, Township Clerk

Published in the *Record-Eagle* on May 18, 25 and June 29, 2003.

Filed with the Secretary of State on July 15, 2003.

9/19

**FIRST AMENDMENT TO
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
FOR
THE CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD
RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY**

This Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation is adopted, signed, and acknowledged by the participating municipalities for the purpose of amending Article III of the Articles of Incorporation for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority adopted by the City Commission of the City of Traverse City, Michigan, on June 30, 2003, and the Charter Township of Garfield Board on June 30, 2003.

Article III is hereby amended to provide in its entirety as follows:

ARTICLE III
PURPOSE

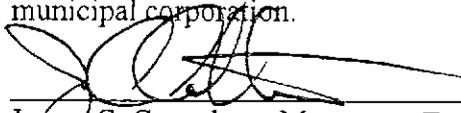
The Authority is incorporated for the purpose of the acquisition, construction, operation, maintenance, or improvement of public recreation centers, public parks, and public conference centers as may be acquired by the Authority or as may be transferred to it by a participating municipality. The Authority may donate, sell, lease or otherwise transfer facilities so acquired or any part thereof or interest therein to one or both participating municipalities or to any other person or entity upon approval of the participating municipalities. Other than as limited by these Articles, the Authority is incorporated for all purposes as stated in the Recreational Authorities Act, as limited by these Articles and any subsequent amendments.

All other provisions of the Articles of Incorporation for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority shall be and remain the same.

This First Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority shall become effective and be in full force and effect upon filing with the Secretary of State.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the participating municipalities have adopted and authorized to be executed this First Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority, on behalf of the City of Traverse City, by the Mayor and City Clerk, and the Charter Township of Garfield, by the Supervisor and the Township Clerk.

CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY, a Michigan
municipal corporation.

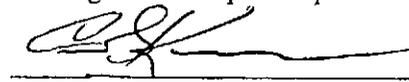


James C. Carruthers, Mayor

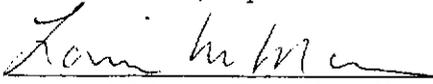


Benjamin C. Marentette, City Clerk

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD, a
Michigan municipal corporation.



Chuck Korn, Supervisor



Lanie McManus, Township Clerk

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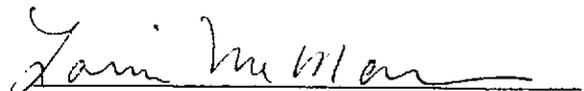
The foregoing First Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority was adopted by the City Commission of the City of Traverse City, Michigan at a regular meeting duly held on the 19th day of September 2016 at 7 pm.

Dated: 9/22/2016


Benjamin C. Marentette, City Clerk

The foregoing First Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority was adopted by the Charter Township of Garfield Board at a Regular meeting duly held on the 13th day of September, 2016 at 6:00 pm..

Dated: 9/14/16


Lanie McManus, Township Clerk

Published in the *Record-Eagle* on September 13, 2016.

Filed with the Secretary of State on October 4, 2016.

APPENDIX B.

RESOLUTION SUBMITTING
RECREATION MILLAGE PROPOSAL
AND BOND PROPOSAL

WHEREAS, the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority is a recreational authority organized under 2000 Public Act 321 and may place a proposal for an authority-wide millage for recreational purposes at a state-wide general election; and

WHEREAS, 2000 Public Act 321, §11 provides that a recreational authority may levy a tax on all taxable property within the limits of the authority for acquiring and maintaining parks, if approved by a vote of the people; and

WHEREAS, 2000 Public Act 321, §23 provides for an election on the issuance of general obligation bonds and a tax for the payment of such bonds.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that there be placed on the ballot for action by the voters in the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield at the general election to be held on November 2, 2004 a recreation bond proposal for the issuance of bonds in an amount not to exceed \$6,650,000 and an additional recreation millage proposal of up to 0.1 mill for a period of up to twenty (20) years levied on all taxable property within Traverse City and Garfield Township commencing as soon as possible;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Grand Traverse and Leelanau County Clerks, City Clerk and Township Clerk are authorized to take all appropriate actions in connection with placing this matter on the ballot;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each proposal shall be levied only if both proposals are approved by the voters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following ballot language is hereby approved:

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, the Barns at the Commons, and the property next to Hickory Hills. State law requires an annual independent audit of the Recreational Authority.

This proposal, if approved by the voters, will only be effective if both it and the Open Space and Natural Area Millage Proposal pass.

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) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds for all or a 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 estimated millage to be levied in 2004 is 0.27 mill (\$0.27 per \$1,000 of taxable value) and the estimated simple average annual millage rate required to retire the bonds is 0.27 mill (\$0.27 per \$1,000 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.

YES _____

NO _____

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 mill that would cost the owner of a home with a value of \$100,000 \$5.00 per year. State law requires an annual independent audit of the Recreational Authority.

This proposal, if approved by the voters, will only be effective if both it and the Open Space and Natural Area Preservation Bond Proposal pass.

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 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?

It is estimated that 0.1 mill will raise approximately \$125,000 when first levied in 2004.

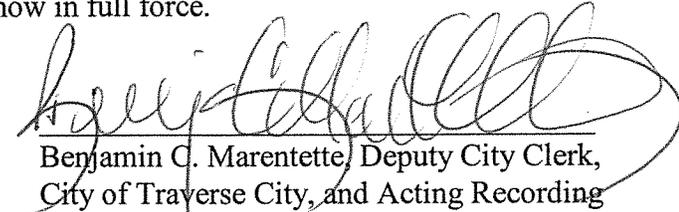
YES _____

NO _____

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager immediately file a copy of this Resolution with the Clerks of Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties, the City of Traverse City, and the Charter Township of Garfield.

I CERTIFY THAT I am the Deputy City Clerk of Traverse City and the Acting Recording Secretary for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority and that the foregoing is a correct copy of the resolution passed as therein set forth on the 12th day of August, 2004 and that the same is now in full force.

Dated: August 12, 2004



Benjamin C. Marentette, Deputy City Clerk,
City of Traverse City, and Acting Recording
Secretary, City of Traverse City and Charter
Township of Garfield Recreational Authority

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR A MILLAGE
PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR THE CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY TO THE
ELECTORATE IN THE REGULAR ELECTION
ON NOVEMBER 3, 2020**

At a special meeting of the Board of the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority, held remotely in compliance with orders to suppress the spread of COVID-19 in Traverse City, Michigan on August 5, 2020.

Present: Ross Biederman, Chair; Michael Groleau, Secretary; Molly Agostinelli; Chris Sullivan; and Ashlea Walter.

Absent: Tim Hughes, Treasurer.

The following resolution was offered by Agostinelli and supported by Sullivan.

WHEREAS, the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority (the “Recreational Authority”) has been established under the provisions of the Recreational Authorities Act, Act 321 of 2000 (the “Act”); and

WHEREAS, the Recreational Authority is authorized to levy a tax of not more than 1 mill for a period of not more than 20 years on all of the taxable property within the territory of the authority for the purposes of acquiring, constructing, operating, maintaining, and improving a public swimming pool, public recreation center, public auditorium or conference center, public historic farm, or public park, MCL 123.1141; and

WHEREAS, the funds for the Recreational Authority to construct, operate, maintain, acquire, and improve pursuant to the Act have been provided by a millage of 0.10 mills, which have been rolled back by the Headlee rollback to 0.0968, previously approved by the electors for the Charter Township of Garfield and City of Traverse City in 2004, which will expire following the December, 2023 levy (the “2004 Millage”); and

WHEREAS, the Recreational Authority wishes to levy a new additional millage up to 0.15 mills from 2020 through 2023 and levy a millage up to 0.30 mills from 2024 through 2039 for the purposes of continuing operations of the Recreational Authority, continued historic preservation of the Historic Barns, and acquiring property adjoining Hickory Hills, and all other purposes of the Recreational Authority (the “Millage Plan”); and

WHEREAS, the Recreational Authority desires to obtain voter approval for a new additional millage of up to 0.30 mills for a period of 20 years to implement and provide funds for the Millage Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Recreational Authority wishes to submit this millage proposal to the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield electors at the regular election to be held on November 3, 2020; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article VI, Section 5 of the Recreational Authority's Articles of Incorporation, the Recreational Authority has submitted a proposed resolution for the tax proposal to the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield for their consideration and comment at least 45 days prior to the adoption of this Resolution;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the following proposals, the language of which is hereby approved by the Recreational Authority and certified to the Grand Traverse County and Leelanau County Clerks, respectively, shall be submitted to the electors of the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield for a vote at the November 3, 2020, election:

a. To be submitted to Grand Traverse County Clerk:

**CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF
GARFIELD
RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
MILLAGE PROPOSAL**

This proposal will allow a new millage for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority to protect the water quality of rivers, creeks, lakes, and bays, protect wildlife habitat, protect natural woodlands and forests, preserve environmentally sensitive lands, and provide opportunities for children and families to enjoy the outdoors by continuing its operations at the Historic Barns Park, Hickory Meadows, and the West Bay Waterfront along with continued historic preservation of the Historic Barns Park for the next 20 years as well as acquiring a new property adjoining Hickory Hills to expand the public park area near Hickory Meadows. State law requires an annual independent audit of the Recreational Authority.

For the purpose of providing funds for the continued acquisition, construction, operation, maintenance, and improvement of public parks by the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority (the "Authority") at an increased millage level, shall the tax limitation on general ad valorem taxes within the territory of the Authority that may be assessed in one (1) year upon all property within the Charter Township of Garfield and the City of Traverse City, Michigan, be increased and shall the Authority be authorized to levy, up to 0.30 mills (\$0.30 per \$1,000

of Taxable Value) as a new, additional millage for a period of 20 years, 2020 through 2039 inclusive?

If approved and levied in full, this millage will raise an estimated \$644,000 in the first calendar year of the levy based on taxable value.

As required by law, a small portion of this millage must be distributed to other governmental units within Grand Traverse County that are entitled to receive a portion of this millage, which are the City of Traverse City Downtown Development Authority, Grand Traverse County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, and Grand Traverse County Land Bank Authority.

Shall the proposal be adopted?

YES

NO

b. To be submitted to the Leelanau County Clerk:

**CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF
GARFIELD
RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
MILLAGE PROPOSAL**

This proposal will allow a new millage for the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority to protect the water quality of rivers, creeks, lakes, and bays, protect wildlife habitat, protect natural woodlands and forests, preserve environmentally sensitive lands, and provide opportunities for children and families to enjoy the outdoors by continuing its operations at the Historic Barns Park, Hickory Meadows, and the West Bay Waterfront along with continued historic preservation of the Historic Barns Park for the next 20 years as well as acquiring a new property adjoining Hickory Hills to expand the public park area near Hickory Meadows. State law requires an annual independent audit of the Recreational Authority.

For the purpose of providing funds for the continued acquisition, construction, operation, maintenance, and improvement of public parks by the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority (the "Authority") at an increased millage level, shall the tax limitation on general ad valorem taxes

within the territory of the Authority that may be assessed in one (1) year upon all property within the Charter Township of Garfield and the City of Traverse City, Michigan, be increased and shall the Authority be authorized to levy, up to 0.30 mills (\$0.30 per \$1,000 of Taxable Value) as a new, additional millage for a period of 20 years, 2020 through 2039 inclusive?

If approved and levied in full, this millage will raise an estimated \$644,000 in the first calendar year of the levy based on taxable value.

Shall the proposal be adopted?

YES

NO

2. If the propositions are approved, the Recreational Authority shall not levy the 2004 Millage beginning with the 2020 levy for the remainder of its term.

3. If the propositions are approved, the Recreational Authority shall levy only up to 0.15 mills of the new millage from 2020 through 2023.

4. All Public Officials of Grand Traverse County and Leelanau County, State of Michigan, and all Governmental units thereof, within such time as shall be required by law, are requested to perform all acts which shall be necessary to be performed in order to submit the above stated proposition to the duly qualified voters of the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield at the election to be held in within the territory of the Authority, the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield, on Tuesday, November 3, 2020.

5. A certified copy of these propositions will be filed with the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield Clerks.

6. It is further ordered that a certified copy of these propositions be filed with the County Clerks as required by law.

Upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

	Aye	Nay
Molly Agostinelli	<u>X</u>	_____
Ross Biederman	<u>X</u>	_____
Michael Groleau	<u>X</u>	_____
Chris Sullivan	<u>X</u>	_____
Ashlea Walter	<u>X</u>	_____

The Chair and Secretary thereupon declared this Resolution approved and adopted by the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority board this 5th day of August, 2020.



Ross Biederman, Chair



Michael Groleau, Secretary

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority, at a special meeting held on August 5, 2020.



Michael Groleau, Secretary



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – PLEASE FORWARD

Rec Authority releases draft five-year recreation plan for public comment

Plan aims to set goals and objectives for the next five years of operations; public hearing set for January 6.

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. – December 4, 2020 – The joint City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority has released a draft of its new five-year recreation plan for a 30-day public comment period.

The draft plan is based on an extensive public visioning process completed by the Rec Authority in 2019 and comes on the heels of a new 20-year operating millage passed by voters in Traverse City and Garfield Township in November. The new plan must be completed and submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by February 1 in order for the Rec Authority to be an eligible applicant for various recreation grant programs administered by the DNR, such as the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.

“The passage of the new 20-year operating millage gives the Rec Authority the ability to plan into the future like this, and will also provide matching dollars to pursue grant opportunities from the state and other funders,” said Matt Cowall, executive director. “The Authority’s first priority in that regard is the purchase of the new Hickory Forest property next to Hickory Hills, but the plan also captures the public’s vision for ongoing operations and improvements at Historic Barns Park, Hickory Meadows and a small piece of the West Bay waterfront.”

The 30-day public comment period will culminate with a public hearing at a meeting of the Recreational Authority Board of Directors on January 6. The draft plan can be accessed online at www.recauthority.org or by contacting Matt Cowall at 231-929-3696 or mcowall@liaa.org. Prior to the public hearing, comments can be submitted online at www.recauthority.org, via email at mcowall@liaa.org, or via U.S. mail to the Recreational Authority, 324 Munson Ave, Traverse City, MI 49686.

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Media Contact

Matt Cowall, Executive Director
231-360-8304
mcowall@liaa.org

19669

Hand Info over over

APPENDIX E.

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

LEGAL NOTICE
The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield
Recreational Authority Board of Directors
Five-Year Recreation Plan
Notice of Public Hearing

The Board of Directors for The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority will hold a public hearing on its draft Five-Year Recreation Plan for 2021. The public hearing will be held on Wednesday, January 6, 2021, at 6 p.m. and will be conducted remotely in compliance with state orders to suppress the spread of COVID-19. During the meeting, a hearing will be granted to any person interested. Anyone wishing to give public comment during the meeting will need to call in and wait in a "virtual waiting room" where their microphones will be muted until they are called upon. The phone number is 1-312-626-6799 and the meeting ID is 860 2403 9928.

A copy of the draft plan is available for public review and comment online at www.recauthority.org or by contacting the Office of the Executive Director, LIAA, 324 Munson Avenue, Traverse City, MI 49686, (231) 929-3696, mcowall@liaa.org.

IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO ATTEND THE PUBLIC HEARING AND HAVE A DISABILITY REQUIRING ANY SPECIAL ASSISTANCE AT THE MEETING, PLEASE NOTIFY THE CITY CLERK AT (231) 922-4480 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. TDD# (231) 922-4412.

The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. Penny Hill, Assistant City Manager, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan, 49684, (231) 922-4440, has been designated to coordinate compliance with the non-discrimination requirements contained in Section 35.107 of the Department of Justice regulations. Information concerning the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided thereunder, are available from the ADA Coordinator.

December 20, 2020-1T 558548

STATE OF MICHIGAN
County of Grand Traverse

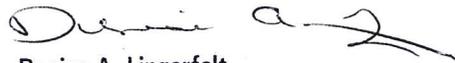
Paul Heidbreder being duly sworn deposes and says the annexed printed copy of notice was taken from the Traverse City RECORD EAGLE, a newspaper printed and circulated in said State and County, and that said notice was published in said newspaper on the following dates:

12/20/2020

that he or she is the agent of the printers of said newspaper, and knows well the facts stated herein



Subscribed and sworn to before
this 21st of December, 2020.



Denise A. Lingerfelt
Notary Public, State of MI
County of Grand Traverse
09/28/2023
Acting in County of Grand Traverse

APPENDIX F.

Comments Submitted for Rec Plan

1.) FROM: Karen Schmidt, Botanic Garden, via email, Fri 12/4/2020 3:39 PM

Hi Matt,

We would like to suggest a small revision for the description of the botanic garden in the RA's 5-year plan. Thanks for considering.

Karen

"The non-profit Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park broke ground on this public garden in 2013, and in just seven years generated considerable success, including restoration of the 1885 Granary as a visitor center, classroom and event space, built to high efficiency LEED standards. Nine impressive accessible gardens, with an emphasis on native plants and the roles of plants and gardens in health, are available for the public to enjoy without charge, and additional gardens are under development. Since 2015, the Botanic Garden has averaged 30,000 visitors a year from all over the world.

The Botanic Garden has cultivated a mighty force of 300 volunteers who maintain the grounds, provide free daily tours from April through October, operate the Visitor Center and gift shop and, most importantly, offer dozens of classes and workshops for children and adults at little or no cost. The Garden's board of directors has raised over \$3 million in grants and donations which have been invested in capital improvements for The Garden and Historic Barns Park and, in turn, in the economic development of the region."

2.) FROM: Garfield Township – Steve Hannon, Deputy Planning Director; Derek Morton, Park Steward; John Sych, Planning Director, via email, Tue 1/5/2021 2:38 PM

Garfield Township – Potential Comments for Joint Rec Authority Master Plan

Chapter 1: Community Description

- **P.10** – Not sure where the acreage data came from, but here is what I have in our GIS data in the table below (also correct the name of Boardman Valley Nature Preserve and Kids Creek Park):
 - Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area – 185 acres
 - Boardman Valley Nature Preserve – 125 acres
 - Miller Creek Nature Reserve – 94 acres
 - Silver Lake Recreation Area – 85 acres
 - River East Recreation Area – 71 acres
 - Kids Creek Park – 21 acres
 - Hughes Drive Nature Reserve – 9 acres

Chapter 5: Planning for the Future

- **P.49** – Support for non-motorized trail maintenance as an appropriate function of the Joint Rec Authority: I believe this was discussed before at one point, but would the Joint Rec Authority consider taking over maintenance of some of the trails in the area (Boardman Lake Loop Trail, Mall Trail, Buffalo Ridge Trail, etc.)? Would this require a request to change the Authority's millage? I believe the idea was to have a central hub for maintenance since the current system divides maintenance responsibilities among several different entities.

Chapter 6: Goals and Objectives

- **P.68** – Objective 3.6: Garfield Township is conducting a planning process in 2021 on the park design for the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area.
- **P.68** – Objective 3.7: See comment above about feasibility of taking over non-motorized trail maintenance under the umbrella of the Joint Rec Authority.
- **P.69** – Objective 4.6: Garfield Township is conducting a planning process in 2021 on the park design for the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area.

Chapter 7: Action Program

- **P.72** – Last paragraph: good idea to have an annual meeting or something similar between the Township, Joint Rec Authority, GTRLC, and other jurisdiction to keep communication open between all these entities.
- **P.74** – Trail connection between Hickory complex and the Grand Traverse Commons. Garfield Township is conducting a planning process in 2021 on the park design for the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area. This will include conversations with adjacent property owners in the surrounding area and an advisory group of different stakeholders, including many of those that are listed here. Our focus will be on the Commons site itself, but this group may also be useful for the Joint Rec Authority in determining trail connections between the Hickory complex and Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area.

3.) FROM: TART Trails - Elizabeth Calcutt, Planner, and Julie Clark, Executive Director, via email, Wed 1/6/2021 4:02 PM

Hi Matt,

On behalf of TART Trails, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Recreation Authority's first Recreation Plan. The plan identifies a number of actions and opportunities for collaboration that support the TART Trails vision of "Happy, active people making connections through a world-class trail network." A few opportunities that we wanted to highlight and add are identified below.

We would like to share our support for the Recreation Authority's work to:

- Acquire the Kroupa property ("Hickory Forest")
- Develop a trail connection between the Grand Traverse Commons and the Hickory complex

We would also like to encourage the Recreation Authority to:

- Integrate and improve wayfinding between the Recreation Authority's properties and the trails and non-motorized infrastructure in the surrounding area
- Participate in the long-term maintenance of non-motorized multi use trails in the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield

Please let me know if you have any questions. We're excited to see this come together, and we look forward to the work ahead!

Thank you,

Elizabeth



RECAUTHORITY
TRAVERSE CITY / GARFIELD TOWNSHIP

Minutes

The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority Board of Directors

January 6, 2021

A special meeting of the Recreational Authority Board of Directors was called to order at 6:00 p.m. as a remote meeting in compliance with state orders to suppress the spread of COVID-19.

The following Directors were present, constituting a quorum: Michael Groleau, Secretary, joining from Garfield Township, Grand Traverse County, Michigan; Tim Hughes, Treasurer, joining from Garfield Township, Grand Traverse County, Michigan; Steve Duell, joining from Garfield Township, Grand Traverse County, Michigan; Laura Ness, joining from Traverse City, Grand Traverse County, Michigan; and Chris Sullivan, joining from Traverse City, Grand Traverse County, Michigan.

The following Directors were absent: Ross Biederman, Chair; and Ashlea Walter.

Secretary Groleau presided at the meeting.

1.

The first item being “First public comment,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individuals addressed the Board:

None.

2.

The next item being “Election of officers for 2021,” Secretary Groleau



introduced this matter. The following individual addressed the Board:

Matt Cowall, Executive Director

Secretary Groleau opened the floor for nominations.

Moved by Ness, seconded by Sullivan, to nominate Ross Biederman as Chair, Michael Groleau as Secretary, and Tim Hughes as Treasurer and to close nominations.

Yes: Groleau, Hughes, Duell, Ness, Sullivan

No: None

CARRIED.

Moved by Ness, seconded by Sullivan, that a unanimous ballot be cast for Ross Biederman as Chair, Michael Groleau as Secretary, and Tim Hughes as Treasurer.

Yes: Groleau, Hughes, Duell, Ness, Sullivan

No: None

CARRIED.

3.

The next item being “Consideration of approving the minutes of the special meeting of December 2, 2020,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individual addressed the Board:

Matt Cowall, Executive Director

Moved by Hughes, seconded by Sullivan, that the minutes of the special meeting of December 2, 2020, be approved.

Yes: Groleau, Hughes, Duell, Ness, Sullivan

No: None



CARRIED.

4.

The next item being “Public hearing for the draft 5-Year Recreation Plan,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individual addressed the Board:

Matt Cowall, Executive Director, who shared for the record written comments submitted by the Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park, the Charter Township of Garfield, and Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails, Inc. (TART Trails).

Secretary Groleau opened the public hearing. The following individual addressed the Board:

Elizabeth Calcutt, TART Trails, in reference to their written comments.

There being no one else present desiring to speak, Secretary Groleau closed the public hearing.

Moved by Hughes, seconded by Ness, that the 2021 Five-Year Recreation Plan as amended and the resolution adopting the plan be approved, and that the plan be submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Yes: Groleau, Hughes, Duell, Ness, Sullivan

No: None

CARRIED.

5.

The next item being “Review of a draft management plan for Hickory Forest,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individuals addressed the Board:



Matt Cowall, Executive Director
Todd Vigland, GTRLC

No action was taken.

6.

The next item being “Discussion of Botanic Garden fundraising plans and cost-sharing on the Historic Barn,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individuals addressed the Board:

Matt Cowall, Executive Director
Karen Schmidt, BGHBP

No action was taken.

7.

The next item being “Consideration of 2021 Annual Goals from Management Entities at Historic Barns Park (TC Community Garden, Botanic Garden, SEEDS),” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individuals addressed the Board:

Matt Cowall, Executive Director
Zach Millican, TCCG
Karen Schmidt, BGHBP
Sarna Salzman, SEEDS

Moved by Ness, seconded by Duell, that the 2021 annual goals and benchmarks for TC Community Garden, the Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park and SEEDS and be adopted.

Yes: Groleau, Hughes, Duell, Ness, Sullivan
No: None

CARRIED.



8.

The next item being “Reports,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individuals addressed the Board:

Matt Cowall, Executive Director
Tom Vitale, GTCD

No action was taken.

9.

The next item being “Report regarding payment of expenditures,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individual addressed the Board:

Matt Cowall, Executive Director

Moved by Sullivan, seconded by Ness, that the report regarding payment of expenditures be received and filed.

Yes: Groleau, Hughes, Duell, Ness, Sullivan
No: None

CARRIED.

10.

The next item being “Second public comment,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individuals addressed the Board:

None.

11.

The next item being “Adjournment,” Secretary Groleau introduced this matter. The following individuals addressed the Board:



None.

Moved by Hughes, seconded by Sullivan, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Yes: Groleau, Hughes, Duell, Ness, Sullivan

No: None

CARRIED.

Matt Cowall, Executive Director

DRAFT



APPENDIX H.

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2021 FIVE-YEAR RECREATION PLAN
for The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield
Recreational Authority
Grand Traverse County, Michigan**

WHEREAS, the joint City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority (“Recreational Authority”) has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents during a five-year period covering the years 2021 through 2025, and

WHEREAS, the Recreational Authority began the process of developing a community recreation and natural resource conservation plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

WHEREAS, residents of the Recreational Authority were provided with a well-advertised opportunity during the development of the draft plan to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the recreation and natural resource conservation plan, and

WHEREAS, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the final draft plan for a period of at least 30 days, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on January 6, 2021 at a special meeting of the Recreational Authority Board of Directors to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the 2021 Five-Year Recreation Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Recreational Authority has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for the Recreational Authority, and

WHEREAS, after the public hearing, the Recreational Authority Board of Directors voted to adopt said 2021 Five-Year Recreation Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Recreational Authority Board of Directors hereby adopts the 2021 Five-Year Recreation Plan.

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and original copy of a Resolution adopted by the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority Board of Directors at a special meeting held on the 6th day of January, 2021.

Michael Groleau, Secretary

